

Session Update– March 2021

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Powers and opened with prayer. The agenda and [consent agenda](#) were reviewed, and no changes were requested. The Session broke into small groups and shared their individual hopes for their area of ministry which were then transformed into prayer requests for the coming week.

Treasurer Mary Tayloe reviewed the [February balance sheet](#). In general, expenses are well below budget for the year due to careful spending and limited programming during the pandemic season. Idlewild will continue to receive some income due to employee retention credits that is part of a federal program.

Dr. Heather Chauhan and Rev. Powers proceeded to report on plans to return to some limited in-person activities at the church. The Session approved a seating plan that will allow as many as 244 worshippers in “pods” of 1-5 people (by reservation). The Fall 2020 Safety Protocol was edited to allow for updated recommendations from the CDC as reviewed by the COVID Advisory Team (CAT). Of note, the surface cleaning precautions have been removed, and no specific age restriction has been imposed for in-person attendance. The Session agrees that individuals can consider their personal situations and use their own best judgment to decide if in-person worship is appropriate for them. Sunday worship in the sanctuary will be by reservation system, and plans are in place to accommodate worshippers who cannot or do not make reservations online.

A new special committee to the Session was formally established by a vote, called the Re-Opening Advisory Team (ROAT). This committee will serve as a logistical clearinghouse for requests, processes, and changes to the COVID policies, particularly those requests that are not appropriate for the CAT, which generally deals with questions of medical opinion and infection control. The ROAT is expected to begin meeting very soon and on a regular basis. Both committees will work cooperatively to respond to questions related to COVID and Idlewild activities.

Mary Tayloe presented the [2021/2022 Operating budget](#) to the Session. Details can be found by watching the Town Hall(s) that are scheduled for March 21 and 22. This budget was approved by the Session at the meeting with no amendments.

Commissioners were elected to participate in a special called meeting of the Mid-South Presbytery on March 23. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the separation of Pinecrest Camp from the Mid-South Presbytery with the opportunity for the camp to function as an independent not-for-profit entity. Charles Key, Michael Peeler, Melissa Grimes, and Steve Valentine were elected to serve as commissioners.

The March 17 meeting marked the last Idlewild Session meeting for Rev. Anne Apple. The Session spent time voicing stories and words of appreciation for Anne (and her family), commenting on her unique and valuable gifts that she has shared with our congregation and our community through the years. Anne acknowledged these statements graciously and responded in prayer.

The meeting was adjourned shortly thereafter.

