



Session Update August 18, 2021

The Session meeting of August 18, 2021 was moderated and opened in prayer by Rev. Powers. The agenda was reviewed and approved.

New members were introduced and received into membership:

Dave Howe is a long-time Presbyterian who has been active at Evergreen and Balmoral Pres churches (among others) and has served as a deacon, elder, and trustee as a member of these churches. He met his wife, Amy, when they were students at Southwestern (Rhodes). Amy is a retired minister (PCUSA) and accompanies her family in worship and church life at Idlewild. Their adult children, Farley and Ed Ezekiel are current members, and son Davis is joining with them.

Davis Howe is the adult son of Dave and Amy, and brother to Farley and grew up at Evergreen Presbyterian Church, but briefly attended BASIC at Idlewild as a high school student. He most recently served as a young adult volunteer at his church home in New Orleans. Davis has enjoyed getting to know (or get reacquainted with) his Idlewild church family at Young Adult events and Theology on Tap.



Elder Scott Thomas offered his faith statement update to those assembled. Elders were divided into their prayer groups to share and reflect on the spiritual practice of prayer, with a focus on pruning and blossoming as described in the sermon from August 15.

The Session heard a report from both pastors. Highlights include Rev. Powers has agreed to chair a committee with UKirk to explore the possibility of expanding that ministry to full time. He will be away from Idlewild for the next 2 weeks for professional conference followed by vacation. Rev. Gale asks for prayers for the Christian Formation and Outreach Committees considering the uptick in COVID cases in our area; these committees have worked hard to develop programs to meet the needs of our members and community during this time of continued uncertainty. Session was pleased to hear that Melenni Harris has moved home after an extended stay in the hospital. Brenda Harris will be out of the office for the rest of August to support Melenni's transition home.

Treasurer Mary Tayloe provided the [financial report](#) to Session. Most significantly, the church's income is down by almost \$100K for the year, which is concerning. The Budget and Finance committee will send a reminder to members about their pledge commitments in an upcoming email. The focus currently is on increasing revenue, and not on tightening spending.



Gib Wilson provided a scheduled report from the Trustees at this meeting. Since the last report, the Trustees awarded 8 scholarships to students, ranging from \$500 to \$2000 from the Jones Scholarship as outlined by the scholarship terms. Gib also briefly reviewed the status of the endowment fund, which is designed to support Outreach and House and Properties. Thanks to recent significant gifts and a good investment year, the amount disbursed for 2021 was higher than previous years. Gifts to the endowment can be made at any time, though most are received as legacy gifts.

The Session approved the [consent agenda](#) which included requests for use of facilities, upcoming baptisms and weddings, and a designated offering for the UKirk Ministry on August 29.

In reports from other committees, the Session heard that the staff is beginning to reassign administrative responsibilities after Mimi's retirement. Changes will be solidified over the coming weeks. An update from House and Properties included a report on the Chapel renovations, plans for HVAC repairs, and repositioning the parking lot dumpster and associated lighting.

The Session got a preview of the upcoming Stewardship and Generosity season. The theme for this year is "Committing Faithfully, Sowing Bountifully". This season will kick off on September 26 and a sermon series on "Forever Pieces" is planned. The deadline for pledge commitments will be November 30.

Jeremy Sykes provided a report from the Special Committee on Discerning Organizational Growth. The group's first initiative is to review and shift the calendar of the terms of service of the installed officers to a term that begins/ends on Pentecost annually. This schedule change required a change in the church's bylaws, which was approved by Session at this meeting. The committee will continue working towards its stated purpose: to evaluate the current structure, size, and needs of lay leadership within Idlewild.

The Session heard a brief report from Rev. Powers from the questionnaire responses received after his series of introductory meetings this Spring and Summer. David will share his full conclusions and an outline of a vision for the next 12-18 months with the Session and the congregation soon. All stated business being addressed, a motion was heard to adjourn the meeting and the Session closed in prayer.