



The Session met in person for the last meeting of the year on December 15, 2021. To celebrate the event and the coming Christmas season, the meeting began with a meal together. Elders and others present were then led in worship and communion by Rev. Powers and transitioned to the scheduled business of the evening.

David gave a brief pastor's report, acknowledging both the coming Christmas celebrations and the approaching departure date of Jenni Brooks. Rev. Powers described a proposed new volunteer role on Sunday mornings; this person would act as a coordinator for incoming questions or messages and find the right person to respond. Elders should notify David or Jenni with potential candidates for this role. David also reported that the Nominations committee will share a "Minute for Ministry" this week to announce the newly revised vision for the Diaconate and to call for nominations from the congregation.

Sara Dorrien-Christians reported that More than a Meal has returned to an in-person meal, however the numbers are much lower than pre-pandemic. It remains to be seen if word-of-mouth will encourage participants to return as in the past or if any changes may be appropriate for the future.

Mary Tayloe provided a [treasurer's report](#) which acknowledges a slight decrease in pledged income for the month but also reports over \$145K of pledges pre-paid for 2022, which are not yet showing on the balance sheet. The shortage of pledged income was offset by unpledged offerings. Overall, the balance is above what was anticipated for the year. Regarding the More Idlewild campaign balance, there is about \$1.5M shortfall, which has remained steady for a while. The subcommittee is planning to meet soon and determine a plan forward.

The Session next voted on the [consent agenda](#), which passed unanimously.

Ben Clark gave a report from the Stewardship Committee and started by praising and thanking the committee members. At this time, just over \$2M in pledges have been committed. The committee believes that a commitment will still come in, so the pledge season has not yet officially been closed.

The Personnel committee reported on the plan to recruit for a new director of Operations and Communications. A new administrative assistant has been hired; Caitlin Bertsch will be assigned to support the Christian Formation Unit. The APNC has almost completed the MIF (Ministry Information Form) and expects to submit this early in January. Bill Gibbons noted the large hole that Jenni's departure leaves for us and expressed appreciation for her willingness to take on so many responsibilities, particularly during the pandemic months. David reminded Session that recruiting and training a quality staff takes time and energy, and patience is needed in this process.



The Personnel committee treated the staff to lunch this week, and they look forward to a Christmas party to be hosted by Judy Johnson later this week.

The Clerk gave a report on the special committee to review and update the membership roll. This review is required by the Book of Order to be completed annually. This committee of 3 has met once in December and developed an outline for future discussions. This work will establish an important baseline to use for programming and commitments going forward.

The Committee on Discerning Organizational Growth (DOG) formally brought 2 amendments to the bylaws to the Session after circulating the same by email 7 days prior. These changes will adjust the membership of the Nominations committee to require only 2 ruling elders (down from 3) and will refocus the Vision Council mission on long-range planning as well as redefine its membership. These bylaws were both passed unanimously and are needed in order to follow through with the recommendations brought by the DOG to Session in November. These changes will be effective with the new officer class.

The DOG also requested Session to form a special committee to update the governance manual so that it will align with the recent bylaw changes as well as to bring it up to date. This committee and its membership were simultaneously approved, to consist of Charles Key, Julie Markham, and Jason Hood.

In new business, Rev. Dorrien-Christians brought a [request to session](#) to consider the creation of a special committee on anti-racism. This need was identified when the Looking Inward, Moving Forward group completed its study, and this committee's charge would be to discern, name, and propose an anti-racist vision and policy for Idlewild, especially taking in consideration the 2021 anti-racism statement passed by the Presbytery of the Midsouth. The committee was approved, and its membership was tentatively determined and will be finalized soon.

The Session next discussed the opportunity to return to in-person meetings. After considerable discussion the Session voted to meet in person every other month, with the actual schedule yet to be determined.

After the stated business was complete, Session was led in the ritual of laying of hands and prayers for Jenni Brooks and for the officers who are ending their term this December 31.

Concerns of the congregation were shared, and these were brought in prayer which adjourned the meeting.