

Session Notes

8 December 2020

Richmond Presbyterian Church

Deep with God, Wide with the World

Session wanted to meet again before the heart of the Advent/Christmas season, as our previous gathering was mid-November and not end of November as usual. Our next meeting is a joint one with the Board January 11 to finalise a proposed budget for the Annual Congregational Meeting (ACM), with our regular meeting planned for January 26.

We discussed a few budget-related items which came back to Session after our preliminary joint meeting last month. It is a challenge to balance the ministries we'd like to pursue against the tough financial situation resulting from pandemic restrictions. If you are one who makes a special offering in this season, there are still many ways for you to do this: e-transfer, Canada Helps, or old-fashioned mailing a cheque. The final proposed 2021 budget will be presented to the congregation at the ACM for your review and approval.

Session received reports on initial reviews for both the Director of Children and Youth Ministry and Music Director positions. We are very happy with both Anne-Marie Ellithorpe (DCY) and Jannie Burdeti (MD) in their positions, and along with Maureen Natusch, who is our Church Administrative Assistant who reports through the Board of Managers, we can report that RPC is very blessed to have added all three new employees during 2020 and look forward to our future with their gifts and presence.

The ACM will be after worship on Feb 21, via Zoom. We know this medium presents difficulties to some, but there is really no viable alternative as we do not expect restrictions on gatherings to be eased sufficiently by that date. We want everyone to be able to take part in that discussion, particularly in these stressed times. Elders will be reaching out to their districts to provide any help you may need to participate. Did you know, you don't even need a computer to Zoom, you can call into the meeting on your telephone? Reports and budgets

will be circulated in good time before the meeting to allow you to prepare any questions or comments. The meeting itself will be conducted as concisely as possible, while still being thorough and open.



We are very happy to confirm that our Part-time Program Planners James Lolong and Jacqueline Cleland have agreed to continue their ministry for 25 weeks into 2021.

Working under the guidance of Anne-Marie Ellithorpe, Director of Children & Youth Ministries, they have been able to connect with our young families even in this time of mostly virtual fellowship. Their work is not always visible to the greater congregation. Besides being involved in regular Zoom activities with kids, Jacqueline has developed curriculum for our 3-year high-school Foundational, Missional, and Vocational course. And people of every age look forward to James's imaginative and engaging Time with Young Christian videos during Sunday worship.

An RPC tradition is supporting the Benevolent Fund via donations after Communion services. Some of you are continuing this even though it's not as simple as dropping your gift into an offering plate at the back of the sanctuary. Session is very grateful to have these funds to help those in the congregation or community who are facing financial deprivation. If you know of anyone (including yourself) who is struggling to put food on the table or provide one small present for a child, please contact your elder, Young Tae, or Victor, in confidence.

Advent 2020 may not offer as much hope or joy as usual. Christmas 2020 may not be the merriest ever. Yet, of any year, this is one where, despite lockdowns and restrictions, Christians can particularly understand and celebrate God's entry into the world. We pray that you may find and treasure moments of grace in your own lives, and continue to be light in a shadowed world.



*Faithfully,
Graeme Stager
Clerk of Session*