

Eastminster Eagle

Volume 38, Issue 9

September, 2021

SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

1 Corinthians 12: 14 encourages us to remember that “Indeed the body does not consist of one member but of many.”

A real-life question facing Christians, Presbyterians, Eastminster is this: What do we do when the many bodies are trending toward one body? In a word, we pray. We pray that even as numbers may be declining, we continue celebrating the oneness of our spirits connecting to our one God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. And in THAT ONENESS, we seek spiritual discernment.

PRAY
On it
PRAY
Over it
PRAY
Through it

As people of reformed faith, we believe spiritual discernment to be a gift of the Holy Spirit who brings about the awareness of God’s presence in our daily living and nudges us always to be attentive to God’s presence. An article from *Guidelines for Communal Discernment* offers this understanding of discerning as a means to 1) recognize and acknowledge what God is doing and what God desires; 2) see a situation from God’s perspective; 3) listen to the Holy Spirit, who prays within and among us; and 4) hear and obey God’s voice.

As Christians holding fast to our reformed and always reforming faith, spiritual discernment is a seeking of God’s never-changing Word in an ever-changing world. We hold fast to the belief that God alone is the Lord of the conscience and each of us is blessed to share in this one-to-one relationship with our Triune God.

Yet to this belief, we add our spiritual maturity and responsibility in seeking communal spiritual discernment. As individuals, we come to together as one community of faith in Jesus as Lord. Communal spiritual discernment asks that, as a united group, we follow the leading of the Spirit. That includes prayer and giving up the notion of control. It includes a daily reflection on Scripture and a careful listening to one another. All of the disciplines move us toward listening for and to God’s voice, and then being God’s voice to the world in what we say and do.

All this listening for and listening to does not short-circuit the hard work of discernment that falls to us humans. As John’s gospel reveals to us that even as “the Spirit blows where the Spirit blows,” we humans are still called to give attention to spiritual practices that enable us to be more receptive and attentive to God, as together we seek to discern and live the one mind of Jesus. Some of those practices include: 1) praying; 2) keeping silence to hear God’s Spirit speak; 3) reading scripture; 4) listening to one another; and 5) respecting the voices that seek to share their values, concerns, hopes, and fears, not just positions attached to intuition, experience, tradition, or institutions. Communal spiritual discernment is about seeking out, even yearning for, a common direction through cooperation and collaboration.

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Spiritual discernment is, however, more than a group agreement. The apostle Paul in Acts 15: 28 reminds us that spiritual discernment is about recognizing when the decisions we make “seem good to the Holy Spirit and to us.” As witnessed through history, God’s presence among us sometimes comes in the gift of a silence that settles upon a group or a celebration of joy when a sense of peace and rightness settle upon all.

The author of *Guidelines for Communal Discernment* offers this: When the deepest desires of persons are aligned with God’s deepest desires, life is marked by loving more freely, becoming dedicated to a larger goodness, and experiencing healing and reconciliation with God, oneself, and one another. Because we are regularly called upon to work together as one body in a variety of groupings and contexts throughout the Church, it is our sacred duty to build and to nurture the relationships that will allow us to function as a whole. It is the Holy Spirit that makes such an enterprise possible, even in the face of potentially divisive issues.

Eastminster has entered a season of spiritual discernment. And yes, God’s call to serve as part of that process through the Long-Range Planning Committee has been answered by Vicki Cook, Elizabeth Kelleher, Daniel Pappas, Tom Pappas, Vicki Thiebaud, Bruce Turner and Sean Turner. For that, we say, “Thank you, God!” They are individuals. They are part of a planning committee. They are part of the larger body of Christ called Eastminster. They are part of God’s family, and brothers and sister in Christ. And just as their discerning prayers and holy work are necessary for following the leading of God’s Spirit into the future, so too are yours—members, family, friends, and guests of Christ’s body, the church at 6550 Samuell Blvd.

There will be a time when this Committee will actively seek the hopes and dreams from all of you. In the meantime, as they do their ministry, they pray for you. With thanksgiving, pray for them.

For all who love the Lord, remember this: In all things God works good!

Pastor Sherry

OUTREACH



COMMITTEE

Relief for Haiti

Eastminster has long supported the work of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA). Most recently PDA has responded to people in the US when hurricanes, wildfire, tornados and flooding have inflicted destruction. Now, a neighbor needs our help.

PDA is currently responding to the devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck Haiti the morning of August 14, 2021 that has resulted in the loss of more than 1,200 lives. Working closely with Presbyterian World Mission, our traditional partners on the ground and ACT Alliance, PDA is helping provide emergency needs such as WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), emergency power generators, shelter, food, first aid and more. With these projects in place, PDA remains committed to the long-term recovery.

EPC is helping support Haiti though our Outreach Committee’s donation of \$100 to PDA’s Haiti fund. If you would like to know more about this work, more information can be found by using this link (<https://pda.pcusa.org>) and clicking the “HAITI” button at the middle of the page. You may find yourself moved to help in your individual way.



In the past on vacation trips, we had to have a map and sometimes (as we did in hiking) carry a compass with us to make sure we were going in the right direction and on the right road to our destination. Same applied for the right road home. Now we have navigation maps on screen in our cars and the maps have built-in compasses so for the most part we can stay in the right direction and the right roads with the help of the GPS satellites.

We are continuing some direction changes that have roots when we were forced by Covid to come up with ways to continue to Worship, learn, and fellowship during that time. A part of those direction changes continues with a long range planning committee and an 8-week study by the Searchers Class looking into societal trends, Presbyterian challenges and Eastminster's future, and the issues that are facing each of us as Christians and Eastminster as a church community. In short, we are looking for direction in what has always been true: that the "times they are changing." As children of God, we need not fear what directions God may lead us especially if we take seriously God's guidance to us. We find that guidance by looking at all the facts, discussing their meaning, assessing our strengths and weaknesses, communing with God and reading The Word. God will help us find that road that we should take.

On September 12, the Gospel Lesson is Mark 8:27-38 which concludes with Jesus's invitation to take up our crosses and follow him. The choir will sing an anthem "The Road Home" by Stephen Paulus. It reminds

us that sometimes we get on the wrong road and we eventually know it and we seek the right road.

*Tell me, where is the road
I can call my own
That I left, that I lost
So long ago?
All these years I have wandered
Oh, when will I know
There's a way, there's a road
That will lead me home*

Many times, in our lives we get on the wrong path and we know it and we wish to get back "home."

*After wind, after rain
When the dark is done
As I wake from a dream
In the gold of day
Through the air there's a calling
From far away
There's a voice I can hear
That will lead me home.*

Yet God is always calling us as a church and as individuals. We just have to listen to that call, and God will lead each of us and our congregation now and in the future and ultimately lead us to our eternal home.

*Rise up, follow me
Come away, is the call
With the love in your heart
As the only song
There is no such beauty
As where you belong
Rise up, follow me
I will lead you home.*

Amen!



Are We Finished Yet?

House & Property We are almost finished with the remodeling of God's house since the winter freeze in February. What we lack is the repair to the pews in the chapel. We attempted to install them about two weeks ago, but the slight damage that was noticed in February has now grown to large cracks in the middle footings of the 10 pews. On August 9th we submitted a supplement to Travelers Insurance for the repair of the pews. The cost estimate to repair the pews provided by Cousins Remodeling is \$4,125. We anticipate that this will be fully covered by insurance.

The session approved the contract on August 15, 2021 with Maximum Construction to replace the entire roof. The new roof is covered by insurance, so the cost to the church is our deductible of \$2,500. The cost estimate from Maximum Construction is \$100,910.72. The estimated time to complete the construction is 4-5 days with an anticipated start time is mid-September.

I want to thank Jo Byrd and Bruce Turner for their time and effort that they contributed to doing the reference checks for the three roofing contractors that we reviewed. Over the past few months, Bruce and Jim Lee helped move our furniture and other items from room to room so the individual rooms could be completed by Cousins Remodeling. Bruce also helped assist me with managing the remodel process when I was out of town or just needed a break. Thank you, Bruce!!! Jim Lee also painted several of the sconce lights, lamp posts, hand rails and signs around the property. Thank you, Jim. Check it out if you have not noticed.

Here are some other things have been repaired along the way:

- ◆ Cloister sconce lights are now working
- ◆ 3 Post Lights in front of the sanctuary are now working

- ◆ Sign in front of the sanctuary is now working
- ◆ Replaced three flood lights for the sanctuary
- ◆ Installed new LED lights in the church office, classroom and toddler room
- ◆ Replaced all chandelier lights bulbs with LED bulbs for the entire property
- ◆ Repaired the north facing clock in the tower
- ◆ Replaced #13 condensation A/C unit
- ◆ Installed condensation line for sanctuary A/C units
- ◆ Replaced water valve in bathroom across from chapel
- ◆ Installed water shutoff valve for property
- ◆ Replaced three thermostats
- ◆ Repaired squirrel damage to soffit and wood trim
- ◆ Repaired roof leaks above church office and fellowship hall
- ◆ Installed mulch to front beds of church
- ◆ Repaired sprinkler system
- ◆ Repaired condensation drain in outside maintenance closet
- ◆ Repaired drain line for the sanctuary bathroom
- ◆ Cleaned out gutters in courtyard area

Calling all key holders - If you have a key to the church, please return it to Bruce Turner, Chandra Anderson or

Blair Garrett. We need to make a complete list of who has a key to the property and make sure you have the proper information to enter the church so an alarm will not occur. We have had several false alarms over the past few months in which the police were called to the property. The church is



now being charged \$50 for every false alarm that occurs and it will

escalate to \$75 to \$100 per event. This wastes money and the time of the police officers. If you need a key, one will be issued to you along with an appropriate login number. You will also be given the EPC password to communicate with the security monitoring service (DFW Security) to avoid the dispatching of the police. We appreciate your help with this concern to the church.

Blessings,

Blair Garrett, Chairman
House & Property Committee
214-402-3153
blair@jbgarrettengineering.com

I am so happy to have been welcomed into this wonderful, warm congregation. It is obvious to me how much you have missed having a youth program in this church, and I'm glad to be here with you as we rediscover youth ministry together.

I grew up in a congregation with a small but active youth group. There were times when I was one of three kids in Sunday School or the only one to go to church camp. And even though I was in a smaller group, I never thought my experiences were lacking because of it. My youth leaders (all volunteers from the congregation) were committed to providing a ministry for every one of us, even if only one of us showed up. Their ministry was not dependent on how many youth were at church on Sunday nights. If there was even one youth present, there was ministry to be done.

This ministry cannot survive without support from you, the congregation! Before we can begin to cultivate a space for our young disciples, we must prove ourselves disciples, too. There are so many ways to volunteer with the youth, from cooking meals to teaching Sunday School to chaperoning youth trips to just being another adult in the room! If you have interest in working with the youth in any capacity, please fill out the information forms on the Youth page of the church website. Completed forms should be emailed to me at audreycwebb1@gmail.com or printed and submitted to my mailbox in the church office. All adults who wish to interact with youth must complete a criminal background check (which I will conduct with information on the forms you submit).

To youth and volunteers alike, I encourage you to fill out these questionnaires. The youth questionnaires will help me build our ministry around their passions, and the volunteer questionnaires will let me know how volunteers wish to be present in this ministry. Open your phone's



Youth

camera, and point the camera at the QR code for the form you wish to access.



Volunteers

I look forward to serving with you! Audrey

OUTREACH



COMMITTEE

What is OSCG?

You've heard of the good work done at the Pleasant Grove Food Pantry (PGFP). Members of EPC work faithfully and your donations help provide people with food. Groceries are provided weekly to those in need in cooperation with the



North Texas Food Bank; But, did you know that fresh

produce is provided to PGFP by a neighbor organization in Pleasant Grove?

Our Saviour Community Garden (OSCG) is a ministry of Our Saviour Episcopal Church, a TEC Jubilee Ministry, and a project of Gardeners in Community Development, The GICD Center for Growing People. The garden began growing in 2003.

Your Outreach Committee recently voted to provide a one-time donation for 2021 to OSCG. The

Garden's produce and your donation are beneficial in creating healthy, fresh foods for



the clients of PGFP. This summer the garden produced tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, cucumber, cucuzza, radish,

herbs, okra (and more okra), beans and blackberries.

You may be interested in knowing more about their work. On their Facebook page you can see the bounty they've harvested this summer and the plans they have for the fall. But, best of all you can see the faces of the volunteers who have planted and picked the bounty of God's gifts.



<https://www.facebook.com/Our-Saviour-Community-Gardens-145994625415780>

The volunteers work on Saturdays, 8am-Noon. Call or text Becky, 214-564-5801, for details on how you can serve.

*Back to School*

Thanks to incredible donors, PCHAS kids got backpacks filled with the supplies and are ready for class to start.

Answers

Answers to prayers come in various ways, sometimes in minutes, sometimes in days.

And some take years to fully unfold the harvest of love and blessings they hold. Answers to prayers come in various forms, sometimes in sunlight, sometimes through storms.

Some blossom early, and some blossom late, but each one will flower — have faith and wait!

—Helen Inwood, *His Mysterious Ways*

Be still (and silent)

We need to find God, and he cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence. See how nature — trees, flowers, grass — grow in silence; see the stars, the moon, the sun, how they move in silence. ... The more we receive in silent prayer, the more we can give in our active life. We need silence to be able to touch souls. The essential thing is not what we say, but what God says to us and through us. All our words will be useless unless they come from within — words which do not give the light of Christ increase the darkness.

—Mother Teresa

“I play the notes as they are written, but it is God who makes the music.” —J.S. Bach

“Keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable.” —Mary Oliver

“Education is not the filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire.” —William Butler Yeats

“If you want the peace that passes understanding, you’re going to have to give up your right to understanding. It’s called trust.”

—Bill Johnson

God languishes with us

A headline from last spring teased, “There’s a Name for the Blah You’re Feeling.” The writer decided what he and others felt as the pandemic wore on wasn’t burnout or depression but languishing — decreasing vitality; feeling dispirited. People of ancient times experienced this too: “The land of Egypt and the land of Canaan languished because of the famine” (Genesis 47:13). “The wine dries up, the vine languishes, all the merry-hearted sigh” (Isaiah 24:7). But there’s more.

If you used to be “merry-hearted” but now sigh a lot, hear this: “The heavens languish together with the earth” (Isaiah 24:4). Isaiah uses “the heavens” to refer to God, who languishes with us. Like an empathizing friend, God sits with us in our struggle. Sure, we pray for rescue now: “I am languishing; O Lord, heal me” (Psalm 6:2). But when our timing isn’t God’s, we trust his promise of restoration: “[God] will wipe every tear from their eyes ... mourning and crying and pain will be no more” (Revelation 21:4).

With the psalmist we hold two truths at once: “My soul languishes for your salvation; I hope in your word” (119:81).

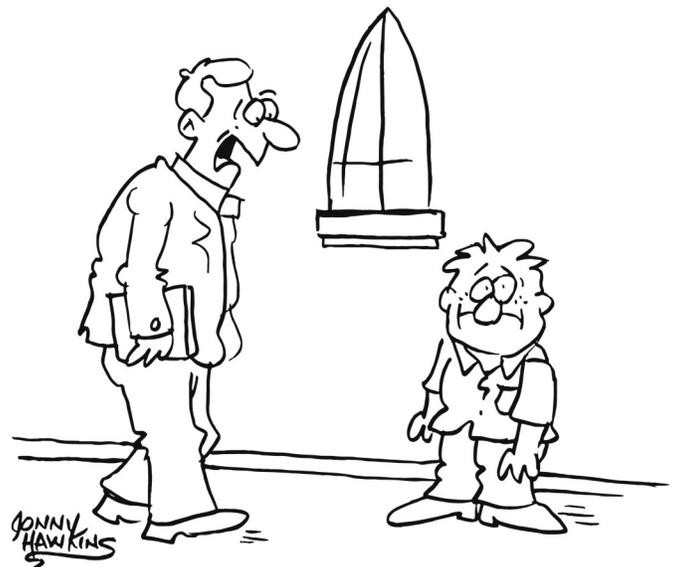
—Heidi Hyland Mann



How many times in the Old Testament do people cross a body of water on dry ground?

- A. once
- B. twice
- C. three times
- D. four times

Answer: C (See Exodus 14; Joshua 3; 2 Kings 2.)



"No, son — the love of Monday is not the root of all evil."

Scripture Readings for September

1	1 Kings 9:24–10:13	11	1 Kings 18:41–19:8	22	2 Kings 6:1–23
2	1 Kings 11:1–13	12	1 Kings 19:8–21	23	2 Kings 9:1–16
3	1 Kings 11:26–43	13	1 Kings 21:1–16	24	2 Kings 9:17–37
4	1 Kings 12:1–20	14	1 Kings 21:17–29	25	2 Kings 11:1–20a
5	1 Kings 12:21–33	15	1 Kings 22:1–28	26	2 Kings 17:1–18
6	1 Kings 13:1–10	16	1 Kings 22:29–45	27	2 Kings 17:24–41
7	1 Kings 16:23–34	17	2 Kings 1:2–17	28	2 Chron. 29:1–3; 30:1 (2–9)
8	1 Kings 17:1–24	18	2 Kings 2:1–18	10–27	
9	1 Kings 18:1–19	19	2 Kings 4:8–37	29	2 Kings 18:9–25
10	1 Kings 18:20–40	20	2 Kings 5:1–19	30	2 Kings 18:28–37
		21	2 Kings 5:19–27		

Learn from leaves

As you're enjoying the fall colors and sipping apple cider, ponder this saying: "Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go."



When leaves stop producing chlorophyll, they turn vibrant shades of yellow, orange and red.

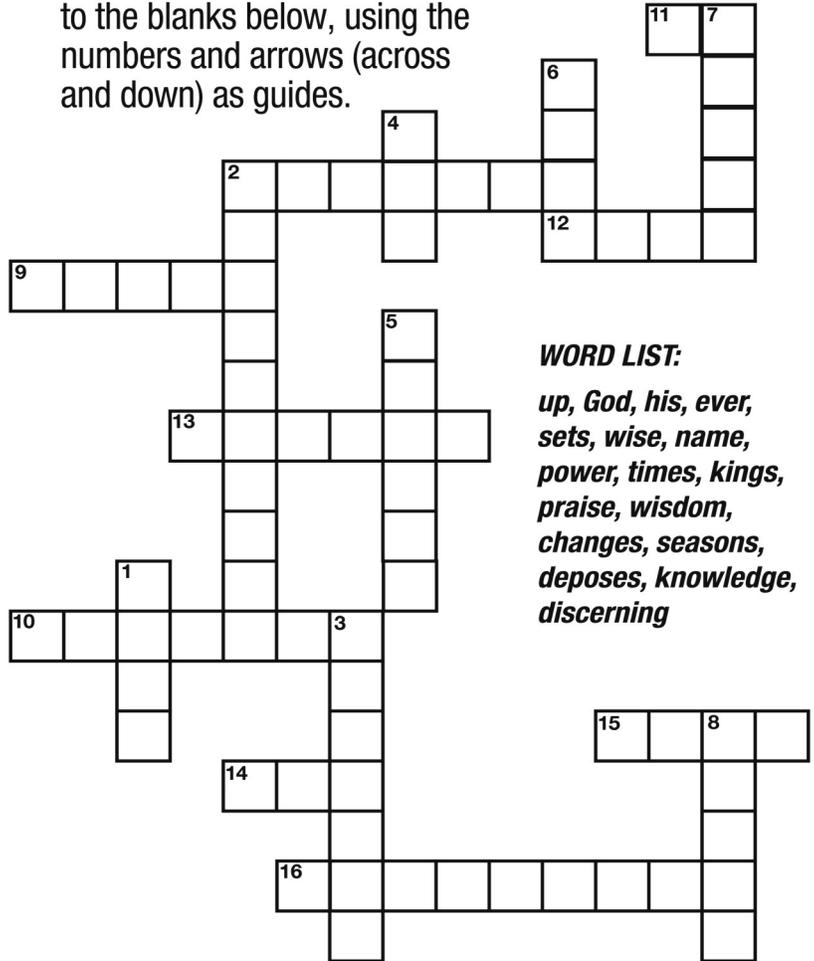
This yearly spectacle makes way for the leaves to let go and fall. It also serves as a good reminder of things we may need to drop: clutter around the home, a desire for control, commitments that no longer bring joy, personal expectations that cause added stress, a need to always be right and so on.

Just as the Israelites had to let go of their past as slaves in Egypt and Saul-turned-Paul had to abandon his persecuting ways, we, too, can let go of what weighs us down and gets in the way of God's best for our lives. Embrace fall as a season of change and see just how beautiful it is to let things go!

—Janna Firestone

Puzzle!

Fit these words from the book of Daniel into the squares. Then transfer them to the blanks below, using the numbers and arrows (across and down) as guides.



WORD LIST:

up, God, his, ever, sets, wise, name, power, times, kings, praise, wisdom, changes, seasons, deposes, knowledge, discerning

" _____ be to the _____ of _____ for _____ and _____ ;
 _____ and _____ are _____. He _____
 and _____ ; he _____ and _____
 them. He gives _____ to the _____ and _____ to
 the _____ ." DANIEL 2:20-21

Answer: "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning." Daniel 2:20-21



Pleasant Grove Food Pantry for month of July: We served face-to-face for two weeks and went back to drive through for the balance of the month.

In July, we served 428 families, 1,296 adult, 368 seniors, 2,189 children for a total of 3,853 total persons. 32,000 pounds of food was distributed. We had 66 new clients.

We continue to serve drive through due to Covid.

Promises on hand

Audrey Penn's book *The Kissing Hand* features a young raccoon who's nervous about the first day of school. Mom consoles him by kissing his palm, signifying her presence with him. The youngster can simply put his hand to his face any time he needs a kiss from her. If that isn't tear-jerking enough, as the raccoon scampers to school, he returns to kiss Mom's hand so she'll have a Kissing Hand too.

That story reminds me of Matthew 28:20, when Jesus promises to be with us always, and of Psalm 23:4, which says, "I will fear no evil; for thou art with me" (KJV). God gives us a Kissing Hand through baptism, sealing us forever with the Holy Spirit and the mark of the cross of Christ.

Just as the raccoons cherish their kissing hands, may we cherish the promise of our Father's eternal presence. Thanks be to God, whose "goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Psalm 23:6).

Eastminster Presbyterian Church Drive-Thru Blessing of the Animals Saturday, October 2, 2021, 10:00-11:00 am

Rev. Sherry Holloman will preside over the festivities and invites people of all faiths to join in celebrating all God's creatures with music, prayers and blessings. She will be joined by Rev. Polly Williams to welcome dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, hamsters and the like. All God's creatures are invited!

"Anybody who has a love of animals can come and enjoy the service, whether they have a pet or not," Pastor Sherry said. "Children can even bring their stuffed animals."

Recognizing the current Covid-19 conditions, Eastminster will be practicing social distancing and encourages you to drive-through Eastminster's west-side parking lot off Samuell Boulevard and Gallion.

This Blessing of the Animals is one way we praise God for the gift of animals great and small. Thanks be to God!



SEPTEMBER



Tammy Crouse	9/3
Shirley Dry	9/3
Jace Blair	9/7
Frank Karlen, Jr.	9/11
Bettye Clark	9/12
Harvey Beatty	9/14
Alex Pappas	9/17
Casey Uche	9/20
Michele Pappas	9/22
Alek Veloz	9/23
Linda Stamport	9/26
Charlene Pietsch	9/27
Henry Owen	9/28

SEPTEMBER



Susan & Bob Barraza	9/1
Allison & Craig Blair	9/5
Rhonda & Kevin Kraft	9/5
Jan & David Anderson	9/10
Lorna & Javed Almas	9/28
Chandra & Frank Karlen, Sr.	9/17
Shirley & Harry Karlen	9/18



**Eastminster
Session**

- Denise Bennett
- Betty Crabtree
- Kayla Dixon
- Blair Garrett
- Kathy Kreger
- Jim Lee
- Michele Pappas
- Helen Randolph
- Vicki Thiebaud
- Charlotte Turner



Pastor	Sherry Holloman
Director of Music	Fred P. Watkins
Organist	Melody S. Davis
Administrative Assistant	Chandra Anderson
Hostess/Housekeeper	Minerva Hernandez
Child Care Provider	Betty Crabtree



HIGHLIGHTS from the STATED SESSION MEETING

August 15, 2021

- ◆ Report from the Treasurer regarding false alarms and the need to make sure all key holders are accounted for and that they are adequately trained in the use of the alarm system.
- ◆ Report from Audrey Webb, CYMT Resident, regarding upcoming events and blueprints for Sunday School.
- ◆ Report from the Pastor regarding Confirmation classes and the possibility of joining with youth from First Presbyterian Garland for these.
- ◆ Adopted new “Common Sense Precautions” from the Outreach Committee regarding meals served in the Fellowship Hall (in light of changing COVID information.)
- ◆ Report from the House and Property Committee regarding renovations (which are nearing completion.)
- ◆ Report from House and Property regarding windows that will need to be replaced in the future.
- ◆ Approved awarding a contract to Maximum Construction LLC to replace the entire roof for the Eastminster Church Property which was deemed damaged by hail for a total estimated price of \$100,910.72.
- ◆ Approved the cost to replace the condensing unit #13 for a price of \$3741.00 on July 2, 2021 by Moody Air Conditioning.
- ◆ Update on progress of the Long-Range Planning Committee, which has established its initial covenant agreement and met with a representative of Project Regeneration, a program provided by Grace Presbytery.
- ◆ Update from the Re-Entry Task Force regarding the need to wear masks indoors and to continue social distancing.
- ◆ Update regarding the Nominating Committee. All members have been contacted and the initial meeting date will be determined soon.
- ◆ Affirmed the Pastor’s vacation absences from August 30 to September 3 and from September 6 to September 13.
- ◆ Approved Rev. Kenny Rigulot as Pulpit Supply for September 12.

Special dates

Labor Day, September 6

Patriot Day, September 11

National Grandparents Day, September 12

Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 15–Oct. 15

First day of autumn, September 22

