

From the Pastor's Desk



Session Meeting Summary for April-May

*Working for the Church
Through the Holy Spirit*



Covenant on Facebook:

Covenant Facebook address is:
<https://facebook.com/cpc.kannapolis/>

Join us on Sunday morning online on our Facebook page at 11:00 AM.

Here is a summary of the Call Session Meeting March 29, 2020.

Session Actions: The Session voted to have the church open from 11:00-12:30 to reach tithes.

Covenant began live streaming morning worship on its Facebook page.

Here is a summary of the Session Meeting April 6, 2020.

The Session voted to apply for financial assistance from Payroll Loan Program first and then Charlotte Presbytery. A free Zoom account was setup in the church name.

Here is a summary of a call Meeting of the Session April 19, 2020.

The Session voted to upgrade the church Zoom account. A donation was given to pay for the cost of Zoom for 6 months.

Summary of Session Meeting May 4, 2020.

Online payment will be ready by June. The church loan will be paid off at the end of May. Approval for licenses for live stream services approved. A Privacy Policy was approved to show how the church uses its information. The Federal Payroll Loan ran out of money. We applied to the Presbytery on April 26, 2020. A light has been installed on the upper parking lot by Duke Energy.

Treasurers Report: March 2020

Main Bal. \$ 4,480.73
Building Bal. \$ 5,680.86

April 2020

Main Bal. \$5,351.85
Building Bal. \$5,915.61

Offerings for March 22-May 3, 2020.

March 22 \$1,349.00
March 29 \$1,306.00

April 5 \$ 1,471.00
April 12 \$1,218.00
April 19 \$2,851.75
April 26 \$ 1,932.00

May 3 \$2,806.00

Detailed offering information will be put in the bulletin when we return to church and mailed to the others members.

Plans for Reopening the Church:

The Session is working on safeguards for reopening the church. The Session wants to make sure the church is as safe as possible when we do. All areas of the church will be cleaned before the church reopens.

Benefit of Online

Services: Since we have been doing services online several things have happened. (1) We are reaching all our young adults and they have reconnected with the church. (2) We have a new way for our sick and shut-in to be apart, (3) We are reaching on average each week 236 people.

FAITH

*is not believing that God can
it is knowing that He will.*

Meeting and Classes on

Zoom:

With the upgraded church Zoom account we have no time limit. So, the following meeting and classes are on Zoom.

1. Wednesday Bible Study at 6:30 PM
2. Adult Sunday School Class 10 AM Sunday
3. Session Meeting
4. Any meeting can be setup for any group that needs to meet. Please contact Rev. Hill.

Information Requested:

We are asking all members to give us their email address so we can send out messages concerning the church. We are finishing set up member information for Servant Keeper. This will allow us to send out mass emails to the congregation. Please give your information to **The Clerk of Session Lisa Haynie or the Assistant Clerk of Session Anita Blakeney.**

Special Note:

I want all of the members to know that the Session and the Pastor are working hard in this unusual time to keep the church finances stable and the people connect to God. Each member will check on by the Elders and Deacons.

Pastor's Vision and Working Outline for the next 18 months:

(Please see the attached pages.)

Special Action Taken by the Session in regard to Covid-19:

The Covid-19 Pandemic has put the rest of 2020 in a very fluid and unstable situation. Due to Covid-19 over the next few months the Session and Pastor will have to make decisions that will affect the rest of 2020 in the life of the church. There is no church bylaw or Book of Order section that specifically addresses this. During our Session meeting on May 4, 2020 the Session approved the following actions;

- (1) To suspend church election of officers for 2020 and the current officers (Elders, Deacons, Trustees, and Corporation) serve until 2021.
- (2) Add an amendment to the church bylaws that the Session has the authority to have Emergency Action Powers in cases such as natural disasters, a pandemic, or any type of emergency. Keeping the congregation informed of the decisions being made.

This is a very unique situation, but for us to deal with the current situation I would like ask for your understand and support as we go through this crisis together.

The Book of Order section G3.0201 show that the Session has responsibility for the mission and government of the congregation. And for this reason and the current crisis the Session based it decision on this fact.

Leading by Example:

This action taken by the Session was needed due to the Covid-19 crisis. I am asking that the members of Covenant put your faith and trust in the leadership of the church at this time. The Pastor and the Session will do their best to make decisions that are needed to keep the church financial stable, ensure the health and welfare of the congregation and keep the members connected to God and informed about what we are doing. Everything that the Pastor and the Session do will continue to be guided by the Word of God and the Holy Spirit as we guide the church through this unusual time.

Letter to the Congregation:

(Please see the attached page.)

On Tuesday October 9, 2018 Ms. Cannon from the Committee on Ministry met with the Session for our tri-annual visit and wanted to know how the Elders on the Session saw the needs and accomplishments of Covenant at this time. Here is a summary of the responses to the questions below.

1. What are the best things about your Church?

The things best about Covenant are the people who have a determined spirit. Spirit filled church and people guided by the Holy Spirit. A sense of respect and love for one another. A small church with a big heart. Having an established church structure (Bylaws and Financial procedures) for the church and its members to work from.

2. What is the major challenges for your church?

Lack of a willingness to serve on committees or in a position. Slow membership growth. Young Adults being active in the church and committed through service and attendance. Accepting the new system from which the working from now. Evangelism and outreach to bring new people in. Programs for youth and members from 35 to 50. Also Sunday school for youth and their parents.

Most of the answers for this question are issues all churches are facing and addressing.

3. What programs are working well?

The Food Bank, Music Ministry Youth and Children Ministry, Bible Study, Adult and Young Adult Sunday School and Vacation Bible School.

4. What programs need improvement?

Usher Board, Children Ministry, Young Adult Bible Study, Sunday School (children-youth), commitment and attendance of membership, Sunday School and Leadership workshops to prepare people for leadership and attendance of workshops. Communicating information to community, Youth and Young Adult programs.

5. What Programs need to be Eliminated?

None

6. Describe the average member of your church?

Called to serve, Friendly, Committed, concerned about future and slow to commit to the new vision and direction of the church of the 21st century. Community ordained and concern for the welfare of FisherTown / Princeton Park.

7. How are your commissioners to Presbytery chosen?

Voluntary basis

8. What can Presbytery do for your church?

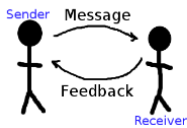
Communication from Presbytery or resources and programs. Teaching resources and programs for Church officers.

These responses reflect the thoughts and concerns about Covenant and looks at where we are and needs for the future. We see our strong points and areas that need work. It shows that like all churches we are a work in progress, but we are a strong and stable church with a strong spiritual base working toward growth in members and ministry. We also need to strengthen and continue to be the spiritual center for the FisherTown community.



“Commucation is what makes a strong team.”

Brian McClennan



The Building Program Plan

The Session has decided the following:

- (1) To raise money to pay for all projects
- (2) No Loan over 10,000.00 will be taken out.
- (3) The projects will be spread out to not put a financial strain on the church.

The projects that are to come;

- (1) Recovering pews and new carpet
- (2) New lighting in sanctuary
- (3) Painting the church.

Future Workshops:

The following work - shops will be held for all church officers and those who wish to become a church officer or learn more about the church.

Book of order and Elders Workshop to be held in May date to be set, **Deacon and Trustee Workshop** to be held in June date to be set, **New Member Workshop** to be held in July date to be set and **Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership Workshop** to be held in August date to be set.

Recovering Pews:

Beginning March 26th we will begin selection of color for pews. We should choose from the colors in our stain glass windows which are red, blue, green, gold, and purple.

The samples are on the small table in the front of the sanctuary. They will be out for 2 weeks and them we will see what the choices were and narrow down to a final choice.

Something To Ponder

Commitment:

Are you committed to your church with your;

1. Service
2. Money
3. Talents

In order for the church to grow we have to give God and the church 100% commitment and service.

If the answer is no what are you going to do? This is the time of lent and your chance to rededicate your life to God.

LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION FROM THE PASTOR

We closed the doors of Covenant on March 15, 2020. We hope to have the doors of the church open in June. As we reopen the church, we want to be safe and continue our strong spirit-filled worship services. I want to give a special thank you to all of members for your faithful tithing. You have received the weekly offering totals and we can see that through your faithful giving we are able to maintain a stable financial base and weather this crisis through our faith in Jesus. I also want to thank all of those who have joined us online and have sent us a donation.

I want to thank the Session for their leadership to be proactive in how the church responds to this crisis. The Session is leading the church through an unusual crisis and are having to work outside the box. The Session will continue to see how the Ministry and Mission of the church will need to change and move to help the church transform for the 21st century.

We see that through this crisis Covenant has had to transform its outreach ministry by live streaming worship services. We are reaching more people and young adults through this new ministry. We will also have the ability for online donations soon. We also have added a new Christian Education resource online called Sermon 4 Kids Plus where we can use videos, get worksheets and ideas for teachers and children sermons. I also want to thank our Christian Education chair Evelyn Russell for her leadership in getting Sunday School moved to Zoom.

I also have a very special thank you to those who volunteered to be my support team as we have begun live streaming and receiving money at the church during this crisis. They have been here faithfully each week supporting the church and your Pastor. They are Clerk of Session Lisa Haynie, Treasurer Mike Grier, Financial Secretary Janice Haynie, and Deacon Melvin Haynie. I also have to give a personal thank you to my wife and mother for their support weekly at the church during this time. I also need to give special thanks to our Minister of Music Milton Thompson, Anita Blakeney, and Janice Haynie for providing music.

We need to realize that Covenant will endure through this crisis as long as are we to faithful support each other and the church through the love of God. We also need to realize that Covenant has began to move to the next level of our ministry and that live streaming our services will continue to be part of our ministry and will continue to grow.

I want to give my personal thanks to God and the Holy Spirit for enabling me to be the strong, spirit-filled, and faithful shepherd to lead God's people while we are in this unknown wilderness. Trusting that God will enable me to lead the church to its new vision and new mission and allow me to be a new strong voice to lead people to God's Word.

We as a church and community, need to pray a special prayer of thanks each day for Jesus walking with us during this time and blessing us to continue to spread God's Word and be a light of hope in these strange and hard times. This crisis has tested and strengthened our faith and caused us to see the important of servicing God and our community.

Your Loving Pastor

Rev. Herbert G. Hill Sr.

THE POST COVID-19 PASTOR'S OUTLINE FOR THE CHURCH

RATIONAL:

This is an outline of the changes the church will have to make due to Covid-19. These changes will affect how the church carries out worship, ministry and mission. The one big change is that I have said we need to be “**a church without walls.**” Today that is a reality and will not change. We are witnessing and preaching to a new and larger community.

Pastor's Vision

This outline is a working vision for the next 18 months which is the rest of 2020 thru 2021. The reason for this time frame is that I believe it will take this long for our government to get Covid-19 under control with a vaccine. And until that time, we will still be in a fluid situation of some uncertainty and the church will have to make changes until we establish our new normal for the church and the community.

These are the areas that will be affected by Covid-19 and as pastor I will be proactive in addressing these needs and areas of concern.

1. Social Trends

Be sensitive to the how people attitudes, and behaviors change and how the church can address those needs through the Word of God.

2. New Neighbor Lines

Opening the doors of the church to people in the neighborhood who may not have come to the church. A new attitude of openness and welcoming spirit. We may be moving beyond being a family church which are our roots, to becoming a community church representing all who are part of our local and larger community.

3. Recovery of Lost Relationships

We have reconnected, with members, family, and friends through the internet. We will be opening the doors to invite people to accept God and membership through online service. We will not just be building our local church ministry, but building of God's kingdom one believer at a time. Live streaming has increased our attendance from 40 to 50 people to an average of 236 people. God's word is reaching a large audience.

4. Break through Generational Differences

Live streaming services have broken down the misunderstanding about our young adults and church attendance. We are living a new day and time and through live streaming they are connected back to the church no matter where they are. Now we can see how the older and younger generation can help each other as we transition in to the new church, both have something to offer.

5. Social Realities and challenges

The church needs to address the issues with housing, food, education, jobs, and community safety. This means addressing racial tension and issues of all people and breaking down any remaining social barriers that divide us.

6. Relational and Mental Health Issues

Provide support and resources to address these issues

7. Ministry Adjustments:

Out reach will be vital for the church

Focus on two or three key missions

Live streaming a key and essential part of morning worship. All types of service will be on line from Communion, Baptism, funerals, concerts etc.

Bible Study, Sunday School, and meeting will be on Zoom.

We will have to ease back into large gathering and church meals. Large services can be split between the sanctuary and the fellowship hall with social distancing and service view on the tv.

8. Additional Changes

We are setting up and testing our online payment service on the church's web page and through an app you can put on your smartphone. We plan for it to be active in June.

We will be looking at adding a membership category **Affiliate Member** which is a person who lives in another city or state and wants to be a member of the church. They will be considered an active member. They will not be able to vote at a congregation meeting or be elected as an officer in the church. By live streaming the worship services we may get some members this way.