

2021 ANNUAL MEETING

OF

KNOX PRESBYTERY



COMMUNION OF REFORMED  
EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

MINUTES

Monroe, LA  
October 26-27, 2021

**Tuesday, October 26, 2021**

**Preliminaries**

*The 2021 annual meeting of Knox Presbytery was called to order at 9:02 am by Presiding Minister ProTem (“PM”) Pastor Kenton Spratt.*

- An invocation was offered by Pastor Stuart Bryan.
- Singing was led by Pastor Douglas Wilson.
- An exhortation was delivered by Pastor Jonah Barnes.
- Roll was called by PM Spratt and a quorum was established at 9:18 am.

**Roll Call**

- Christ Church (Missoula, MT); Pastor Flynn Ayers present.
- Christ Church (Moscow, ID); Pastor Douglas Wilson and Pastor Toby Sumpter present.
- Christ Covenant Church (Enterprise, OR); Pastor Terry Tollefson present.
- Trinity Reformed Church (Moscow, ID); Elder Christopher Schlect and Pastor Joshua Appel present.
- Trinity Church (Denver, CO); Pastor Brian Brown and Elder Justin Riley present
- Christ Covenant Reformed Church (Billings, MT); Elder Ryan Yeager and Elder Mike Elliott present.
- Emmanuel Church (Helena, MT); Pastor Jonah Barnes present.
- Trinity Covenant Church (Fort St. John, BC); Pastor Adam Harris present.
- Trinity Church (Coeur d’Alene, ID); Pastor Stuart Bryan present.
- Valley Covenant Church (Lewiston, ID); Elder Rusty Olps present.
- King’s Cross Church (Wenatchee, WA); Elder Jess Monnette present.
- Christ Church (Spokane, WA); Pastor Kenton Spratt included in the Roll Call

**Motion (10/26/21:01)** was made by Stuart Bryan to accept the published 2021 Knox Presbytery agenda. The motion was seconded by Terry Tollefson. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

**Motion (10/26/21:02)** was made by Ryan Yeager to approve the minutes from the Spring gathering. The motion was seconded by Mike Elliott. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

- N.B., Toby Sumpter mentioned after the motion was passed that his name was left out of the roll call. He was present.

PM Spratt invited member churches present to share prayer requests.

**Motion (10/26/21:03)** was made by Brian Brown to receive Redeemer Community Church (Centennial, CO) as a candidate church into Knox Presbytery. The motion was seconded by Christopher Schlect. Discussion ensued. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

**Motion (10/26/21:04)** was made by Douglas Wilson for Knox Presbytery to receive the report that Ben Zornes has fulfilled the recommendations of the ordination committee. The motion was seconded by Stuart Bryan. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

### **Aaron Ventura Licensure**

**Motion (10/26/21:05)** was made by Christopher Schlect for the Knox Presbytery to recognize that Aaron Ventura has satisfied the Presbytery's requirements as a licentiate. The motion was seconded by Toby Sumpter. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

### **Moscow Particularization Question**

Presbytery was informed that Christ Church Downtown is becoming a Mission Church under Christ Church, Moscow.

PM Spratt welcomed the guests.

### **Ryan Handermann Examination**

**Motion (10/26/21:06)** was made by Douglas Wilson that Presbytery recommend Trinity Reformed Church (Moscow, ID) ordain Ryan Handermann. The motion was seconded by Rusty Olps. Discussion ensued. **Motion carried** unanimously (14-0-0).

- Toby Sumpter was absent from this vote.

**Motion (10/26/21:07)** was made by Christopher Schlect that Presbytery receive the report that King's Cross Church switched from 1647 WCF to 1788 WCF. The motion was seconded by Stuart Bryan. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

***Wednesday, October 27, 2021***

### **Preliminaries**

- Singing was led by Douglas Wilson.
- An invocation was offered by PM Spratt.

### **Grande Prairie Letter**

**Motion (10/27/21:01)** was made by Terry Tollefson that the Presbytery bring Christ Covenant Church (Grande Prairie, AB) into the CREC as a candidate church. The motion was seconded by Toby Sumpter. Discussion ensued. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

**Motion (10/27/21:02)** was made by Christopher Schlect that the Presbytery receive the Letter from Christ Covenant Church (Grande Prairie, AB), that the Presbytery extend forgiveness to

them, and that we commission PM Spratt to communicate our forgiveness back to them. The motion was seconded by Jess Monnette. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

See appendix I for the letter from Christ Covenant Church of Grande Prairie.

### **Christ Church, Spokane, Regarding: Andre Fowlkes**

*Toby Sumpter acting PM.*

**Motion (10/27/21:03)** was made by Christopher Schlect that the Presbytery receive the report from Christ Church (Spokane, WA) and admonish Christ Church (Spokane, WA) to continue in their ongoing pastoral attention and assessment of the situation (re: Andre Fowlkes). The motion was seconded by Stuart Bryan. Discussion ensued. **Motion carried** (12-0-3).

See appendix II - Report from Christ Church, Spokane

### **Council Items**

*Kenton Spratt resumed PM role.*

**Motion (10/27/21:04)** was made by Toby Sumpter that Knox Presbytery grant that Francis Foucachon be granted exception to serve as a ruling elder at Christ Church (Moscow, ID), while still a member of the PCA. The motion was seconded by Mike Elliott. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

**Motion (10/27/21:05)** was made by Toby Sumpter to adjourn the Presbytery meeting. The motion was seconded by Stuart Bryan. **Motion carried** unanimously (15-0-0).

**Christ Covenant Church of Grande Prairie seeks reconciliation with the  
CREC.**

In seeking reconciliation with the CREC, we disclose that we are a different group now, at least to some degree. Our session now consists of

Robin Shoemaker – elder, treasurer

Jamie Soles – elder, chairman

Jesse Penner – deacon, secretary

Having discussed these matters at length, we agree together that we should ask forgiveness of the CREC for the following;

We failed to show due respect for fellow Christian brothers, and particularly elders in Christ's church, with strong (and wrong) accusations of influence peddling. This is certainly a two-edged sword that we were unwise to use. Forgive us.

Our session proved unwilling to hear with compassion those who were hurt in our own midst, which caused them to seek refuge elsewhere. We also failed to perceive any good motive for the actions taken by the Barendregt brothers against our council. We have since, by the kindness of God, seen the harm that was done and reconciled with the brothers in question, but harm was caused in the CREC by our lack of compassion as well. Please forgive us.

It seems to us that we could have put forward more effort to find a way to converse with the leadership of Knox Presbytery. Good advice was offered by Allan Burroughs, Jack Phelps, and others, but it was not taken by us. Please forgive us.

Our session offered a harsh and defensive response to the Knox Presbytery offer for pro-tem assistance. Forgive us for this. We have seen for ourselves how this worked in the church in Fort St John, which happened in a good and God-glorifying way, and a good example to us. Our unwillingness to submit to authority undermined the authority which was given us by the Lord. He has taken us, shaken, us, and rearranged us.

The separation we chose for ourselves by rejecting Knox Presbytery's offer of advisors (during the following presbytery), was, as we see now, an exercise in pride. There has been no good fruit down that road, just further separation. Forgive us for acting in pride toward you.

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It has now been four years since that last presbytery when the offer was made for advisors, made up of pastors sympathetic to our cause. When that offer went home from presbytery it met a wall among our session, and we stepped out of the CREC. We thought this might help quell the internal fighting in our session room, but it proved to provide only a brief respite. Temperatures rose over Pastor Theo Hoekstra, whom most of the session seemed to regard as difficult to work with. The warning lights flashing on our collective dash were still being ignored, and the church splintered further. Pastor Theo left in the beginning of 2018.

But we were not done. All through 2018 we maintained an uneasy peace, as we tried to reconcile the various visions within the church of what we should be doing. People grew discouraged and all through 2019 the ship was leaking vital fuel. We had a substantial group who wished to re-establish connection with the CREC, and several, especially former session members, who wanted nothing to do with the CREC. Session was unable to reconcile these disparate views.

The year of 2019 was the hardest year I (Jamie Soles) have ever had in church, as I watched old friends and compatriots become estranged and

drift away, unable to enjoy church anymore. All the things that had made Christ Covenant Church the good thing that it once was had by then fallen off, except for the service. We had stopped doing psalm sings after one blow-up, prayer meeting after another blow-up, no bible studies running, hospitality waned, brotherly love waned. And I was leading our session through all of this, what looked and felt like shepherding Christ Covenant Church into the grave. I was ready to throw in the towel several times and preached myself out of it several times. Jacob persevered through a lot more trouble than you have, Jamie. Hold on...

But God was doing things quietly and out of sight to me. There were sabbath dinners starting up among some of the Shoemaker clans. Jeremy Barendregt moved back to town, and felt like CCC should be his church home. And reconciliation became a front burner issue, especially under the eye of Terry Tollefson, whom we will be blessing till the day we die. He walked us through reconciliation, and we, the CCC session and the Barendregt brothers, walked through it in the fall of 2019.

Then came Covid.

Thank God for Covid.

Our regular meeting place, a Seniors Recreation Center, closed down immediately and stayed that way. We missed the first week, and had folks visit other online churches. By the second week we were online, and we did service, then watched other preachers mostly. A couple of us preached over the interwebs. Seven weeks of this, and we began to realize what a trick was being pulled on us and the whole world, and that this was no way to do church. Brad Donovan said, "I have a shop we could use!" And we did. We started meeting together again in mid-May 2020. The spirit in our midst was completely different. All the grumbling voices were gone, there was new vision growing in how we should comport ourselves, and we were delighted to be with one another again.

Our folks came to me with requests: "We have to start prayer meeting again. We can meet at my place!" or "We must start our psalm sings again! Let's meet at my house for the first one!" or a couple of our men saying, "You mentioned catechism last week, and I was convicted because I have not been doing this with my kids. We are starting this week." Or "We really need a men's meeting where we can talk with one another!" and within a couple weeks it was up and running and is now completely vital. Or the ladies starting a regular get-together every month for an afternoon. Or a couple of our just-married and not-yet-married men coming to me telling me they had started a bible study and invited the young folks, and they almost all came, and have been coming for months now. Beautiful! And the fact that none of it came from me, priceless.

It feels to me that the Lord Jesus has given us back Christ Covenant Church. We are now looking outward again, looking for ways to be valuable to our community. Staying open when nobody else is seems a good start...

Blessings to you all!

Jamie Soles – Christ Covenant Church chairman.



Appendix II - Report from Christ Church, Spokane