

*"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."*

In the Loop

A Summary of the July 2024 Meeting of the English Commission

Committee and Other Reports

1. Mission and Evangelism
 - a. Living Waters Mission – A team of 12 has volunteered for the weeklong project in Guatemala. Regarding fundraising efforts, Elder Kimball Wong will collaborate with our treasurers, Winchell Quock (EWC) and Dave Soohoo (PCC) to track progress towards achieving fundraising goals. Prior to the departure date, funds will be sent to Living Waters to cover the cost of project supplies.
 - b. Vision Care Clinic – The committee approved moving forward with the Lion's Club to host a free clinic in March 2025 subject to Session approval.
2. Resource
 - a. Due to the commission's scheduling change, the committee hasn't met since the June meeting.
 - b. Board of Pensions – The 2025 rate changes are projected to yield a reduction of costs from 39% down to 26% of the effective salary (salary + housing) that will result in immediate cost savings beginning January 2025.
3. Worship & Nurture
 - a. July 28 – During teatime, a Senior Awareness for Urban Living (SAUL) presentation will be led by Al Wong. The course is designed to empower seniors with practical and effective techniques for self-protection and living more confidently.
 - b. In early August, 6 women of the church will be attending the Presbyterian Women Churchwide Gathering in St. Louis.
 - c. Aug 25 – Rev. Victor Floyd of Calvary Presbyterian Church will be guest preaching and leading a session on hymns during Teatime.
 - d. September 8 – *Light Out of Darkness* Sunday will be observed.
4. Nominating
 - a. The committee consists of Diane Go, Susie Wong, Eddie Kam, Kathy Tong (Deacon Rep.) and Kimball Wong (Elder Rep.).
 - b. **To Do**: In the process of discussing deacon nominations for 2025, the Commission (Pastor Don, elders) have been asked to provide training to equip deacons to call on members, make home visits and fulfill other duties.
5. Personnel – The Board of Pensions will be offering online workshops on July 25 and August 5 covering the new benefits plan for 2025.
6. Pastor's Report – During Pastor Don's absence for most of August and the beginning of September, back-up coverage has been arranged.
 - a. Pastoral Emergencies: Rev. Norman Fong, Rev. Maggi Henderson of Old First Presbyterian Church
 - b. Commission Moderator On-call: Rev. Dr. Leslie Veen
7. Treasurer's Report
 - a. Budget Notes

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- 1) At the halfway point of the year, 47.6% of the projected income has been received and 48% of the annual budget has been expended resulting in a small deficit.
 - 2) Living Waters Donations - \$165 of the goal of \$750 has been donated. An anonymous donor has pledged to match contributions up to \$750 to reach the target of \$1,500.
- b. Income to Expense Report for the month of June and Year-to-Date 2024

	June 2024	Year-to-Date 2024
Total Receipts (A)	\$13,819.87	\$113,923.42
Total Expenses (B)	\$18,051.21	\$116,125.54
Total = (A-B)	-\$4,231.34	-\$2,202.12

New Business

Reflections on the 06/09/24 Special Meeting of the Session

- a. Rev. Dr. Janet Bower, COM Liaison, attended as guest moderator of the English Commission and reminded us of Kaleidoscope Institute's covenant of R-E-S-P-E-C-T as a guide to our discussions. (See page 3.)
- b. Purpose and Objectives of this Time Together
 - 1) Our primary purpose is to discern the will of God.
 - 2) Our objectives are to share our feelings and experiences; express our hopes and dreams; understand where the worshipping community is; and identify next steps.
- c. Reflections
 - 1) The covenant of R-E-S-P-E-C-T made between our moderator, Rev. Grace Kaori Suzuki, and the PCC Session requires the English Commission to keep confidentiality.
 - 2) Therefore, the Commission must limit their sharing of information at this time to general descriptions of topics covered.
 - a) English Worshipping Community feedback on July 7th
 - b) Governance and polity issues of the Session and 3 commissions
 - c) Inter-commission dynamics
 - d) Leadership and approaches to creating change
 - e) Preparing for the Session meeting in September
- d. **Next Steps:** The three Committee on Ministry liaisons will be conferring with Rev. Grace Kaori Suzuki.

Calendar Dates

July 28	Teatime Presentation - Senior Awareness for Urban Living (SAUL) Guest Presenter: Al Wong
August 4	Communion/Sabbath Sunday
August 4	Pastor Don – Away on vacation through August 7
August 4	Guest Preacher: Rev. Dr. Leslie Veen
August 6	M&E and W&N Committees
August 11	Resource Committee
August 12	Pastor Don – Away on vacation through September 4

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August 18	Guest Preacher: Scott Barlow
August 18	Board of Deacons
August 20	English Commission (tentative plans to be on recess)
August 25	Guest Preacher: Rev. Victor Floyd, Calvary Presbyterian Church
August 25	Presentation on Hymns at Teatime with Rev. Victor Floyd
September 1	<i>Communion/Sabbath Sunday</i>
Sept. 1	Guest Preacher: Rev. Gregory Chan
Sept. 2	<i>Labor Day Holiday</i>
Sept. 3	M&E and W&N Committees
Sept. 8	<i>Light Out of Darkness Sunday</i>
Sept. 8	Resource Committee
Sept. 8	PCC Session
Sept. 15	Board of Deacons
Sept. 17	English Commission
Sept. 21	EWC Potluck (tentative date)
Sept. 28	<i>Cameron House 150th Anniversary Gala</i>

Respectful Communication Guidelines*

R = take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others.

E = use EMPATHETIC listening.

S = be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles.

P = PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak.

E = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions.

C = keep CONFIDENTIALITY.

T = TRUST ambiguity because we are not here to debate who is right or wrong.

Communication is one of the most important elements in building a more inclusive community. People of different backgrounds bring with them different communication styles. Sometimes these differences can cause conflicts among members of a community—often in an unconscious way.

Guidelines for communication are like the traffic rules that one has to understand and observe before getting a license to drive a car. We are required to pass a test proving that we know and will follow the rules in order to lessen the possibility of traffic accidents. With interpersonal communication, we do not require people to pass a test but we do need to remind people about how to interact respectfully. Conditioned by our society, we may react to others who are different with negative attitudes, put-downs, judgments and dismissal. If we are to express the essence of God's inclusiveness, we need to agree to behave differently when we are attempting to build a more inclusive community. The Respectful Communication Guidelines provide a foundation to uphold the well-being of the community.

*Excerpts taken from the Kaleidoscope Institute KI Toolbox www.kscopeinstitute.org