

DENVER PRESBYTERY

# VISIONARY LEADERSHIP COMMISSION MINUTES

Jan | Feb | Mar  
Report to April  
Assembly



# VISIONARY LEADERSHIP COMMISSION

January Minutes to Assembly

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Welcome and call to order by Moderator, Russ Kane.

## Formation of Roll

Visionary Leadership Commission Moderator | Russ Kane

At-Large members 2024: Charla Musgrave, Doug Friesma, Chris Spotts, Matt Syrdal

Absent: Stephen Scott, Jill VanderWal,

Presbytery Officers: Pat Queen, Moderator Elect; Ruth M. Huff, Vice-Moderator Elect

Ex-Officio: gretchen Sausville, Stated Clerk; Sue Pilcher, Treasurer; Dee Cooper, Lead Presbyter

## Devotions | Doug Friesma

Doug invited us to consider the Matthew 25 Summit and read 1 John 1:1-10. He shared the following quotes:

*The people of today are not guilty of the sins of the past and the crimes of settler colonialism. We are not guilty for what our ancestors did, but we are responsible for the world that they created and we inherited.* -Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

Dr. William Yoo said he wants people attending the Matthew 25 Summit to leave not only with good answers, but with “new questions,” such as “how can answering this hard question get me to more faithful, more full answers to how I want to envision and enact God’s love and justice” in the world. Prayer was offered.

**Approval of the Agenda** by consensus with no changes.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda** by consensus with no changes

- Treasurer’s Report
- Highlands Camp AC
- Recognizing outgoing Presbytery Leaders

## Administrative

Minutes from 11 December 2023 were approved without change.

## Fiduciary Stewardship| Sue Pilcher

- Sue gave an oral report and written report in the consent agenda.

**Motion:** Finance and Property recommends that the Visionary leadership Commission allow St. Paul to apply for a \$60,000. PILP loan for necessary maintenance projects around the church. **Approved**

*Background: The maintenance projects include- replacement of two paired furnaces for the Fellowship Hall (\$11,000); expenses related to the deductible costs not reimbursed*

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*by insurance (\$16,500) for roof replacement due to hail damage; \$12,000 for the replacement of fire sprinkler heads that are not up to current fire protection code throughout the building; repairs to the skylight in Fellowship Hall (up to \$13,000) and potential replacement of the drinking fountain on the main floor (\$2,000). These estimates are approximate.*

## **Discussion: Where Have We Come?| Russ Kane**

Russ talked about the final ARTF report, and the journey of the presbytery over the last few years. He used the illustration of a 3D printer as an amazing, innovative tool to make things. VLC gathered into small groups and discussed hopes/excitement and fears in this new time. The common thread was Denver Presbytery is rich in resources from people, to staff, to finances. There is excitement around the church's desire to address cultural challenges and engage Matthew 25 beyond concepts. There is fear around the volume of work and the integration of the work into new systems and falling back into old patterns.

## **Matthew 25| Dee Cooper**

- Matthew 25 Summit
  - 18 folx going from Denver Presbytery are attending Matthew 25 Summit in Atlanta, and has the largest contingent attending and shows a commitment to our vision.
  - The conference is a full three days, and the folx are invited to take notes in their respective workshops in order to share upon return.
- Engaging Matthew 25 as Denver Presbytery
  - There is a wide range of comfort in engaging this topic. There is a Kenyan Proverb that we gather together as a whole moving through. We go together.
  - Matthew 25 is not a program, it is a vision and a way of being and we are inviting the presbytery as a whole to engage in this work of dismantling structural racism
  - When we do this work together, we have relational connections which invites and opens opportunities for churches we may never have imagined. We aren't guilty but we are responsible...not just professionally but personally.
  - Shade Trees is an excellent organization that will be our foundation for this work.
    - It is an in person experience, and rooted in a relational somatic experience with hands on learning, sharing, and storytelling in three 180 minute segments.

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- Greg Ellison and 5 facilitators guide the group safely in this work.
- This can count as the Anti-Racism Training Ministers of Word and Sacrament are required to do re. the Book of Order.

**Motion:** *for a Called Presbytery Assembly March 1-2, 2024 for the purposes of anti-racism training with Shade Trees. Location and times to be determined. Approved*

## **Lead Presbyter Report | Dee Cooper**

- Dee invited us to think differently about New Years resolutions as individuals, and think about and share about “agreements” with ourselves this year.
- Agreements allow us to co-create with one another and can be changed without guilt and shame.
- Agreements free up creative energy, and can be renegotiated.
  - An example: Pilots have a route and a direction, but 95% of the time they are making adjustments in flight.
- Agreements are being made within each of Denver Presbyteries committees and commissions
- Visionary Leadership Commission is invited to re assess their agreements
- Part of agreements are clear communication pathways.
- All Committees and Commissions will be creating agreements.

## **Stated Clerks Report| gretchen Sausville**

- Clerk’s Gathering Thursday February 1, 2024, 10:00-11:30AM on zoom
- Boundary Training 2024 with Praesidium (e-learning) for all those required to participate.
- Records review in the Presbytery Center Records for all congregations, NWC, and Minister of Word and Sacrament.
- Church Leadership Connection Training to be scheduled.

## **Generative Time**

### **The Year Ahead: Ongoing/Unfinished Business| Russ Kane**

- By-Laws and Standing Rules: Ongoing- gretchen to write a process for VLC to understand what we have and what we hope to have.
- Matthew 25 Integration (add to list)
- Role of Lead Presbyter- 1 year review & revision agreement accountability and leverage of role and details.
- Highlands Camp Partnership
- Update the terms of the PZDP (see ARTF Report)
- Participation of Active Ministers of Word and Sacrament on Committees: every active pastor is expected to be a part of core committees.

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Evaluation Process for Agencies & VLC how are we doing mutual accountability and access how we are doing.

- Communication Strategy for Committees (see ARTF Final Report)
- Associate Presbyter for Faith Formation (see ARTF Final Report) Long term strategy.
- Connecting with our Committees -

Russ led us through a brainstorming process for us to also discuss additional pieces that have energy for the group this year.

- Mission Staffing design,
- Long term budget strategy,
- the name of “Visionary” and how to we hold the visionary with the viability
- Timing and communications,
- work/life balance and holding the space
- Collaboration vs consensus (agreement) what does it mean to have a shared leadership model?

Revisit list in February and organize our work, and the collaboration.

## **Review of Meeting**

- Key Decisions & Assignments
- Self-Evaluation Questions:
  - Were we faithful to our Agreements?
  - Did we give the right energy to the right things?
  - What should we do more/less in the future?

Next meeting: February 12, 2024 at 11:00am on zoom

Devotion February -

Closing prayer - Russ Kane

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. gretchen N. Sausville  
Stated Clerk



# VISIONARY LEADERSHIP COMMISSION

February Minutes to Assembly

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Welcome and call to order by Moderator, Russ Kane.

## Formation of Roll

Visionary Leadership Commission Moderator | Russ Kane

At-Large members 2024: Charla Musgrave, Doug Friesma, Matt Syrdal, Jill VanderWal,

Absent: Stephen Scott, Doug Friesma, Chris Spotts

Presbytery Officers: Pat Queen, Moderator Elect; Ruth M. Huff, Vice-Moderator Elect

Ex-Officio: gretchen Sausville, Stated Clerk; Sue Pilcher, Treasurer; Dee Cooper, Lead Presbyter

## Devotions | Pat Queen

In Celebration of Black History Month, Pat shared a devotion on the life of Anna Pauline Murray, known as The Rev. Dr. Paulie Murray. "True community is based upon equality, mutuality, and reciprocity. It affirms the richness of individual diversity as well as the common human ties that bind us together." Prayer was offered.

**Approval of the Agenda** by consensus with no changes.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda** by consensus with no changes

- Devotions Calendar
- January 8, Minutes
- PZDP Notes from 1/10 meeting
- FSC Report/Budget Summary

## Administrative

Minutes from 8 January 2024 were approved without change.

## Fiduciary Stewardship| Sue Pilcher

- Sue gave an oral report and written report in the consent agenda.

**Motion:** *Fiduciary Stewardship Committee recommends to the Visionary Leadership Commission \$75,000 withdrawal against line of credit for cash flow. -Approved*

## Matthew 25 Summit Debrief| Dee Cooper

- **Matt 25 Summit Report/Debrief**
  - Dee collated the responses from the Denver Presbytery Matthew 25 Summit participants.

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- We are called to call folx in, as opposed to calling folx out which can stall conversations.
  - Our work with Matthew 25 is to go deeper as opposed to going broad, and they intersect.
  - We show up and share thoughts, have an abundance of ideas, and may not engage and take action.
  - Recognition of the journey for Denver Presbytery, that we are leaning into the learning from folx who have been doing this work for a long time.
- VLC was invited into breakout sessions to discuss questions, and then report back to the larger group.

## **Discussion: Focusing VLC Work| Russ Kane & Dee Cooper**

- Decisions and Work flow terminology was discussed.
- The committee report template was shared.
- Dee discussed communication flow.

## **Called Presbytery Meeting March 1-2, 2024 - Shade Trees| Dee Cooper**

Details of the Assembly Meeting for the purposes of Shade Trees was explained and discussed extensively. The Assembly would be held at Wellshire Presbyterian Church. The VLC was invited to sign up to volunteer on March 1-2, 2024, and spread the word within their contexts. Beth Carlisle put together an extensive media kit. The Schedule for the Assembly is March 1, 2024 - 4PM-7PM Part 1. followed by dinner.  
March 2, 2024 - 9AM-12PM Part 2. 12PM-1PM - lunch. 1PM-4PM Part 3.

## **Stated Clerks Report| gretchen Sausville**

- Clerk's Gathering Thursday February 1, 2024 was a great gathering for our clerks.
- 40 of our congregations had their statistical reporting complete by February 1, 2024.
- Boundary Training 2024 with Praesidium is underway.

## **Review of Meeting**

- Key Decisions & Assignments
  - Matthew 25 Task force- Matt Syrdal was added
  - Approved line of credit for cash flow
  - Priorities to bring back.
  - Sign up for Shade Trees and volunteer and register
  - Get the word out about Shade Trees.
  - Agreements to be updated by February 20, 2024
- Self-Evaluation Questions:
  - Were we faithful to our Agreements?

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- Break out sessions were wonderful
- Summarize break out room conversations in chat in future.
- Pro- active and setting up structures moving forward.

Next meeting: March 11, 2024 at 11:00am on zoom

Devotion March - Matt Syrdal

Closing Prayer - Dee Cooper

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. gretchen N. Sausville  
Stated Clerk



# VISIONARY LEADERSHIP COMMISSION

March Minutes to Assembly

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Welcome and call to order by Moderator, Russ Kane.

## Formation of Roll

Visionary Leadership Commission Moderator | Russ Kane

At-Large members 2024: Charla Musgrave, Doug Friesma, Matt Syrdal, Jill VanderWal, Stephen Scott

Absent: Chris Spotts

Presbytery Officers: Pat Queen, Moderator Elect; Ruth M. Huff, Vice-Moderator Elect

Ex-Officio: gretchen Sausville, Stated Clerk; Sue Pilcher, Treasurer; Dee Cooper, Lead Presbyter

## Devotions | Matt Syrdal

A devotion of the book of Exodus from *Hard and Holy Work: A Lenten Journey Through the Book of Exodus*. Prayer was offered.

**Approval of the Agenda** by consensus with no changes.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda** by consensus with no changes

- Devotions Calendar
- 12 February 2024 Minutes
- FSC Special Called meeting
- Budget to Actual Summary through February - moved to discussion
- VLC Agreements

## Administrative

Minutes from 12 February 2024 were approved without change.

## Fiduciary Stewardship| Sue Pilcher

- Sue gave an oral report and written report in the consent agenda.

**Motion:** *A sub-team, including the Lead Presbyter, Stated Clerk, FSC Moderators, Treasurer, and Accountant work on a plan for cash flow and disbursements over the calendar year.* **Approved**

## Matthew 25| Dee Cooper

- **Shade Trees Debrief** (popcorn responses consider in advance)
  - What celebrations stand out for you?
    - Broad participation
    - Circle exercise

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- Non threatening
- Energy in the room
- Functional space
- Interactions with different people
- Energetic facilitators
- Experiential
- Folx left with energy
- Space to move forward no matter starting place
- Food for thought
- Lots of food
- What can we take moving forward?
  - We did this and it works
  - Imagining what the world looks like= HOPE
  - Creating a track record
  - Churches meeting together and how to move forward
  - Covenant community process
  - Always ask about accessibility
- **Report from the Matthew 25 VLC Sub group**
  - Presented 3 points of contact for follow up engagement this spring, and to gather our Matthew 25 churches together for further conversation, maybe at tables during dinner at the April Assembly,
  - Will read the book *Anxious To Talk About It* and discuss it in May.

## **Discussion: Focusing VLC Work| Russ Kane**

- Russ walked the VLC through the work of VLC (Fiduciary, Strategic & Generative), to go beyond merely receiving and approving reports.
- VLC was invited into breakout sessions to discuss questions, and then report back to the larger group
- The following documents referenced our discussion
  - Modes of Governance & the VLC
  - ARTF Final Report
  - Mission and Staffing Design
  - VLC Responsibilities and Types of Work
  - Decision & Workflow Terminology
    - Priorities revisited: Which “Mode” will we need?
      - How will we prioritize and delegate work for the next 3-6 months?

## **Ministry Relations Committee: Hays Motions for NWC**

### **NWC Incubator Request**

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## **Rationale**

This is the first full calendar year where we will have all 4 NWC Incubator Leaders on payroll, and all receiving a 301- Board of Pensions Grant. The amount requested covers compensation for a total of 6 months, which will allow us to make payments through July 2024. This request must go to the Visionary Leadership Commission because it surpasses the \$30,000 threshold set by the Presbytery's guidelines for Hays. The funds are part of the presbytery's commitment to fund the Incubator positions at 100% from Hays funds. The package breakdown and other supporting information is reflected in the chart below.

## **Motion from MRC to VLC**

*The Ministry Relations Committee recommends that the Visionary Leadership Commission approve a request to distribute \$147,256.46 from the Hays bequest to fund compensation for NWC Incubator Leaders. The \$147,256.46 should be taken from the interest up to \$147,256.46 and any remaining from the principal of account number 102262000003 – William and Jane C. Hays Crut Endowment Fund. **Approved***

## **The Psalm Hays Request**

### **Rationale**

At the end of 2023, The Psalm received funds for their approved \$30,000 Investment Grant from Presbyterian Mission Agency. In addition to the matching funds from the Presbytery's operating budget, this Hays request provides critical funds to support the ministry and leadership of this New Worshiping Community. This ministry is led by Rev. John Yu.

### **Motion from MRC to VLC**

*The Ministry Relations Committee recommends that the Visionary Leadership Commission approve the distribution of \$30,000 from the Hays bequest to cover costs associated with supporting ministry staff at The Psalm. The \$30,000 should be taken from the interest up to \$30,000 and any remaining from the principal of account number 102262000003 – William and Jane C. Hays Crut Endowment Fund. **Approved***

## **Winds of Grace Hays Request**

### **Rationale**

At the end of 2023, Winds of Grace received funds for their approved \$30,000 Investment Grant from Presbyterian Mission Agency. In addition to the matching funds from the Presbytery's operating budget, this Hays request provides critical funds to support the ministry and leadership of this New Worshiping Community. This ministry is led by Rev. Dave Van Deren.

### **Motion from MRC to VLC**

*The Ministry Relations Committee recommends that the Visionary Leadership Commission approve the distribution of \$30,000 from the Hays bequest to cover costs associated with supporting ministry staff at Winds of Grace. The \$30,000 should be taken from the interest up to \$30,000 and any remaining from the principal of account number 102262000003 – William and Jane C. Hays Crut Endowment Fund. **Approved***

**Stated Clerks Report| gretchen Sausville**

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- Concurrences for Overtures at the General Assembly will take place at the beginning of April. Past Commissioners and the VLC are invited to look at Overtures that Denver Presbytery may wish to concur on based on our Mission, Vision, and Values. Concurrences will be presented at the April 22, 2024 Assembly.
- gretchen will be on Continuing Education for the April 8, 2024 VLC meeting and Ruth Huff has agreed to take minutes.

## Review of Meeting

- Key Decisions & Assignments
  - At April 8, 2024 next steps of Matthew 25 task Force
  - Begin reading *Anxious To Talk About It*
  - Cash Flow sub team to gather and discuss cash flow and disbursements
- Self-Evaluation Questions:
  - Were we faithful to our Agreements?

Next meeting: April 8, 2024 at 11:00am in- Person

Devotion April- Russ Kane

Closing Prayer - Russ Kane

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. gretchen N. Sausville  
Stated Clerk