Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting

Faith Presbyterian Church

Tallahassee, Florida

December 6, 2020

1. Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Devotion

The Stated Session Meeting of Faith Presbyterian Church was called to order via teleconferencing and opened with a prayer by the Moderator, Senior Pastor Brad Clayton, at 11:45 p.m. Aggie Bell provided the devotion.

The Ruling Elders (16) present. Present via teleconferencing with Zoom were Lee Andre, Bob Apgar, Aggie Bell, Leon Corbett, Ginny Dailey, Neal Evans, Cory Hill, Laura Ketcham, Mary Keyt, Lee Marsh, Tracy Morales, Linda Shelley, Robert Volpe, Frank Walker III, Malikah Woody and Roy Youngblood. **A quorum of at least one-third of the members of the Session was present.**

The Ruling Elders (5) absent were Amanda Bevis, Alice Bonn, Andee Harrison, Bill Holliman and Jason Taylor.

Associate Pastor Trinity Whitley (Teaching Elder), Barney Ray (Clerk of Session), Caressa Nee (Deacon) and Randy Zepp (Church Administrator) were also present.

2. Sharing of Joys and Concerns – The Moderator asked if anyone had any joys or concerns to share. Concerns were shared for Aggie’s sister Nancy who will be receiving treatment next week and Linda’s Aunt Rosie who is in the hospital. Joys were shared for the expected birth of Mary’s first grandchild, the response to the Angel Tree and Manna programs and many generous gifts received from members.

3. Clerk’s Report

1. Approval of the Minutes - The Moderator asked if there were any discussion or recommended revisions to the minutes from the **October 26, 2020 Stated Session Meeting.** Hearing none, **the minutes were approved by acclamation.**
2. Communications –
   * Received a letter from Lafayette Presbyterian on request for transfer of membership to Faith for Robert and Nancy Henning. This was communicated to church staff and Stewardship Committee moderator.
   * Received request from Roy Youngblood who is serving on the Presbytery’s task force for Faith’s 2021 pledge to Presbytery.
3. Fall Presbytery Meeting Report

Linda Shelley, Roy Youngblood, Trinity Whitley and the Moderator provided a report from the meeting. Trinity was nominated and approved as Vice Moderator of Presbytery for 2021 and will become Moderator in 2022. A retirement ceremony for Brandt Copeland of First Presbyterian (Tallahassee) was held. A task force on racial injustice was approved. The Moderator recognized W.O. Bell, Linda Shelley and Roy Youngblood for their service on Presbytery committees.

4. Pastor’s Report –

1. Worship & COVID Update – The Moderator wanted the Session to be aware of publically available information on COVID-19 positive testing increases in recent weeks. Lee Marsh said that he expects that numbers may increase rapidly over the next two to three weeks before Session meets again and that he would support a vote by email if changes to the current church plans should be warranted based upon input from the pastor’s task force. The Moderator asked if the Session would be okay with communication by email should this be necessary. The elders agreed.
2. Pledge Call Telephone Script – We have received 163 pledges totaling $875,000 but there are about 75 members who pledged for 2020 that we have not received a pledge for 2021. Total pledges for 2020 were $1,060.000 and $1,100,000 would be needed to fund the 2021 increased budget. We need volunteers to make calls which are a normal process each year. Ginny, Bob, Laura, Leon, Linda, Robert, Roy, Malikah, Frank and Neal volunteered to call.
3. Congregational Meeting – The Moderator asked for elders to sign up for the congregational meeting via Zoom and to help spread the word so that we can have at least 90 members attend. A quorum is 10% of the membership which is about 829 but having a few extra would help ensure enough to conduct the meeting to elect new officers and nomination committee.

5. Financial Report – Cory Hill reported that as of December 3rd our budgeted receipts were $1,167,000 and actual receipts were $1,124,00 but that actual expenses were less than receipts at $1,057,000. Randy Zepp added that the largest receipt total is received in December. The Moderator said that our church is in very good shape financially considering the length of time with no in-person worship services and now limited attendance worship.

6. Diaconate Report – Caressa Nee reported that the Diaconate last met on November 8th and the next meeting in December 13th. She said that deacons continue preparing meals for families as needed but there are still no receptions for funerals. The first fellowship picnic was held with five families attending. She reported an increase in people seeking food at Manna since September and that food for 225 families was prepared for November although less than that number came to Manna. Deacons are hosting an outdoor movie on December 20th to show a Charlie Brown Christmas. Angel Tree gifts are due December 7th and there is an Advent Book Club.

7. Consent Agenda – The Moderator asked if anyone wanted to pull anything from the consent agenda for discussion. Hearing no such request, the Moderator asked if there was a motion to approve the consent agenda. Roy moved approval and Mary Keyt seconded the motion. **The consent agenda was unanimously approved.**

1. **Stewardship Committee** requested that the Session approve the membership report which included the following changes to the church rolls:

Request for Transfer by Letter from Active Roll: William Lampkin

Members to be Dropped from Active Roll: Grayson Ruhl

Baptism: Lawson Lewis Mitchell

Total membership of 826

b. **Youth & Families Committee** requested the Session approve placement of a Help Shelf TLH on church property to assist community members who may be facing food insecurity. The committee is also looking to place Help Shelf TLH boxes in two other locations in the community.

8. Action Agenda –

a. **Finance Committee** requested approval of the 2021 Budget of $1,304,520 budgeted receipts and $1,363,319.35 in budgeted expenses. The Moderator explained that normally the Session approves a budget in January after calls are made to follow up on pledges not received but that the Session can approve the budget now and the Finance Committee will come back in January to recommend any changes after the final total of pledges is received if necessary. He asked if there were any questions. Ginny Dailey asked if there were any staff increases in the budget. The Moderator said that there is a 2% increase for staff in the budget. Linda Shelley asked if the $10,000 Preschool Donation in budgeted revenues was advisable given the current financial situation and action items from the Preschool Committee. The Moderator offered and elders agreed that the Finance Committee could address this line item at the January Session meeting. Leon said that the 2021 budget was not balanced. The Moderator said that once all pledges are received either the pledges would balance the budget or the Session could use cash reserves or reduce the budget. **The Session approved the motion to approve the budget and review again after final pledges were received.**

b. **Preschool Committee** requested approval of the following items:

i. cover preschool budget shortfall of $48,400 caused by COVID in May 2021. Discussion: Neal Evans asked about the contingency of the PPP loan approval and what impact this would have on this action item. The Moderator explained that the church had submitted all of the necessary paper work to the bank and responded to questions from the bank. The bank had submitted the documents to the federal government and was waiting for the final forgiveness approval. He explained that only one loan covering the church and preschool was obtained and that a calculation of the amount to use for church payroll versus the preschool payroll was use to allocate the loan. Neal suggested that the motion could be amended to eliminate the contingency of the loan forgiveness and to approve an amount not to exceed $48,400 instead of an amount equal to $48,400. Ginny Dailey said she was okay with the suggested changes. **A vote of the amendments to the motion was unanimously approved**.  **A vote of the motion as amended was unanimously approved**.

ii. cover one scholarship for preschool year 2021-2022 in August 2021 for $9,850. After hearing no discussion of the motion, **the Session unanimously approved the motion.**

iii. approve First Christmas Drive Through event for children and families fundraiser December 11-13, 6-8pm, to replace the Fall Parent Party fundraiser originally approved by the Session January 2020. **The Session unanimously approved the motion.**

9. Items Not In Agenda – The Moderator asked if there were any items anyone wanted have considered to add by a 2/3’s vote. None were offered.

10. Informational Items/Committee Reports –

The Moderator asked if there was anything to share from the committees as informational items.

Ginny Dailey said that the Witness Committee was working on an anti-racism action item to bring to the Session.

11. Closing prayer - to conclude the meeting at 1:17 p.m.

**Summary of Motions Approved by the Session**

* **Approved call for a Congregational Meeting for purposes of electing new officers and new nominating committee on December 13th at 2pm by email vote on November 18, 2020**
* **Approved membership report from Stewardship Committee**
* **Approved placement of Help Shelf TLH box on church property from Youth & Families Committee**
* **Approved the 2021 Budget from the Finance Committee**
* **Approved covering Preschool shortfall of up to $48,400 in May 2021**
* **Approved increasing the 2021 Budget covering one scholarship for Preschool from $9,000 to $9,850.**
* **Approved First Christmas Drive-Through fundraiser for the Preschool on Dec 11-13**

Respectfully submitted by

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Barney Ray, Clerk of Session

Approved by Moderator

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Brad Clayton, Senior Pastor