Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting

Faith Presbyterian Church

Tallahassee, Florida

January 24, 2021

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 11:30 a.m.

The Ruling Elders (16) present. Present via teleconferencing with Zoom were Bob Apgar, Aggie Bell, Amanda Bevis, Leon Corbett, Ginny Dailey, Neal Evans, Andee Harrison, Cory Hill, Laura Ketcham, Mary Keyt, Lee Marsh, 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 Lee Andre, Alice Bonn, Bill Holliman, Tracy Morales, and Jason Taylor.

Associate Pastor Trinity Whitley (Teaching Elder), Barney Ray (Clerk of Session), Cindy Littlejohn (Deacon), Ruth Reynolds (church member), Anita Parish (church member) 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. Prayers were requested for the following:

Torrescano family (Stacey and Joseph) on the passing of Bob Torrescano (member);

Trinity’s sister Kathryn; Linda, Carolyn and Carolyn (friends of Cindy Littlejohn); the families of Randy Zepp’s cousin (Ricky) and college friend (Jeannie) who passed away; the family of Frank Walker’s former colleague (Nilda). The Moderator led the Session in prayer for those mentioned by name and for all those not mentioned.

Laura Ketcham provided the devotion and closed in prayer.

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 **December 6, 2020 Stated Session Meeting or December 13, 2020 Congregational Meeting.** Hearing none, **the minutes were approved by acclamation.**
2. Approval of Annual Statistical Report - The Moderator asked if there were any discussion. Hearing none, **the minutes were approved by acclamation.**
3. Winter Presbytery Meeting Report - Linda Shelley and Malikah Woody volunteered to serve as commissioners. Mary Keyt volunteered to serve as the alternate.

4. Pastor’s Report –

1. Faith by the Numbers – The Moderator mentioned that he would send out an email after the February 14th worship service to the Session to either vote to restart in-person worship services or to extend the no in-person worship phase of the church’s reopening plan.
2. Session Dates – The Moderator shared the 2021 calendar dates for Session Meetings. He said that he seeks input from the Session these dates in order to determine whether any adjustments are advisable. He specifically asked about the proposed Retreat on April 25th. He had received some feedback about possibly conducting the Retreat in August but he also knows that this is a busy time for families with the beginning of the new school year. No further feedback was provided so he decided to keep the Retreat for April and will adjust in necessary.

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| February 21 | New Officer Exam |
| February 28 | Stated Session Meeting |
| March 28 | Stated Session Meeting |
| April 25 | Stated Session Meeting (Retreat) |
| May 23 | Stated Session Meeting |
| July 25 | Stated Session Meeting |
| August 22 | Stated Session Meeting |
| September 26 | Stated Session Meeting |
| October 24 | Stated Session Meeting |
| December 5 | Stated Session Meeting |

5. Financial Report – Cory Hill reported that we ended the year better than we would have expected back in the spring at the beginning of the pandemic. Receipts were about what we budgeted but expenses were less so we had a surplus of about $72,000. The Moderator said that Randy wanted us to know that if we included all receipts the total was almost $1.6M which includes giving to designated funds. Mary asked if that didn’t to include the food or in-kind donations. Randy confirmed it did not include in-kind donations.

6. Diaconate Report – Cindy Littlejohn said the Deacons had discussed stepping up support of the meal train. Because there were so few families who participated in the outdoor picnic in November, future fellowship luncheons are on hold. She said that Manna on Meridian served 214 households in December which was a significant increase over the previous December. Faith is the host church for Manna in February and will be seeking volunteers. Manna needs peanut butter donations. Backpack program looking for volunteers. Deacons are planning for Habitat for Humanity instead of mission trips. Next Diaconate meeting is Feb 7th. Susie Clemons is the diaconate rep for February.

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. Neal Evans 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:

Members to be Dropped from Active Roll: John and Debi York

Total membership of 824

1. **Adults & Families Committee** requested the Session’s approval of the book *We Are Called to Be A Movement* by Rev William J Barber II as the study for the Lenten season.
2. **Youth & Families Committee** requested the Session’s approval of the curriculum, *Anxiety as Opportunity for Spiritual Growth*, from Redeeming Babel and instructed by Curtis Chang, Professor at Duke Divinity School and SeniorFellow at Fuller Theological Seminary
3. **Personnel Committee** requested the Session’s approval of the revised Position description for the Director of Christian Education for Children.

8. Action Agenda –

a. **Witness Committee** proposed that the Session of Faith Presbyterian Church adopt and implement an Antiracism Initiative for the year of 2021. With the increasing recognition of the violence sustained by black, indigenous, and people of color, and with the growing awareness of the church’s complicity in racism from our earliest history, the purpose of the Initiative would be to educate, discuss, and suggest actions to be taken to support our brothers and sisters of color in whatever way we can.

In implementation of this Proposal, the Committee requests that the Session:

(1) Provide for all Ruling Elders to participate in a study with the Witness Committee in furthering this Initiative.

(2) Direct that each Committee evaluate their work and ministry to be more inclusive and to consider how their work might support the efforts of antiracism.

(3) Authorize the Witness Committee, in conjunction with the Adults and Families  
Committee, to set up a year-long series of studies, field trips, and discussions to allow  
the congregation of Faith Presbyterian to participate more fully in the efforts represented  
by this Initiative.

(4) Authorize the Staff and Committees to reach out in concrete and loving ways to foster a relationship of mutual respect and fellowship with Trinity United Presbyterian Church.

Lee Marsh (Moderator of the Witness Committee) provided some background about the origins of this action agenda item. He mentioned the actions of the General Assembly regarding antiracism.

The Moderator asked if there were any discussion. Hearing none, he called for a vote of the motion. **The motion was approved but with at least one voting against the motion.**

b. **Witness Committee** requested approval the Session’s approval of proposed 2021 budget of $61,450 includes an increase to Missionaries of $1,225. The 2021 Budget proposed by Finance Committee is $61,425 for Witness Committee for a difference of $25.

Lee Marsh (Moderator of the Witness Committee) said that this request was included in the 2021 Budget action item from the Finance Committee and stated that it did not need to be on the action agenda as a separate item. **This item was withdrawn**.

c. **Buildings & Grounds** **Committee** requested the Session’s approval of to  
allocate unspent funds from 2020 to be placed in the Building and Grounds designated funds account to cover the purchase of a 5-ton compressor installed in January and for the cost of repairs to the steeple.

Linda Shelley (Moderator of Buildings & Ground) explained that the annual budget they receive is for on-going maintenance but not capital projects or replacement of major equipment. So the committee relies on the Session to approve designated funds to cover these types of costs.

Randy Zepp said that of the over $72,000 of 2020 carryover funds that $22,586 was still available for this purpose. Neal Evans said he thought this request was included in the 2021 budget action item from the Finance Committee. The Moderator said that it was but since it was currently in discussion, a vote of the motion could be made by the Session. Hearing no further discussion, the Moderator called for a vote of the motion. **Motion was unanimously approved.**

d. **Buildings & Grounds** **Committee** requested the Session’s approval our church as a COVID vaccine site.

Linda Shelley said that Bethel AME had served as a vaccination site and she felt that the Faith campus could serve as a good drive through site. She said that they reached out to Bethel AME and the Health Department but has been unable to get any detailed logistical information. She said that she believed the church would be covered by the Good Samaritan law in Florida Statutes for liability purposes. She said that our church has several current or retired nurses or medical personnel that could assist with this effort. Lee Marsh expressed a concern about operating a drive through site when the preschool was in operation. Linda said this would operate on a weekend so that it would not occur during preschool hours. **Motion was unanimously approved.**

e. **Finance Committee** requested the Session’s approval of the 2021 Budget and one time capital expenses.

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| **Budgeted Revenues** |  |
| Pledged Contributions | $1,044,394 |
| Non-Pledged Contributions | $263,350 |
| Loose Offering | $5,000 |
| **Total Contribution Receipts** | **$1,312,744** |
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| Miscellaneous Receipt |  |
| Interest Income | $1,300 |
| Planned Giving Receipts | $220 |
| Rental Income-Delta Court | $16,500 |
| Other Miscellaneous Receipts | $6,500 |
| **Total Miscellaneous Receipts** | **$24,520** |
| **Total Budgeted Receipts** | **$1,337,264** |
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| **Budgeted Expenditures** |  |
| Presbytery, Synod, & G.A. | $15,870 |
| Presbytery of Florida | $53,520 |
| Delta Court Taxes | $2,000 |
| Delta Court Mortgage Interest | $1,842 |
| Delta Court Mortgage Principal | $13,775 |
| Preschool Scholarships | $9,180 |
| Children & Families Committee | $9,600 |
| Adults & Families Committee | $5,952 |
| Youth & Families Committee | $16,200 |
| Communications Committee | $3,000 |
| Stewardship Committee | $2.095 |
| Management Committee | $114,081 |
| Diaconate Operating | $1,250 |
| Diaconate Benevolence | $24,148 |
| Presbyterian Women Operating | $1,300 |
| Presbyterian Women Benevolence | $3,240 |
| Witness Committee Operating | $3,025 |
| Witness Committee Benevolence | $58,400 |
| Personnel Committee | $812,023.28 |
| Worship & Music Committee | $23,300 |
| Buildings & Grounds Committee | $124,000 |
| Evangelism Committee | $3,350 |
| Finance Committee | $6,000 |
| **Total Budgeted Expenditures** | **$1,307,151.28** |
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| **Use of 2020 Carryover Funds** |  |
| Outside Covered Area Project | $27,500.00 |
| Installation of new Fire Alarm System | $16,654.71 |
| Accrued Leave Liability | $6,000.00 |
| **Total One Time Expenditures** | **$50,154.71** |

Cory Hill (Finance Committee Moderator) highlighted a 2% raise for all staff in the Personnel Committee budget. He also said that accrued liability leave is now in the budget for staff when they leave the church. The Moderator reminded the Session that they have approved a preliminary budget at their last meeting in December and that this would replace that budget. Hearing no discussion, **the budget was unanimously approved.**

The Moderator expressed appreciation for Cory Hill, Randy Zepp, and Valerie Marlow for their work on preparing the budget. Cory thanked the Moderator for his work as well as those previously mentioned.

The Moderator said that the staff is appreciative of the 2% increase. He also mentioned that this will require a congregational meeting to approve new Terms of Call for himself and Trinity Whitley. After discussion of several dates, The Moderator said he would entertain a motion for calling a congregational meeting. **Frank Walker made a motion to call a congregational meeting for March 7th. Cory Hill seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.**

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.

Since in-person memorials and funerals have been suspended during the pandemic, Linda Shelley said the Leah Circle has decided to work on a project to identify ways to memorialize deaths that occurred during the pandemic whether due to COVID 19 or not. She mentioned the possibility of a service of remembrance. Members of Session stated their support for the idea.

Ginny Dailey said that the Preschool Board is starting to study the possibility of a summer program for the preschool. She wanted to extend an invitation to the Session members and committee members to participate.

Amanda Bevis said that the Communications Committee is reviewing the idea of updating the church’s brand including updating the church’s website. She said that they have done an unscientific survey of church members to see what they would like to see. She said she hopes to bring something to the next Session meeting.

The Moderator provided an update on the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan stating he had signed what he believes is the final form and returned it to the bank but no final approval yet. Neal Evans asked if there were any discussions about applying for another PPP loan for the preschool. The Moderator said he had discussed this with member Blaine Click and he doesn’t believe that we would qualify since the preschool and church are one entity for legal and tax purposes and we would have to document a 25% reduction in revenues.

11. Closing prayer - to conclude the meeting at 12:48 p.m.

**Summary of Motions Approved by the Session**

* **Approved the 2020 Statistical Report**
* **Approved membership report from Stewardship Committee**
* **Approved book for Lenten study from Adults & Families Committee**
* **Approved curriculum from Youth & Families Committee**
* **Approved revised position description for the Director of Christian Education for Children from Personnel Committee**
* **Approved an Antiracism initiative for 2021 from the Witness Committee**
* **Approved use of Carryover funds for Buildings & Grounds Committee for capital expenditures.**
* **Approved a revised 2021 Budget from the Finance Committee**
* **Approved use of the church campus as a COVID vaccination site**
* **Approved call for a Congregational Meeting for purposes of approving the Terms of Call for the Pastor and Associate Pastor for March 7, 2021**

**Actions of Session Approved by Email between December 6, 2020 & January 24, 2021**

On January 10, 2021, an email was sent at the direction of the Moderator to the Session requesting an electronic vote on whether to continue limited in-person worship or to suspend in-person worship due to recent increased COVID-19 positivity rates.

Option A:  Continue in-person worship as we have since October 25, maintaining the guidelines that we put in place.

Option B— Close the sanctuary for in-person worship for one month- reassessing the week of February14- February 21.  This is the first Sunday of Lent.  Worship will still be available by live-stream.

**The Session approved by email Option B**

Respectfully submitted by

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Barney Ray, Clerk of Session

Approved by Moderator

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Brad Clayton, Senior Pastor