Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting

Faith Presbyterian Church

Tallahassee, Florida

March 28, 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 (18) present. Present via teleconferencing with Zoom were Courtney Atkins, Aggie Bell, Ruth Bedell, Amanda Bevis, Skip Cook, Leon Corbett, Neal Evans, Pat Farrell, Andee Harrison, Mary Keyt, Karen Linville, Lee Marsh, Wayne McDaniel, Matt Sirmans, Linda Shelley, Robert Volpe, Frank Walker III, and Roy Youngblood. **A quorum of at least one-third of the members of the Session was present.**

The Ruling Elders (4) absent were Bob Apgar, Sophie Beckham, Laura Ketcham and Jason Welty.

Associate Pastor Trinity Whitley (Teaching Elder), Barney Ray (Clerk of Session), Ty Wold (Deacon), Mary Steen (Director of Christian Education) and Randy Zepp (Church Administrator) were also present.

The meeting was started with a devotion and prayer by Pat Farrell.

2. Sharing of Joys and Concerns – The Moderator asked if anyone had any joys or concerns to share. The Moderator shared a joy for the new elders on Session. Trinity shared that Gayle Avant and Robert Perry are both in the hospital. Prayers requested for Laura York and her mother and sister. A joy shared for this morning’s Palm Sunday worship service which included children. The Moderator said thought about recently deceased member Peter Ray who participated in making the palm crosses in the past. Barney Ray asked for prayers for his sister-in-law (brother’s wife) recently diagnosed with cancer and for her whole family.

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 **February 28, 2021 Stated Session Meeting or March 7, 2021 Congregational Meeting.**

Hearing none, Linda Shelley moved to approve as submitted. Neal Evans seconded the motion. **The motion was approved.**

4. Pastor’s Report

1. Faith Worship by the Numbers – The Moderator directed elders to the numbers in the Session packet of members attending worship in-person and virtually.
2. Election of Clerk and Church Officers – The Moderator said that the Session is required to approve officers of the Board of Trustees per the bylaws of the church. He also said that the Clerk of Session is approved annually by the Session. The Clerk of Session serves as President of the Board, the Moderator of Buildings & Grounds serves as Vice President. The Moderator of Finance serves as Treasurer and The Moderator of Management Committee serves as Secretary. The Senior Pastor serves as the Executive Vice President. The Moderator said he had communicated with each of the individuals serving in those roles to confirm their willingness to serve as officers. He said the first order of business was to elect the Clerk of Session for a one year term and that the current Clerk of Session Barney Ray had agreed to serve another one year term.

Neal Evans moved to approve Barney Ray as Clerk of Session and Mary Keyt seconded the motion. The Moderator called for a vote of the motion. **The motion was approved.**

Wayne McDaniel moved to approve Barney Ray as President, Linda Shelley as Vice President, Robert Volpe as Treasurer and Leon Corbett as Secretary. Executive Vice President is Brad Clayton. Neal seconded the motion. **The motion was approved.**

1. Session Orientation – The Moderator provided a summary of the expectations from the elders on the Session from planning of their committee meetings to timely reporting of motions and minutes from their committees. He also mentioned it is important to coordinate with other committees in development of projects, initiatives and motions that may affect the work and programs of other committee as well. He also said that motions not presented on the agenda of Session meetings require a 2/3s approval of the Session to consider the motion at the meeting.
2. Anti-Racism Initiative – The Moderator read the eight statements from denominations anti-racism initiative and asked members of session to share their thoughts on any of the statements. Various members shared their personal thoughts and feelings.
3. April Meeting – The Moderator said that the Elder retreat is currently scheduled for April 24th. He said that an in-person retreat is more conducive to discussing initiative such as strategic planning, the new endowment process and planning for re-opening programs. The Moderator stated that while it is his responsibility to set Session Meetings, he asked for feedback from the Session. He mentioned the option to postpone the retreat until August. Several members expressed their preference for providing more time for everyone to receive both of their vaccine shots and gaining maximum strength from the vaccine before meeting in-person. Neal asked if scheduling for May was feasible to provide needed time for full vaccination and time for planning over the summer before fall. Aggie mentioned that May is usually very busy with school graduations and other activities. The Moderator thanked everyone for their input and said he would schedule a regular Session meeting on April 25th and schedule a retreat for a future month.

5. Financial Report – Robert Volpe reported that pledged contributions are ahead of schedule and non-pledged contributions are behind which is due to reduced capacity for worship services. He said expenditures are well under budget but that is a result of fewer programs operating during the pandemic. He said the Finance Committee had decided to increase church reserves due to the benefits from the federal Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan. Ruth Bedell asked how much the church received from PPP loans and whether we had applied for the second round. Randy Zepp said the church used $148,000 of PPP loan in total. Because of this loan forgiveness, Finance was able to increase reserves by $34,000, result in $49,583 in 2020 Year End Carry Over funds and the balance to pay for the new alarm system. We did not qualify for the second round since the preschool is under the same federal employer’s identification number as the church and we did not qualify because we did not have a 25% reduction in any quarter.

6. Diaconate Report – Ty Wold reported that they discussed the anti-racism initiative at their last meeting and deacons were asked to share their own credos for their next meeting. Lois Kennedy reported on meal trains for members needing meals. He said they have not had any funeral receptions due to pandemic but are hopeful to begin them again in the near future. He said deacons will deliver Easter lilies after the Easter services. Deacons asking all members to bring their own chair for the outdoor Easter worship service. He reported that Manna on Meridian served over 200 households this month, that Faith is the lead church for May and that planned renovations to Delta Court building will increase space for storage for Manna. No Meals on Wheels for Memorial Day this year due to pandemic. He updated on various other initiatives.

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 Robert Volpe 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:

Deceased members: Sid Fleishman and Lance Scalf on 2/25/2021

Baptisms: Steven Lapham Evans, III (“Tripp”) on 3/21/2021

Total membership of 819

1. **Worship & Music Committee** requested that the Session approve the baptism of Guy Peters, son of Katherine and Kevin Peters.
2. **Personnel Committee** requested that the Session consent to call Linda Pitts as part-time Parish Associate.
3. **Adults & Families Committee** requested Session approve for the Faith Forum Program Wednesday nights from April 7 through May 12 topic “Why Do We Need To Address Racism?”

8. Action Agenda

1. **Stewardship Committee** requested Session approval of revisions to Chapter IV of the Church Policies & Procedures Manual to add language establish the Tree of Life Endowment.

Roy Youngblood provided the highlights to the changes. Hearing no further discussion, the Moderator called for a vote of the motion.  **The motion was approved.**

1. **Children & Families Committee** requested Session approval to host Vacation Bible School (VBS) June 21-25 under the safety guidelines created by the VBS Safety Subcommittee and with the approval of the FPC Safety Committee.

Aggie Bell and Mary Steen were available to answer questions. Aggie said that we are planning to have a total of 84 children which is much less than normal due to the pandemic. We have received several volunteers but need 7 to 10 more volunteers. Someone asked the minimum age and Mary said it is 3 but we will have a nursery for younger children of volunteers. Lee Marsh mentioned that the federal Center for Disease Control (CDC) has recently revised guidelines reducing spacing down from 6 feet to 3 feet for children in school and wondered if we could add more children to VBS. Mary said she was not aware of this update but they could study whether this was feasible with sizes of classrooms and the number of volunteers available.

Hearing no further discussion of the motion, the Moderator called for a vote of the motion. **The motion was approved.**

9. Items Not In Agenda – The Moderator asked if there were any items anyone wanted have considered adding 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.

Roy reported that we are doing time and talent differently this year. He said committees are asked to tell the Stewardship Committee their specific volunteer needs and the Stewardship Committee will communicate these specific needs to the congregation to fill them.

Roy also reported that Harbor Chase, an assisted living facility across John Knox Road from the Faith campus, invited us back to provide a worship service with the residents. The first one will be Easter Sunday at 2pm. He said our church has provided worship for Chase Harbor for ten years but had to stop last March due to COVID-19.

The Moderator said that will have a FM transmitter to use for the outdoor worship service for Easter so maybe possible for Harbor Chase to pick this up on a radio there.

With the approval of the consent agenda, the Moderator reported that as the new Parish Associate, Linda Pitts will start work on April 12th. She will also help with worship service especially with Trinity going on maternity leave beginning in May. She has been attending at Lafayette Presbyterian Church and volunteering there.

11. Closing prayer – The Moderator concluded the meeting in prayer at 1:05 p.m.

**Summary of Motions Approved by the Session**

* **Approval of the minutes from Stated Meeting on January 24, 2021 and the Called Meeting to exam new officers on February 21, 2021.**
* **Election of Barney Ray as Clerk of Session for a one year term**
* **Election of the Board of Trustees - Barney Ray as President, Linda Shelley as Vice President, Robert Volpe as Treasurer, Leon Corbett as Secretary and Brad Clayton as Executive Vice President.**
* **Approval of changes to the church rolls for deceased members Sid Fleishman and Lance Scalf on 2/25/2021 and Baptism of Steven Lapham Evans, III (“Tripp”) on 3/21/2021. Total membership of 819.**
* **Approval of the baptism for Guy Peters, son of Katherine and Kevin Peters**
* **Approval to hire Linda Pitts as part time parish associate.**
* **Approval of Wednesday night program “Why do we need to address racism?” for April 7th through May 12th.**
* **Approval to revise Chapter IV of the Church Policies & Procedure Manual to add establish of the Tree of Life Endowment.**
* **Approval to host Vacation Bible School June 21-25.**

**Actions of Session Approved by Email between February 28, 2021 & March 28, 2021**

No votes by email were requested between Session meetings.

Respectfully submitted by

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Barney Ray, Clerk of Session

Approved by Moderator

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Brad Clayton, Senior Pastor