Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting

Faith Presbyterian Church

Tallahassee, Florida

July 25, 2021

1. Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Devotion

The Stated Session Meeting of Faith Presbyterian Church was called in the Fellowship Hall and opened with a prayer by the Moderator, Senior Pastor Brad Clayton, at 11:35 a.m.

The Ruling Elders (13) present. Present were Bob Apgar, Courtney Atkins, Aggie Bell, Leon Corbett, Neal Evans, Andee Harrison, Karen Linville, Wayne McDaniel, Matt Sirmans, Linda Shelley, Robert Volpe, Jason Welty and Roy Youngblood. **A quorum of at least one-third of the members of the Session was present.**

The Ruling Elders (8) absent were Amanda Bevis, Skip Cook, Ruth Bedell, Pat Farrell, Laura Ketcham, Mary Keyt, Lee Marsh and Frank Walker III,

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

The devotion was provided by Karen Linville.

2. Sharing of Joys and Concerns – The Moderator asked if anyone had any joys or concerns to share. Prayers were requested for Beverly Sims and her husband, Betsy Wood, Mary Keyt, Lee Marsh, Barney Ray’s two sister in-laws, Dan Lawry (friend of Jason Welty) and Erica (wife of longtime friend of Brad Clayton). Praise was given for Robert Volpe’s new job.

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 **May 23, 2021 Stated Session Meeting.** Hearing none, **the minutes were approved by acclamation.**
2. Presbytery Meeting Commissions for Summer Meeting - **Linda Shelley and Roy Youngblood volunteered to serve as commissioners**.

4. Pastor’s Report

1. Faith Worship by the Numbers – The Moderator directed elders to the information about worship attendance in-person and virtually.
2. COVID Reopening for Session – The Moderator said that decisions need to be made in order to plan and advertise in advance when programs begin if they are approved by the Session. He said that it is easier to set dates and then cancel them if circumstances change that it is to try and plan and advertise on short notice. Discussion of the increased infection rates locally and how that may impact reopening. Programs were discussed and whether masks should be required or not. It was discussed that children under 12 years old are not approved for vaccination. It was also requested that the church task force provide some guidance for specific factors to consider for any potential shutdown of in-person activities.
3. Linda Shelley made **a motion to allow lay liturgists in the worship services**. Jason Welty seconded the motion. **The motion was unanimously approved**.
4. Linda Shelley made **a motion to resume in-person Sunday school classes beginning August 15th and requiring masks in class**. Jason Welty seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn to consider whether to require masks inside the church buildings for all activities.
5. Linda Shelley made **a motion to require masks inside church buildings for all activities.** Robert Volpe seconded the motion. **The motion was approved by majority vote.**
6. Linda Shelley made **a motion to resume in-person Sunday school classes beginning August 15th**. Jason Welty seconded the motion. **The motion was unanimously approved**.
7. Robert Volpe **made a motion to allow choir to resume if all members are vaccinated.**  The motion received a second. Discussion: The Moderator asked if we could require vaccination. Both Robert Volpe and Matt Sirmans said that the church could. There were discussions about a policy requiring vaccinations for a specific group of people and not all people. **The motion was unanimously approved.**
8. Linda Shelley **made a motion to resume Wednesday night programs on August 18th without dinners**. Roy Youngblood seconded the motion. **The motion was unanimously approved.**
9. Bob Apgar **made a motion to resume coffee bar services with the stipulation that people drink their coffee outside the building on the covered patio**. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

5. Financial Report – Robert Volpe reported directed Session members to the financial report in the meeting packet for information but said that revenues are just ahead of expenditures for the year and asked if there were any questions. Linda Shelley asked how much of the $48,000 in the budget set aside for the preschool was needed. Randy Zepp said that the preschool fiscal year ends July 31st and we will know after that. **Linda requested a report on this issue for next month’s Session meeting.**

6. Diaconate Report – Mary Chiles reported that the Sealey Elementary support committee met earlier this month to plan for the upcoming school year. She said that a request to provide breakfast food for teachers on August 2nd was filled in two days. Another request to provide teacher requested school supplies will be sent this week. She reported that the church has been providing the requested 5 volunteers on the third Friday of the month to prepare food at the homeless shelter. She said about one hundred people were served. She said that Jubilee was scheduled for October 17th and asked the Moderator if that needed to be cancelled or rescheduled based upon the earlier motion to prohibit church wide meals inside the buildings. The Moderator said that we should keep this on the calendar at this time and assess closer to that date.

7. Consent Agenda – The Moderator asked if anyone wanted to pull anything from the consent agenda for discussion. Trinity Whitley said that the motion from Adults & Families Committee included a request for a church wide breakfast on August 15th in the Fellowship Hall which is contrary to the motion previously approved to not resume church wide meals in church buildings. The Moderator moved this motion to the Action Agenda for consideration. Hearing no other requests, the Moderator called for a vote of the remaining items on the consent agenda. **The consent agenda was unanimously approved.**

1. **Children & Families Committee** requested that the Session approve of the Preschool Curriculum – Celebrate Wonder and distribution of the Bible that accompanies it to families of 3 year olds.
2. **Youth & Families Committee** requested that the Session approve fall youth curriculum, “I’ve Been Meaning to Ask”, https://sanctifiedart.org/ive-been-meaning-to-ask-worship-series, to be utilized for either Wednesday nights, Sunday School or youth group.
3. **Stewardship Committee** requested that the Session approve the membership report which included the following changes to the church rolls:

**Deceased members -** Nancy Simpson, Larry Wood and Allan Ragsdale;

**Baptisms -** Jack Antonio Ptachick;

**Total Membership of 815**

8. Action Agenda

a. **Adults & Families Committee** requested that the Session approve the following:

* A series of educational Antiracism tours will be offered starting September 18 with a tour of the Meeks Eaton Black Archives on the FAMU campus; then Oct 9 with an urban hike visiting important sites led by Mike Metz; and finally a visit to the Riley House in November if they have reopened for visitors at the time. This is intended to be a multigenerational event with families welcome.
* A 4 week study of activities/ministries titled Antiracism: Now What addresses racial disparities and inequalities in Tallahassee led by Ginny Daily will be conducted on Tuesday evenings in the fall.
* A church wide breakfast will be held August 15th to kick off the new Sunday school year. Brochures will be handed out to explain the classes offered. **(This item was removed from the motion by acclamation)**
* A grief and loss group for adults will be offered in the fall. The program used will be Mourners’ Path, which is a faith based curriculum for 6—8 week groups led by 2 lay facilitators and 1 pastor. Training must be attended by all facilitators. The next training will be Aug 26-28 in New Orleans. Part of the expense will be paid by the church and part by the participants.

Given the previous Session action regarding church wide meals, the Moderator recommended that the church wide breakfast on August 15th be removed from the request for approval. Hearing no dissent and no further discussion, he called for a vote of the motion. **The motion was unanimously 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. Wayne McDaniel expressed appreciation for members Jimbo Harrison, Roy Youngblood and Randy Zepp who worked with Wayne and replaced ceiling tiles in the preschool wing recently.

11. Closing prayer - to conclude the meeting at 12:56 p.m.

**Summary of Motions Approved by the Session**

* **Approval of the minutes from Stated Meeting on May 23, 2021**
* **Approved Linda Shelley and Roy Youngblood as commissioners for the August 3rd Presbytery Meeting.**
* **Approved resumption of lay liturgist during worship.**
* **Approved requiring masks inside church buildings for all activities.**
* **Approved resumption of in-person Sunday school program beginning August 15th.**
* **Approved resumption of Wednesday night programs without meals beginning August 18th.**
* **Approved resumption of choir activities if all members are vaccinated subject to Director of Music’s decision to resume.**
* **Approved resumption of coffee bar with stipulation that members drink their coffee outside on the patio.**
* **Approval of Preschool Curriculum – Celebrate Wonder and distribution of the Bible that accompanies it to families of 3 year olds.**
* **Approval of fall youth curriculum, “I’ve Been Meaning to Ask”.**
* **Approval of changes to church rolls.**
* **Approval of a** **series of educational Antiracism tours will be offered starting September 18 with a tour of the Meeks Eaton Black Archives on the FAMU campus; then Oct 9 with an urban hike visiting important sites led by Mike Metz; and finally a visit to the Riley House in November if they have reopened for visitors at the time. This is intended to be a multigenerational event with families welcome.**
* **Approval of a 4 week study of activities/ministries titled “Antiracism: Now What” addresses racial disparities and inequalities in Tallahassee led by Ginny Daily will be conducted on Tuesday evenings in the fall.**
* **A grief and loss group for adults will be offered in the fall. The program used will be Mourners’ Path, which is a faith based curriculum for 6—8 week groups led by 2 lay facilitators and 1 pastor. Training must be attended by all facilitators. The next training will be Aug 26-28 in New Orleans. Part of the expense will be paid by the church and part by the participants.**

**Actions of Session Approved by Email between May 23, 2021 & July 25, 2021**

No actions were conducted by an electronic vote.

Respectfully submitted by

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Barney Ray, Clerk of Session

Approved by Moderator

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Brad Clayton, Senior Pastor