Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting

Faith Presbyterian Church

Tallahassee, Florida

August 22, 2021

1. Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Devotion

The Stated Session Meeting of Faith Presbyterian Church was called to order in the Fellowship Hall by the Moderator Dr. Brad Clayton and opened with a devotion and prayer by Wayne McDaniel at 11:45 a.m.

The Ruling Elders (16) present were Bob Apgar, Ruth Bedell, Leon Corbett, Neal Evans, Pat Farrell, Andee Harrison, Mary Keyt, Laura Ketcham, Karen Linville, Lee Marsh, Wayne McDaniel, Matt Sirmans, Linda Shelley, Frank Walker III, Jason Welty and Roy Youngblood. **A quorum of at least one-third of the members of the Session was present.**

The Ruling Elders (4) absent were Courtney Atkins, Aggie Bell, Amanda Bevis and Robert Volpe.

Barney Ray (Clerk of Session), Nancy Wesley (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. Prayers were requested for Marilyn Dixon (Linda Shelley’s mother), Brad Clayton’s grandmother, parents and other family members, Denice and Bart Ray (Barney Ray’s sister-in-law and brother), Ched (Matt Sirmans’ father-in-law), Landry (Vicki Fanin’s baby grandson), John Kessler and his family (father’s passing), Tracy & Danny (friends of Laura Ketcham), Dan Lowry (friend of Jason Welty), Pam (Jill David’s mother), Brittany Long (brother’s sudden passing), people impact by the approaching Hurricane Henri in the Northeast, doctors, nurses and workers at hospitals, people of Afghanistan (war/transition of power) and Haiti (earthquake).

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 **July 25, 2021 Stated Session Meeting.** Hearing none, **the minutes were approved by acclamation.**
2. Communications – Email received on Thursday, August 19th from Elder Skip Cook submitting his resignation from the Office of Elder.

4. Pastor’s Report

1. Faith by the Numbers report – Better turn out last week and better turnout today since Sunday School started. Lee Marsh spoke favorably of the on-line capability to view the service.
2. Officer Nominating Process – We need to two currently serving Elders and one Deacon to be on the nominating committee. Wayne McDaniel and Jason Welty volunteered to serve. The Moderator said he would talk to the Deacons about getting a volunteer to serve on the committee.
3. COVID Policy Review – The Moderator asked if elders had anything to discuss about the current policy. Wayne McDaniel said someone had expressed concerns about the transition on Wednesday afternoon between youth and young children in the preschool wing and short time to clean or sanitize. The Moderator asked Randy Zepp to tell Jerome (the sexton coming in on Wednesday afternoons) to prioritize cleaning in that area. It was discussed that the new filters in the air conditioning system were sufficient to address concerns of COVID virus spread through the system. **Roy Youngblood made a motion to continue the current COVID policy until the next Session meeting. Wayne McDaniel seconded the motion**. Under discussion of the motion, Ruth Bedell expressed concerns over the ability to social distance in the sanctuary during worship with more people returning to worship. Wayne McDaniel said that chairs could be added to the back and outside walls of the sanctuary to increase seating capacity and provider a greater ability to social distance. Linda Shelley spoke in favor of Wayne’s suggestion to add chairs. Leon Corbett said that he and his wife had served as greeters during the morning worship and he counted 180 people in worship today. Mary Keyt asked if any consideration was given to returning to conducting Session meetings virtually via Zoom. Discussion included the difficulties in trying to conduct meetings in-person and virtually simultaneously. Lee Marsh said he felt that Session couldn’t expect to hold their meetings entirely by virtual technology while worship was open to in-person attendance. A vote of the motion was called. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

5. Financial Report – Randy Zepp said the financial report in the Session packet was as of the end of July. He provided a verbal report of additional financial information in August to date. He reported that we are about $48,000 short on revenues. Nonpledged contributions are off 29% which is about $30,000 short so far this year. He doesn’t see that source of revenue recovering before the end of the year. He said that so far $9,500 in on-line giving in August will not be reflected until end of the month. He also said we have $26,000 in prepaid pledges that will be recognized at the end of the month. He said that we do have an operating deficit. Frank Walker said that the good news is that the Preschool does not need the $48,000 requested and approved by the Session to cover an anticipated deficit. He also reported that they received $40,000 in grants from the Early Learning Coalition. Linda Shelley complimented the Preschool staff and Board for their hard work in keeping their expenses within revenues received for the year. The Moderator said the church has sufficient reserves to cover any deficits for this year but any deficits should be addressed in the budget planning for next year. Frank asked if the $10,000 contribution for use of the sextons that was waived this year would continue next year and the number of student scholarships funded by the church would continue as well. The Moderator said that the current year budget contained those issues but it was too soon to know whether or not that would continue into the 2022 budget.

6. Diaconate Report – Nancy Wesley reported a request from the Diaconate to the Session to make a decision about Fall Jubilee for October 17. They would like to provide preordered boxed lunches and serve outdoors. **Linda moved to move forward with planning Jubilee as scheduled and recommended by the Diaconate, Matt seconded the motion**. Under discussion, Wayne McDaniel asked what activities are planned. Nancy said they were waiting to see where COVID impacts would be before finalizing activities. She said likely there would not be any bounce houses or water activities. Maybe lawn games and a cake walk. A vote of the motion was called. **The motion was unanimously approved.** Nancy reported that eight students in the preschool were identified for weekend backpacks to take home food for their families. Wayne McDaniel recommended contacting Second Harvest who also does a backpack program funded federally. Some of the deacons helped with a community service project with the confirmands.

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. **Jason Welty moved approval and Linda Shelley 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: Vivian Corgan

Total membership of 814

8. Action Agenda

a. **Buildings & Grounds Committee** requested that $7,500 from unallocated or reserve funds be provided for the painting of the steeple.

The Moderator asked if there were any discussion. Hearing none, he 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 Youngblood asked the Moderator about the personnel committee minutes in the Session packet with expressed concerns for the mental health of the church staff. He asked how we could help. The Moderator expressed appreciation for the question and suggested dropping notes to the staff from time to time as helpful. He mentioned he may close the office for a mental health day if needed. Roy spoke in favor of volunteering to be a mentor for confirmands. Pat Farrell said they changed the way mentors are assigned to confirmands. This year the youth will select their mentors rather than one being assigned to them. From Buildings & Grounds, Linda Shelley said there is a safety concerns with the uneven sidewalks caused by tree roots. She also said B&G is waiting to receive input from staff and members on use of the former Faith Counseling Center building. Roy advertised the Disciple classes starting this fall and encouraged officers to sign up.

11. Closing prayer - to conclude the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

**Summary of Motions Approved by the Session**

* **Approval of the minutes from Stated Meeting on July 25, 2021.**
* **Approval to continue the current COVID policy until next meeting.**
* **Approval to continue planning for the Fall Jubilee on October 17th.**
* **Approval of the membership report.**
* **Approval to use $7,500 of reserve funds to paint the church steeple.**

**Actions of Session Approved by Email between July 25, 2021 & August 22, 2021**

No actions were conducted by email during this time frame.

Respectfully submitted by

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Barney Ray, Clerk of Session

Approved by Moderator

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Dr. Brad Clayton, Senior Pastor