Minutes of the Stated Session Meeting

Faith Presbyterian Church

Tallahassee, Florida

August 25, 2019

1. Call to Order/Opening Prayer/Devotion

After determining that everyone expected was present, the Stated Session Meeting of Faith Presbyterian Church was called to order and opened with a prayer in the room 110 of Faith Presbyterian Church by the Moderator, Senior Pastor Brad Clayton, at 11:42 a.m. Amanda Bevis provided the devotion.

The Ruling Elders (18) present were Lee Andre, Linda Antwi, Bob Apgar, Kevin Askew, Syauchen Baker, Randy Beach, Amanda Bevis, Ginny Dailey, Neal Evans, Andee Harrison, Cory Hill, Bill Holliman, Lee Marsh, Mike Metz, Charles Ranson, Linda Shelley, Jason Taylor and Malikah Woody. Associate Pastor Trinity Whitley (Teaching Elder) was also present. **A quorum of at least one-third of the members of the Session was present.**

The Ruling Elders (3) absent with prior notice were Becky Miller, Molly Novin and Frank Walper.

Barney Ray (Clerk of Session) and Nancy Wesley (Diaconate Representative) were also present.

2. Sharing of Joys and Concerns –

Joys were shared for:

* The absence of asbestos in the air in the Fellowship Hall and Preschool during installation of the new flooring in the Fellowship Hall which is almost completed.
* The more than forty (40) people who have stepped in to help with the various preschool transition activities over the next year.

Concerns were shared for:

* The many big questions facing the preschool during this time of transition to a new director.
* Andee Harrison’s daughter who is having tendon surgery on September 3rd
* The family of the Swift Creek Middle School student who passed away this week.

3. Clerk’s Report

1. Approval of the Minutes - The Moderator asked if there were any discussion or recommended revisions to the minutes from theJuly 28, 2019 Stated Session Meeting. Barney Ray mentioned that Linda Shelley identified one correction to the membership report. John S. Neely Jr. was misidentified as John S. Needy, Jr. A motion was made **to approve the minutes as revised. The motion received a second. The Moderator called for a vote of the motion. The motion was approved.**
2. UKirk support using Amazon Smiles – Email received from Frank Walper recommended sharing how to support the UKirk ministry by using Amazon Smiles. This included sharing this information with the Presbytery to include in future communications with churches throughout the Presbytery. The Session agreed with this recommendation. Trinity Whitley advised that when ordering from Amazon that you have to add your items to your cart and then go login at the Amazon Smiles webpage (smile.amazon.com) to check out in order to select the Presbyterian University Center for them to receive a donation from the purchase.
3. Next Presbytery Meeting on Tuesday, October 29th at Fellowship Presbyterian in Tallahassee – **Linda Shelley volunteered to serve as one of the two commissioners.** The Clerk requested Elders check their calendars and let him know if they could serve as a commissioner for the next meeting.

4. Pastor’s Report –

1. Focus 2019 Update – **Ginny Dailey shared that the preschool** has three (3) brand new scholarship children who are either younger siblings of Sealey Elementary students or will be attending Sealey in the future. The three children and their families are grateful and have been wonderful. The total annual cost for the three scholarships is $26,400 and they are fully funded. The children were very excited to go to preschool. Preschool survey is available to complete. The Moderator said that he wants all of the preschool to know that they are supported 100% by the church. We can show that support by attending preschool events and completing the survey. **Malikah Woody said that the Adults & Families** is planning for fall and spring to strengthen connections. The Faith Formations events will focus on the topics of environmental sustainability, mental health, suicide, Guardian Ad Litem, the need for foster parents, Yoga sessions on Wednesday evenings and a new salt shaker’s group for lunch or dinner with different people. Mike Metz also mentioned outdoor movie nights in November and December. Neal Evans asked about where we can find out when committees are meeting and get copies of the agenda ahead of time in case we wanted to attend them. The Moderator said that unless committees are specifically identified on the church calendar on a specific date, they meet on the monthly committee night. He said that moderators need to let Cheri Harkema know if they are meeting differently than on the calendar. He said we need to brainstorm ways we can communicate and sharing this type of information. Various moderators mentioned that they do not normally get their agenda out until right before their meetings. The Moderator said that we all need to improve in that area and maybe even discuss agenda items for the next meeting before finishing the meetings. Barney Ray suggested that committee moderators can use the list of emails we receive from Cheri Harkema with the Session agenda to communicate our committee agendas with everyone on the Session. Trinity mentioned that there is a Pumpkin Patch meeting on Sept 8th after church and Ginny Dailey said there is a preschool listening session also on Sept 8th.
2. Long Term Strategic Plan (LTSP) Update – The Moderator said a church wide survey will be launched on September 8th thanks to the expertise of Chad Van Iddekinge. He said he expects all elders to participate in the survey. Charles Ranson said it is important to respond quickly after receiving it because if people delay they are less likely to complete it. He said 30% participation is considered a good response rate.
3. September 22 Session Meeting Start Time – This is the same date as the preschool homecoming weekend and Jubilee Sunday. We can either move the start time to 12:30 or move it to another Sunday such as September 29th. Witness and Management Committees will move their meeting scheduled for September 29th to another date. Trinity will need to miss for new member class. **The next Session Meeting will be held on September 29th**.
4. Stewardship Thank You Notes – We will need to send another round of Thank You notes in advance of the Stewardship campaign. He encouraged committees to start thinking about their 2020 budget requests.

5. Finance Report – Randy Beach said the finances are tighter than last year. Non-pledged contributions are less than budgeted. Receipts increased in August. The hope is that receipts will increase in the Fall as people get back into church programs.

6. Committee Reports – **Lee Andre said Children & Families** held their annual back to school splash party on Friday. Wednesday Night and Sunday School programs are starting for the year. **Bill Holliman reported that Youth & Families** sponsored some tough topics in planned programs for youth and their parents that will hopefully help everyone. He also mentioned that they were preparing for the Pumpkin Patch. **Malikah Woody said that Adults & Families** has a Single Together group for all ages but typically ages 30 and up. They had a beach trip over the summer. The committee is planning for Advent. **Linda Shelley reported that the Building & Grounds** provided an update to the installation of new flooring in the Fellowship Hall. When the carpet was pulled up, the tile under it came up as well which was not the plan. So they had an air quality test performed to check for asbestos particles in the Fellowship Hall and Preschool School Building as a precaution and none was found. **Neal Evans said that the next agenda for Management** will look at technology in the church. **Ginny Dailey said that Witness** is planning for the summer 2020 mission trip. Some members would like to return to Guatemala but a Hurricane Michael mission trip is likely. They are looking for a trip leader who will help with the planning over the next year. She said that they are looking into mission trip participant requirements like what Shannon Guse uses for youth wanting to go to Montreat. She said Mission Sunday is on October 6th. The **Preschool Board** and subcommittees are preparing for Beverly Sims’ retirement. She hired all but one of the teachers and to them, she is the preschool. They will conduct a strategic planning exercise to decide who we want to be which will help us with hiring a new director. They had a listening session with the local early learning coalition about the community need for childcare. They are conducting listening sessions for preschool parents on Sept 5th and church members on Sept 8th although either group can attend the other if they cannot make this schedule. Two issues of concern that they’ve heard is about adding infant and toddler care which are expensive and it is different from our history of preschool education and summer care. Currently we offer two weeks of the total ten weeks in the summer. They have looked at what other preschools are doing. Current teachers enjoy having time off in the summer. She said she wants elders to share that if they hear any concerns expressed that they are listening to everyone and collecting a lot of input and to have faith in the process. Preschool Homecoming weekend celebrating 60 years of the Faith Preschool is the weekend Sept 20th-22nd. Friday night is a catered dinner. Saturday is a tailgate before the FSU football game and Sunday is the service and Jubilee afterward. Linda Antwi said that **Stewardship** will be stuffing envelopes at their next meeting on Sept 9th if anyone would like to help. **Andee Harrison said that Worship & Music Committee** will discuss restarting Taize services and Peter Pursino will need some help with their production of Godspell. Horizons youth ensemble (6th-12th grades) will meet Sunday night before youth group beginning Sept 8th. October 10th is a music with a mission concert. **Amanda Bevis reported that Evangelism** is looking at existing connections with the community such as through VBS and Preschool as a potential for evangelism. She said they are also reviewing policies and procedures. **Jason Taylor said that Personnel** are discussing the potential for a part-time volunteer coordinator and whether to add some additional administrative responsibilities as well and looking into a Sabbatical policy. Some questions were asked about continuing education for staff. The Moderator said that he, Trinity, Shannon and Mary have time they can take off to do this and a limited allocation to cover the cost. Amanda Bevis asked when the time for input would come for the volunteer coordinator position and would the Session have to approve it. Jason said that they are looking into if it is needed at this point. If it is determined it is needed, it would be a budget ask for 2020 and require the Session to approve.

7. Communications Reports – Amanda Bevis said she received a lot of positive feedback from Session members after last month’s report. They will develop a communications plan for the church hopefully next month. She said that they will continue to provide analytics in each Session packet. July is a slower month which is why the numbers were different than May and June. She said that she had heard from three committees identifying their communications liaison. **She asked for the other committees to identify someone and the Moderator requested that moderators make this a priority**. Amanda said that Cheri Harkema is our lead and go-to communications person in the church.

8. Diaconate Report – Trinity said they need help with the Jubilee event. She said people can go to the church’s website for the link to the sign genius to help out. They voted to contribute and sponsor Santa Day by Hang Tough community group. More details to come.

9. Consent Agenda – A change to one of the dates for baptism was announced for the Detwilers to 9/1.

1. The **Worship & Music Committee** requested Session approval for **baptism requests** from **David and Julie Detwiler for their daughter Audrey on 9/1/2019** and from **Melanie and Greg Black for their daughter Katherine on 10/13/2019.**
2. The Youth & Families Committee requested Session approval for the following:
* From Youth Cartel, Teaching Tolerance, PCUSA’s Faith Questions and the Bible Project to supplement a high school study on justice.
* To use the Bible Project as supplemental videos in all youth Sunday School classes.
* To show during youth group the documentary “Won’t You Be My Neighbor?” (PG-13), a documentary about Fred Rogers.
* To take a youth field trip to see “A Beautiful Day In the Neighborhood” when it comes out in theatres in November. This film is not yet rated.

It was mentioned by Trinity Whitley that there will need to be a Called Session meeting on September 1st before the service to receive the Detwilers into membership. Lee Andre and Amanda Bevis said they could be there and Amanda volunteered to clerk for the meeting. The Moderator asked if there was additional discussion needed.  **Bill Holimon made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Neal Evans seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

10. Motions in Action Agenda – No motions were on the Action Agenda.

11. Items Not In Agenda – Ginny Dailey said that the Preschool Board would like the Session to approve their request to solicit donations for a gift to honor of Beverly Sims. The Moderator asked for a vote on whether the Session approved adding this request to the agenda. **The Session approved adding this item to the agenda.** Ginny Dailey presented the **motion to approve solicitation of donations to fund a Sims Sunshine Stage to create a shaded space on the playground.**  **Her motion received a second from Linda Shelley.** Questions were asked about the cost and on-going maintenance. Ginny reported that she did not have a cost estimate yet and that the Board has a maintenance budget line for the playground and she didn’t think this would increase maintenance costs. There was no end date determined for the solicitation. She would propose informing everyone of this opportunity to donate to this project. Linda Shelley asked about a Love Gift for Beverly. Jason Taylor said that Personnel Committee has been providing a financial gift from their budget in recent history rather than soliciting Love Offerings each time a member of staff departed. Neil Evans expressed concern about not having a cost estimate. Linda Shelley said she is concerned that without approval today, they will miss an opportunity during September 22nd weekend to raise funds. **The motion approved.**

Linda Shelley asked to add an item to the agenda about communicating to the church about installing a tree and a plaque to honor someone. She said that this has been done many times in the past. She didn’t know if it would be considered fundraising for someone to pay the church to acquire and plant a tree and the plaque. The Moderator stated that if that has been the practice of the church that Session approval was not necessary.

12. Other – No other business discussed.

# 13. Communion - Holy Communion was observed to conclude the meeting at 1:26 p.m.

**Actions of Session Approved by Email between July 28th & August 25th**

The next Stated Session Meeting is on Sunday, September 29, 2019.

Respectfully submitted by

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Barney Ray, Clerk of Session

Approved by Moderator

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Brad Clayton, Senior Pastor