

**First Presbyterian Church**  
**The Work and Worship of the Session**  
**Monday, April 27, 2020**

The stated meeting of the Session of First Presbyterian Church (Greensboro) was held on Monday, April 27, 2020 starting at 5:35 p.m. via Zoom as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. There was no March Session meeting due to the onset of the coronavirus pandemic. Neil Dunnivant, Executive Pastor, served as meeting moderator. Dolly Jacobs attended the meeting as a called ordained staff member. Other staff present included Kevin Murray, Donna Chase, Danny Massie, Alexandra Mauney, and Nate Sell. There were 65 people in attendance via Zoom.

Neil called the meeting to order at 5:35pm. Danny Massie led the Session meeting in a devotion and referred to Psalm 66 during his comments. God is always at work for the good of His people. In this unprecedented time, COVID-19 will change Christian communities moving forward. God's sovereignty will prevail. God will use this time to bless His children as He always has.

### **Worship**

Danny then focused his remarks to the Session about his vision about worship. We are learning to do worship in a new way. We continue to Livestream every Sunday morning and attendance is good. We have gotten positive feedback from members.

We are also looking for ways to do things better. A small group has been formed to look at evaluating our technology to see where we can make improvements, coordinating efforts to hear more from our senior pastors more frequently during this time, and incorporating the Rejoice experience to be a part of our Livestream services.

There were many comments and questions from Session members, including the following:

1. Are we able to livestream the Rejoice service?
2. What improvements can be made with the lighting?
3. Have families record prayers and share them during the service as Prayers of the People. Families can do this on their iPhones. It is an easy way to generate community connection for folks missing seeing each other. From Terri Maulsby.
4. Anne Brown and Wells Brabham shared comments about the state of COVID-19 in Guilford County. As our community returns to normal, we should not assume that our members will be comfortable coming out of their homes as they have in the past. We need to live with the virus.
5. Sara Stroud stressed the importance of adjusting worship as the pandemic wanes. We may need to reenter worship with a hybrid model where some congregation members attend while social distancing, and other congregation members continue to Livestream.
6. Dolly asked the Session to be thinking about funerals, communion, and baptisms, and how we can offer these traditions and sacraments during this time.
7. Griffin Jones reminded us to keep local and state restrictions in mind while we make decisions on worship moving forward.
8. Debbie West suggested Facebook Live.
9. Dolly Jacobs and Alexandra Mauney invited conversations about Presbytery policy during this time.

### **Pastoral Care**

Dolly Jacobs then offered remarks about pastoral care during the COVID period.

The pastoral staff has contacted all who live in retirement communities. Doug McElroy has contacted the veterans. Maggie has contacted the people who attend our caregivers' support group and other members who look to her for medical guidance.

During weekly staff meetings via Zoom, the pastoral care staff has brainstormed a list of those who live alone. Over 30 church members have volunteered to contact 90 members who have been identified as living alone.

Seventeen Session members have written notes of thank you and prayers to 50 church members who have been identified as "first responders."

Dolly asked Session members to continue to send her names of those who live alone, those who work in the medical profession, those who have their own businesses, or have lost their jobs.

She also asked Session members to "adopt" an FPC member who is either a senior in high school or college and write a note to them during the month of May.

Session members responded to Dolly's report with the following questions and comments:

1. Continue to reach out to seniors at our universities, colleges and high schools. From Lisa Cook.
2. Dolly is coordinating with Kevin Murray and the Youth Committee about ways to recognize and engage our graduates.
3. Make sure we stay in close touch with the confirmands. From Debbie West.
4. Assess how the church can communicate with folks who do not have email access or similar technology.
5. Since we don't expect the COVID environment to improve significantly for the foreseeable future, coordinate a long-term plan for reaching out to members, such as Session members being assigned to up to 10 individuals to contact a month. From John Atkinson.

## **Christian Formation**

Donna Chase addressed Christian formation and began her remarks with thanking those Session members who are involved with Christian Formation.

She updated the group on the various Sunday school classes and small groups that have been continuing to meet in different ways during the pandemic. Book clubs are meeting. Some of the circles are meeting.

Many of our summer youth trips have been cancelled due to the pandemic. No decisions have been made yet about Montreat and Vacation Church School. God Talks, previously scheduled for May, has been cancelled. Confirmation small groups are continuing to connect with confirmands. Confirmation Sunday has been rescheduled for October 2020.

Donna concluded her remarks by reminding us that the organizations that will survive and thrive during the pandemic will be those that are willing to reinvent themselves.

Session members responded by reiterating that overcommunication is important and appreciated right now.

## **Outreach**

Neil Dunnivant updated the Session on the following:

1. Camille Townsend needs help with Hot Dish and Help on May 5th and May 7th. Please send Camille an email or give her a call if Session members can assist. Hot Dish & Hope participation was down for a short period of time but now has returned to normal.
2. The Giving Back Garden is thriving and its volunteers are regularly attending to it.
3. The financial status of the church has been blessed beyond belief.
  - a. We have been approved, and received the initial deposit, for a \$479,000 Payroll Protection Program loan from the federal government. Many thanks to Andrew Spainhour, Penne Prigge, Rosa McNairy,

Art Winstead, Bill McNairy and countless others who have contributed their time and expertise to solidifying the loan.

- b. The church wants to help some of its furloughed workers and is brainstorming about how best to do so.
  - c. Thank you to those members who have paid their pledges early in 2020, as well as to members who have increased their pledges this year.
4. New Elder Training will begin in May. The retreat will be held at the church and many of the training classes will be held via Zoom.

### **Additional Business**

Sheri Evans gave a PNC report. Unfortunately, the Committee is at a standstill because members are unable to visit the final candidates and they are unable to visit FPC. She asked the Session to pray for the candidates, the PNC, and the selection process. Danny Massie has committed to stay with FPC until it finds a new pastor, or until FPC no longer needs his services.

Nate Sell offered prayers for the people.

The Session meeting was adjourned at 6:51pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Louise Maulsby Bristol

Clerk of Session