

First Presbyterian Church
The Work and Worship of the Session
Monday, March 15, 2021

The stated meeting of the Session of First Presbyterian Church (Greensboro) was held on Monday, March 15, 2021 starting at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom meeting due to the COVID pandemic. Jill Duffield, Senior Pastor, served as meeting moderator. There were 64 attendees, including session members and senior pastoral staff. Guests included Anne Albert, Ann Alexander, Donna Chase, Christine Ciaccio, Keith Dove, Debby Foster, Erwin Fuller, Tim Millisor and Lisa Witherspoon.

Welcome

Jill Duffield opened the meeting with prayer and a reading of Psalm 118. Upon a motion made and seconded, the consent agenda was approved as distributed, including the previously attached minutes of the March 7 congregational meeting, February 2021 membership reports, reports of the Discipleship, Hospitality and Pastoral Care committees, and Memorial Tributes for Park Rutan Davidson, Nancy Edmunds Hannah and Peggy Watkins Wharton.

What's Going Well

Attendees shared numerous ways they have seen God's movement of spirit at FPC, including: Lenten small groups, our congregation's generosity, new births in the FPC community, our church is officially an Earth Care congregation, God's presence during a difficult time for church members.

Covid Task Force

Although our campus currently remains closed, there are hopeful signs that the virus is abating in our community. The test positivity rate has decreased to around 5%, hospitalizations and deaths are decreasing and Greensboro's COVID hospital has closed. Our community's Ro value is 0.98 however it is trending upwards. Wells Brabham stressed that we need to remain vigilant.

The task force is pleased to recommend a phased reopening at FPC. Beginning April 18th, 2021 weekday gatherings of groups (up to 50 people) are allowed to meet outdoors on campus and groups (up to 25 people) to meet indoors. Beginning May 2nd we will resume modified in-person worship and funerals and weddings of up to 175 people will be allowed. Beginning May 9th we plan to offer two in person worship services in the sanctuary with up to 175 attendees.

Sunday school classes will resume in the fall, but these groups are allowed to meet at FPC during the week starting April 18th.

Finance

Joe Vartanian, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, presented the report on the January 2021 finances.

Our revenues through February were \$968,119 which is \$202,521 higher than projected and \$17,688 less than last year at this time. Our pledged and non-pledged gifts have come in significantly better than projected thus far this year. We have not collected any plate offerings to date this year.

Our expenses through January were \$616,183 which is \$26,628 less than projected and \$145,230 better than this time last year. Our net revenue is \$351,936 which is better than projected by \$229,149 and \$127,543 better than this time last year.

Statement of Operating Activities- Explanations of significant variances from year to date budget:

1. Contributions and gifts are \$188,053 over budget mainly due to pledged and non-pledged giving.
2. Program expenses are under budget mainly due to music and worship, Christian education, and congregational care.
3. Repairs are under budget mainly due to capital repairs and HVAC repairs.

We anticipate that as the church reopens, we might expect to see increases in all gifts, however we will also see increases in our expenses. We continue to be extremely grateful for our congregation's generosity.

Stewardship

Christine Ciaccio and Jim Hoeger provided an update from the Stewardship Committee. We have received pledges in total of \$2,349,823 which is \$150,177 short of our goal for 2021. The committee is continuing its efforts to contact the 122 members who pledged last year but have not yet done so this year. If this group gives the same pledge amount as in 2020, we would achieve an additional \$380,903 in pledge contributions.

Of the 122 families that pledged in 2020 but not yet in 2021, the committee has successfully obtained 30 pledges. It will continue to reach out to families that it hasn't connected with to date. Neil asked any session members who would be willing to make phone calls to notify Christine and Jim.

Pastoral Care

Dolly encouraged the session to read the Pastoral Committee report that was prepared by Debbie West. She announced the retirement of congregational nurse Maggie Turner. Since joining FPC in 1999 Maggie was instrumental in creating programs such as First Friends, the Health Ministry Team, flu clinics and the Teddy Bear clinic for our preschoolers. After initially retiring in December 2010, Maggie graciously returned to FPC in 2015 as the Director of the Sadye Bowles Ministry Team and to work with our pastoral care ministries.

Church members are invited to email Maggie at mturner@fpcgreensboro.org prior to her last day on April 30th, 2021 to express their gratitude for her service.

Prayers of the People

Dolly Jacobs invited session members to share their prayer joys and prayer concerns.

Scripture Reading

Chuck Norman read Romans 5:1-5

Faith Sharing

Tessa Kirkpatrick shared a personal testimony of her personal faith.

Property

Beau McIntosh updated the session on the Property Committee. FPC signed a six month listing agreement to market the four Greene Street properties and the Shetler Building. A marketing packet will be given to the committee for their approval and the sale plans to “go live” the first week of April 2021. We anticipate a 3-4 week timeframe preceding a call for offer process. Beau addressed a number of questions from members of the session. Neil assured us that the property committee will vet the offers very carefully.

Sid and Cathy Batts Pastoral Residency

Katherine Farless gave a report on behalf of Chris Barbee, committee chair. The committee was able to meet and interview two candidates this year. An offer was extended to and accepted by Rachel Smith, a 3rd year student at Duke Divinity school. Rachel and her fiancé Steven are resident advisors at the Friendship House in Durham, an intentional community that allows persons with developmental disabilities to live among a supportive community. Rachel’s start date will likely be mid-August and she will be our only pastoral resident next year.

New Business

Jill reminded us of the Holy Week events. There will be a drive through Communion and evening video service on Maundy Thursday, April 1st and an evening video service on Good Friday, April 2nd. An outdoor walk-through Easter Vigil is planned at three different times on Saturday and Sunday April 3rd and 4th. Easter Sunday will also include two sunrise outdoor services and a video service. More information is forthcoming.

Closing Prayer

Jill offered a closing prayer entitled Lord It is Night from the New Zealand prayer book.

The Session meeting was adjourned at 7:05p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Stroud
Clerk of Session