

MINUTES OF THE SESSION

Stated Meeting

First Presbyterian Church, Durham, NC

Monday, February 26, 2018

**STATED MEETING OF THE SESSION**

Called to order with prayer at 7:00 pm by Mindy Douglas.

Jane Wettach led a devotional with an excerpt from the Declaration of Faith and Wendell Berry's *Jayber Crow*, and shared reflections on the concept of God and of church. Jane opened meeting with prayer.

PRESENT—A quorum was present, including:

- Moderator Mindy Douglas, Pastor
- Marilyn Hedgpeth, Associate Pastor
- Christyn Klinck, Clerk
- Guests: Susan Dunlap, Sharon Hirsch, and Jon Abels
- the following Elders:

**Class of 2018**

Al Arrowood

Lenore Champion

Miriam Morey

Gerald Postema

Eric Wiebe

Jane Williams

Sigfried Fullenkamp

**Class of 2019**

George Bernhardt

Barbara Buckley

Libby Gully

Delia Kwon

Dewey Lawson

Karen Romines

**Class of 2020**

Carol Carson

Brent Curtis

Andy Henry

Tyler Momsen-Hudson

Alice Raney

Cris Rivera

Jane Wettach

Excused absences: Sam Miglarese, Ellie Dilworth, Chris Brown (Property Chair)

Other absences: Caroline Rourk; Gray Wilson

CONCERNS/CELEBRATIONS

Mindy shared concerns and celebrations of the church.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Mindy distributed copies of L. Gregory Jones article *Embrace the Wilderness*, from Duke's Faith and Leadership series. The article is attached to this report.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA: *It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the agenda.***

CONSENT AGENDA: *It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve the items in the consent agenda:*

A. Reception of minutes

1. Stated Session Meeting January 29, 2018
2. Email vote: Sanctuary Use on Feb 13, 2018, by People's Alliance, The City of Durham Human Relations Commission, and Southerners on New Ground: *Twenty-one votes—21 for the use of the sanctuary, none opposed.*
3. Congregational Meeting February 18, 2018

B. Weddings:

- Kelly Leslie and Joe Vaillancourt, April 20-21, Mindy performing ceremony
- Cheryl Varghese and Kelvin Varghese, June 1-2, guest pastor
- Alexandra Lowe and Graham Turner , June 29-30, guest pastor
- Jeremy Nabors and Susan Ward, August, Mindy performing ceremony

C. Committee minutes and Diaconate Report – Christian Education 02-2018; Finance and Investment 2-20-18; Property 02-12-18; Service and Mission 02-2018; Worship and the Arts 02-07-2018; Diaconate Report 01-29-18

D. Presbytery Benevolence Form, approved as part of the 2018 budget at January 2018 Meeting.

STAFF REPORTS

**Mindy**

See report attached to these minutes.

**Marilyn**

See report attached to these minutes. Marilyn highlighted some items of her report.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. **Christian Education** – Lenore Champion, Caroline Rourk, Brent Curtis

See report.

Lenore mentioned that the “families with young children” gatherings are well-received. Middle school parents want to join in for the supper trips to Bull City Burger. This past Sunday the FPC youth group joined with other youth groups to watch the documentary *Screenagers*.

B. **Finance and Investment** – Al Arrowood, Carol Carson

See report.

*Motion: Approve the FPC's Investments and Their Management: A Reference Document.*

Al reviewed the history of the document: Almost two years ago, the Session established the Investment Subcommittee, which was tasked to do two things: 1)

write an investment policy for the church; and 2) find an investment manager to work with. Both tasks were accomplished. Carol Carson added that the Reference Document was written to help everyone understand what the investments are. It's a living document that will grow and be updated as the church changes. Al commended Carol on the quality of the document, and they both encouraged everyone to read it.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

Al commented on two other items:

1. Prepaid pledges are about twice what they were last year. This is probably in anticipation of changes in the tax law.
2. The committee is seeking volunteers to assist with the weekly counting of receipts on Monday morning. Please let Al or Carol know if you are interested.

C. **Personnel** – Gray Wilson

No report.

D. **Property** –Barbara Buckley

See report.

1. Motion: Establish a Grounds and Landscape Subcommittee as a permanent subcommittee of the Property Committee.

Barbara explained that a group has been meeting for several years to work on the landscaping and grounds. The Property Committee wants to make this a permanent subcommittee. Barbara moved that the name be changed to “Landscaping and Gardening Subcommittee.” Cris Rivera seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. There was no discussion on the main motion, and it passed unanimously as revised: *Establish and Landscaping and Gardening Subcommittee as a permanent subcommittee of the Property Committee.*

2. *Motion: Adopt the following worship safety protocol: All exterior doors and the main sanctuary basement hallway doors will be locked 10 minutes after the beginning of worship (e.g. on Sundays 11:10). A volunteer will be in the lobby during the entire service to let any latecomers in. Anybody not wishing to participate in worship and who is not here to participate in a church related activity will be asked to leave.*

The clerk proposed adding “e.g.” before “on Sundays at 11:10,” which was approved by consensus.

Discussion focused around the need to balance security with a welcoming environment. Questions were asked about the details of the locked doors, the kinds of threat that the committee is attempting to address, and the number of people who come in late through the back of the sanctuary. Comments included that the path to the back through the basement is also locked to prevent access to the children in the nursery.

*Dewey Lawson proposed sending the motion back to the committee (i.e. the Emergency Management Team) for more information and alternative plans. The proposal was agreed to by consensus.*

3. *Motion: The Emergency Management Team will report directly to the Session.*

There was no discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Barbara Buckley clarified that the report regarding Motion 2 above will come to the session from the EMT.

E. **Service and Mission** – Jane Williams, Libby Gulley

See report.

1. Report on City of Durham plans for the parking lot between FPC and St. Philip's Episcopal – Susan Dunlap, Sharon Hirsch

Jane introduced Susan and Sharon to give an update from Durham CAN and to report on recommendations made to county regarding the parking lot. Documents distributed included a timeline, a summary of affordable housing statistics, and a Joint Statement from FPC and St. Philip's (all attached to these minutes). Susan and Sharon gave a brief history of CAN's advocacy efforts for affordable housing in Durham; reviewed the handouts; and discussed the momentum that has been built for these efforts. They are hoping that many people from FPC will attend the April meeting of Durham CAN. A brief question-and-answer session followed.

F. **Stewardship** - Miriam Morey, George Bernhardt

No report.

G. **Worship and the Arts** – Jerry Postema, Alice Raney

See report.

1. ***Motion: James Biery and Boyd Gibson will be "Composers in Residence" at First Presbyterian Church.***

Jerry review the proposal "Composer in Residence" and briefly introduced each of the proposed composers. The motion will allow the Session to create a position "composer in residence" and install candidates into that position. The term is up to three years, and is available for renewal with agreement of the director of music and the WATAC. Biery will be in residence for three months and Boyd for three years. Both are established composers and musicians, and the committee feels grateful to have this opportunity. After a few questions and comments, *the motion was approved unanimously.*

ONGOING BUSINESS

- Report from Strategic Planning Team (SPT) – Jon Abels

The SPT met on Feb. 18 to create a plan for the coming year. The first phase is the listening phase, during which the team will meet with representatives from five categories, in small groups. The listening phase will be followed by surveys, sharing the results with the congregation, and a second round of larger focus groups to gather data which the team can study and use for further investigations. The SPT hopes to have

written recommendations by January of 2019. Jon answered questions and responded to comments. Mindy referred Session members to her article in the newsletter.

NEW BUSINESS

- Report from Feb 2018 Presbytery Meeting – No report. Representatives had excused absences due to Tom Carsey’s funeral.
- Approve Durham First 2017 Annual Statistical Report. *It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve this report.*
- Approve Durham First 2016 Annual Statistical Report. *It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve this report.*
- Maundy Thursday – Delton Farmer, interim pastor at Covenant Presbyterian; Joe Harvard, moderator of the session; and Patrice Nelson issued an invitation to join Covenant for a Maundy Thursday service. Service at 6 p.m. and meal at 5 p.m. *All moved to accept the invitation, and Andy seconded it. The motion passed unanimously.*

FPC would like to invite Covenant for Good Friday Stations of the Cross. The invitation can come from the Session. Jerry will poll the WATAC and return to Session with a motion.

- Jerry added an invitation: Trinity Avenue Presbyterian has been extending hospitality to Beth El Synagogue for more than a year while they undergo renovations. The two congregations are planning a 10-day interfaith trip to Israel. Some from FPC will be going as well, and there is still room for others to join. Anyone interested can talk to Jerry.

REMINDERS

- Next stated session meeting: March 19; 2018, Jerry Postema will lead the devotion. Note that this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. (4<sup>th</sup> Monday is during Holy Week).
- Congregational meeting is this coming Sunday, after worship.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS, the meeting closed with prayer by Mindy Douglas at 8:25 pm.

This meeting and all meetings of the year are moderated according to *The Book of Order* and *Robert’s Rules of Order*.

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Christyn F. Klinck, Clerk

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Rev. Mindy Douglas, Moderator

Approved by Session: \_\_\_\_\_