

MINUTES OF THE SESSION
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON, TEXAS
August 16, 2022

The August Stated Meeting of the Session began at 6: 00pm in the Fellowship Hall. Dr. Jim Birchfield called the meeting to order with a quorum present.

Jim Birchfield introduced the new Youth Director, Marty O'Rourke. Marty introduced himself and how he felt called to come to First Presbyterian Church . The elders laid hands on Marty and prayed for his ministry as Youth Director.

OMNIBUS MOTIONS

The following omnibus motion, provided to Session in advance of the meeting, was duly adopted:

- Resolved, that the submitted Session Meeting Minutes June 21, 2022, be approved.
- A motion was made, seconded, and approved to elect Cindy Cook as Member at Large for the year 2023.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Finance

Steve Oldham

The church finished the year in the black.

Personnel Committee

Amy Winstead

The Officer Nominating Committee has inquired as to whether the nominated elders should undergo a criminal background check. The Personnel Committee is working with the Governance Committee to work out guidelines.

Pastor Nominating Committee

Cindy Cook

The committee is working through the submitted names and is narrowing the field. They have moved to the stage of visiting the churches of the nominees.

Officer Nominating Committee

Brent Dorsey

The committee has 15 nominees and will begin interviewing in September. The committee is requesting that the name of the committee be changed from Officer Nominating Committee to Elder Nominating Committee. This change will need to be voted on at the Annual Congregational Meeting in November.

Clerk's Report

Martha Barnes

- The Elders are requested to sign the "Affirmation of Service to First Presbyterian Church Houston" and the "Conflict of Interest Policy."
- The Session Retreat will be September 23-24 at the Barnes Ranch. A rough draft of the agenda for the retreat was distributed.
- There has been feedback on the Governance model which may require that a few tweaks be made.
- A contact list is in the session packet.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting will be Sunday, November 6, 2022, following the worship service in the sanctuary.
- Elders are asked to wear their name tags on Sunday mornings.

Michael Harada

As the church is in a state of change, the Lord is calling us to a season of fasting. A month will be designated and then days can be chosen for days of fasting. More information will be forthcoming.

Pastor's Reports

Jim Birchfield

- Beginning this Sunday there will be a seven week focus on "Here to Serve ", a vision of stewardship and giving. The congregation will receive a brochure sharing the vision for community giving with a pledge card included.
- A proposal will be made jointly by Governance and Finance to Session at the next Session meeting to make a change to the configuration of Session committees under the current governance model.
- A handout was distributed showing the dashboard designed to track the criteria to rate church "wellness" and the relationship to goals. Work continues to establish the formula that calculates perceived attendance from online statistics.
- The search for a Choir Director and Young Adult Director has been paused until the new Senior Pastor is present.
- The session is encouraged to support Marty O'Rourke and his team in his new role as Youth Director.

Jon Crantz

- There will be training Sunday August 21 at 11:45am after the Grand Hall worship service for those Elders who wish to be certified to lead Communion.
- Elders are asked to signup to assist in the worship services.

ACTION (DISCUSSION) ITEM

Introduction of Session Portal

Patrick Matthews

The session is invited to participate in a Digital Govenda Portal through the First Presbyterian Church website. This portal is a repository for documents, materials, votes, and surveys etc. as a resource for use by the session.

Worship Update

Dan Wagner

- Sunday, September 18, 2022, will be the beginning of an 8:15am service which will be a service where contemporary and traditional worship come together. The structure will focus on an encounter with the living God using worship elements (music styles, preaching, readings etc.) that best support the purpose of each part of the worship service. Young families have been requesting an early service and it is one more step back to normalcy.
- A motion was made and approved to have only one worship service for the Annual Fall Kickoff, September 11, 2022, at 10:45am.

Review of First Presbyterian Annual Calendar

Jim Birchfield

A handout was distributed showing the 2022-2023 Ministry Calendar and a shorter version of the Big Event Days. More information about Community Life will be coming.

Review of Progress: Four Initiatives

A Priority Binder was distributed outlining the progress of the Four Initiatives.

- Progress since the initial presentation
- Progress of strategies
- Futures goals

There will be quarterly progress reports:

- How do we know we are progressing?
- How do we know how the initiatives are working together?

- How are we calling for improved congregational engagement?
- The Initiatives
- Missional - Caitlin Rhodes-Karahadian/Jim Birchfield
 - Outreach - Emmanuel Paulpeter
 - Community Life - Jon Crantz
 - Worship - Dan Wagner

Communion was served by intinction by Rev. Jon Crantz and elder Kristen Foxley.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40pm with the "Lord's Prayer."

Martha Barnes

Rev. Jim Birchfield Moderator

Martha Barnes, Clerk of Session