

SESSION AGENDA
Tuesday, August 16, 2022
Fellowship Hall (In Person)
5:30 PM Dinner – 6:00pm Meeting Begins

<u>Item</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Opening Prayer	Birchfield
Omnibus Motion	Birchfield
Minutes	
Consent Motions	
Election of 2023 Member At Large	
Committee Reports & Updates	
Finance Committee	Oldham/Roberts
Personnel Committee	Winstead
PNC Update	Cook
Advisory Committee (Clerk’s Report)	Barnes
• An Invitation To Fast	Harada
Pastor’s Report	Birchfield
Discussion Items	
Introduction Of Session Portal	Matthews
Worship Update	Wagner
Review Of FPC Annual Calendar	Birchfield
Review Of Progress: Four Initiatives	Various
First Look: September Session Retreat	Birchfield
Session Prayer	All
• Homily Reflection	Crantz
• Communion	
• Closing Prayer & Doxology	

2022-23 Upcoming Session Meetings & Important Dates

Session Retreat Dates: September 23-24
No Session Meeting on September 20
 October Session Meeting: Tuesday, October 18
 Congregational Meeting: Sunday, November 6
 November Session Meeting: Tuesday, November 15
No Session Meeting in December (Session Christmas Party on 12/9)
 January Session Meeting: Tuesday, January 17
 February Session Meeting: Tuesday, February 21
 March Session Meeting: Tuesday, March 21
 April Session Meeting: Tuesday, April 18
 May Session Meeting: Tuesday, May 16
 June Session Meeting: Tuesday, June 20

MINUTES OF THE SESSION
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON, TEXAS
June 21, 2022

The June 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.

The Session members gathered around Rev. Andrew Stepp, laid hands on him, and prayed for him, his family and for his new ministry. The Session thanked Andrew for his service to God here at First Presbyterian Church and that we were sending him to Mandarin Florida with much love. Andrew then thanked the Session for the time he and his family have spent at First Presbyterian Church for the past 15 years.

OMNIBUS MOTIONS

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

- Resolved, that the submitted Session Meeting Minutes May 17, 2022, be approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Finance

Steve Oldham

May was \$396k in contributions, \$467k in total revenue for the month. Expenses for the month were \$534k, a negative variance of \$67k. We finished May with ~\$4m cash on hand, with \$750k remaining in capex commitments from previous projects. We expect to finish June with \$3m, \$2m above our cash reserve.

Advisory Council

Martha Barnes

- The Presbytery Meeting will be held at Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church Houston, September 16-17. A request was made for those interested in serving as commissioners.
- The Session Retreat will be the following weekend September 23-24 at the Barnes Ranch.
- A motion was made and approved to elect Susan Miclette as the Clerk of the Elder Class of 2025.
- The election of the 2023 Member at Large has been delayed until the next Session Meeting.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting will be Sunday, November 6, 2022, following the worship service in the sanctuary.

Pastor's Reports

Jim Birchfield

- Jim Birchfield will serve as Interim Executive Pastor.
- Jon Crantz will serve as Senior Associate Pastor.
- The Youth and Children Ministries will report to Caitlin Rhodes-Karahadian.
- As of July 1, 2022, Lisa Belus will serve full time as the Human Resources Director.
- Erin Varnell will become the Administrative Assistant to the Senior Pastor.
- There will be a small training for Elders to be empowered to serve communion in the worship service in the Grand Hall beginning the middle of July.
- The August Session Meeting will focus on
 - A set of Progress Markers.
 - Metrics
 - A Year Long Calendar

These items will be the subject of the Fall Session Retreat.

- There will be a focus on "Here to Serve 2.0" from mid-August to the 1st Sunday in October. The Stewardship Giving emphasis will be asking the congregation to "Fund the Vision." There will be a luncheon to share with the congregation "Where your money is going."
- Jim Birchfield distributed an email from the co-executor of the Dunagin estate describing an estate gift of \$3 million dollars and that it is to be used in the "Here to Serve Campaign".
- Jim Birchfield shared a power point presentation of "Tracking What Matters." Tracking membership attendance, in person and on-line, vs giving trends. Are we tracking the right things the right way? Attendance is more than people in the pews, it includes those online and other vital

groups whose participation cannot be tracked by counting heads in a worship service. Giving trends seem to indicate that the current reduction in giving may primarily be an 'asking' problem...i.e., the Session/Pastors have not, as yet, outlined the new/continued vision and asked for the congregation to support that vision.

ACTION (DISCUSSION) ITEM

Steve Oldham/Hunter Johnson

- The 2023 Budget was presented which included a chart describing the different actions approved in 2021-2022 that add funds to the 2022-2023 budget delineating them from increases to the 2022-2023 budget coming from actions to support the four priority pillars. This was followed by a period of questions and answers. Time was given for those who wished to speak for and against the approval of the budget.
- A motion was made and approved, with two objections, to accept the proposed 2023 Budget of \$10,823,010 .

Communion was served by intinction by Rev. Jim Birchfield and elder Brent Dorsey.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 with the singing of the *Doxology*.

Rev. Jim Birchfield Moderator

Martha Barnes, Clerk of Session

**First Presbyterian Church Houston
2022 - 2023 Operating Budget**

Revenues	
Contributions	8,228,010
Presbyterian School	780,000
Kids Day Out KDO	400,000
Program Revenue	200,000
Investment Income:	
TPF - Morrow/Vernon	40,000
TPF - Flourish Funding - Bonner B	250,000
TPF - Permanent Funds Ministry	725,000
Dale Avenue Properties	200,000
Total Revenues	10,823,010
Expenditures	
Grants Scholarships	725,000
Program Expense	200,000
KDO	400,000
Children & Family	538,166
Communications Media	1,006,741

Community Life	668,728
Equipping & Sending	500,506
Ministry Support	3,976,946
Outreach	1,471,048
Next Generation	574,300
Worship	761,575
Total Expenditures	10,823,010
Expenditures Non-Cash	
Depreciation Amortization	615,000

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HOUSTON
MEMBERSHIP REPORT TO THE SESSION, JUNE 2022

NEW CHURCH MEMBERS:

- None

RESTORED TO ACTIVE ROLL

- None

REMOVED FROM ACTIVE ROLL

- 1 (Transfer Letter Sent)

MOVED TO INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP ROLL

- None

DISMISSED FROM INACTIVE ROLL

- None

DECEASED

- Glenn Blake 6/25/22
- John Kennedy 6/25/22
- Carol Vance 6/24/22

DISMISSED

- 3 (Moved to a different location)

MEMBERSHIP AS OF MAY 30, 2022

Gains 0

Losses 7

MEMBERSHIP AS OF JUNE 30, 2022

3,049

JUNE 2022

Baptisms: Infant: 3
Adult: None
Weddings: 0
Member Memorials: 1
NonMbr Memorials: 0
Internment (Memorial Garden) 1

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HOUSTON

MEMBERSHIP REPORT TO THE SESSION, FOR JULY 2022

NEW CHURCH MEMBERS:

- None

RESTORED TO ACTIVE ROLL

- None

REMOVED FROM ACTIVE ROLL

- None

MOVED TO INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP ROLL

- None

DISMISSED FROM INACTIVE ROLL

- None

DECEASED

- Charlotte Tomas
- William Hale
- Joyce Thompson

DISMISSED

- None

MEMBERSHIP AS OF JUNE 30, 2022: 3049

Gains 0

Losses 3

MEMBERSHIP AS OF JULY 31, 2022

3046

JULY 2022

Baptisms: Infant: None
 Adult: None
Weddings: None
Member Memorials: 2
NonMbr Memorials: 0
Internment (Memorial Garden) 2

Reports

Finance

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
July 7, 2022 12PM
Pastor's Conference Room

Attendees: Jim D'Agostino, Jamie Hampton, Hunter Johnson, Matt Malinski (ZOOM), Steve Oldham (ZOOM), Sara Robertson, Alicia Ten Eyck

Opening prayer - Sara

1. Steve reviewed Preliminary financial statements for 6/30/22.
2. Discussion of financial information to review monthly before monthly FC meeting, and financial information for Session to review.

Treasurer Steve Oldham will continue to report monthly to the Finance Committee. Session will receive financial information quarterly (Aug, Oct, Jan, Apr).

3. Discussion of Audit process and Engagement Letter from Blazek & Vetterling for 6/30/22-23. Hunter Johnson expects to have Engagement Letter for review by the FC at the August FC meeting. The Audit Report should be issued by 10/31/23.
4. Discussion of issues related to FC Charter and FC oversight to be addressed & documented by FC.
5. Update from Jamie on Permanent Funds Ministry's current spending policy, update of policies and procedures of the PFM, and plans to communicate work of the PFM to interested covenant partners during the fall giving campaign.
6. Other business: Starting Aug 4, all FC mtgs in CE 218

Closing prayer – Jim

Submitted by Sara Robertson, FC Chair

Finance Committee Meeting
August 4, 2022 12PM Pastor's Conference Room
MINUTES

Attendees: Jim Birchfield, Hunter Johnson, Matt Malinsky (ZOOM), Steve Oldham, Sara Robertson, Alicia Ten Eyck (scribe)

Opening prayer - Sara

1. Minutes of July meeting approved.
2. Review Financial information – Steve
Financial information will be sent to Session each month. Steve will report to the Session during the meeting quarterly.
3. Update of Auditor engagement letter – Hunter reported that Blazek & Vetterling will provide the letter after the 9/1 Finance Committee meeting. Blazek & Vetterling will attend the meeting by ZOOM.
4. Update of Finance & Governance issues by Sara
The FC agrees that the Risk Management Team will be part of the Governance Committee.
The FC joins the Governance Committee in proposing to Session that a first year elder become a member of the FC during the first year.
The Finance Charter will be revised by Jim D'Agostino, Jim Birchfield, and Sara. Jim D'Agostino will draft other policies. These documents will be subject to Session approval.

Closing prayer - Alicia

Submitted by Sara Robertson

Personnel

FPC Personnel Meeting Minutes August 10, 2022

- Present – Lisa Belus Director of Human Resources- Staff, Amy Winstead, Chair, and Evelyn Smith, Vice Chair; Members Absent - Pastor Jim Birchfield and Stephanie Fleck, Elder Class of 2025 and Ad Hoc member Caroline Nakamura.
- Meeting was opened in prayer by Evelyn.
- Amy gave an update on informal meetings held in June and July of elders assigned to personnel to acquaint new member Stephanie Fleck – Elder Class of 2025 and Caroline Nakamura, Ad-Hoc member as volunteer consultant.
- Amy introduced a process for ongoing prayers for all FPC staff by members of the personnel committee. FPC staff names will be divided up into thirds and the committee members will each take a third of the list and pray for their list of staff all during the month. Then, at the next month's meeting members will switch lists

with each other. This way all FPC staff will be prayed for throughout the year. The HR Director will notify committee members of additions to staff and those who have resigned.

- HR Director Update -
 1. Employee Handbook – Complete and ready for final review with committee next month.
 2. Employee Resignations– Ryan Born, Director of Youth, Andrew Stepp, Executive Pastor and Matt Lee, Assoc. Part-time Pastor. Exit Interviews were conducted with Ryan Born and Andrew Stepp.
 3. New Staff Hired – Marty O’Rourke, Youth Director, Rachel Jean Pierre, E&S Coordinator, and Devon Lewis C&S Coordinator.
 4. Job Descriptions – All positions have job descriptions but are in process of review to be updated as staff goes through governance restructure.
 5. Background checks (criminal) for Nominees for Elder position – Discussion regarding implementing this as a standard part of the process when selecting elders to serve on session. Reviewing best practices. Background checks are being implemented increasingly for corporate boards as well as non-profit boards due to fiduciary responsibilities.
- Next Meeting – Wednesday, September 14th at 8 AM Pastor’s Conference Room
- Amy closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully Submitted by
Evelyn Smith, Vice Chair Personnel

Community Life

Governance Committee Report

The Governance Committee did not formally meet in July or August. However, the committee was represented at an ad-hoc joint meeting of Finance and Governance requested by Pastor Birchfield and held in his conference room on July 25th. At this meeting, two matters were discussed, and proposals agreed, that would require approval by the full Governance Committee and, ultimately, by Session.

- A proposal will be made jointly by Governance and Finance to Session to make a change to the configuration of Session committees under the current governance model. It was proposed by Finance, and agreed by Governance, that an additional Session Elder from the first-year Session class be added to the Finance Committee as a non-voting member. This change would reduce by one the number of Session Elders assigned to the Community Life Committee. It was felt that this change is needed because, for purposes of continuity, such an important committee as Finance should have representation from all three Session classes. The Session Committee configuration presented in the Governance Manual will be revised to reflect this change. The Advisory Committee will determine which first-year Elder will be moved over to Finance for the 2022-2023 year.

All voting members of the Governance Committee affirmed agreement with this proposed change via email ballot on August 4th.

- It was also agreed that our governance documents should be revised to clarify that the area of risk management will fall under the purview of the Governance Committee. This will involve revising the Governance Committee Charter to reflect this additional responsibility. A Risk Management Team will be appointed who will report ultimately to the Senior Pastor through the Chief Operating Officer, and the Governance Committee will provide Session oversight of that Team.

Both of these proposals will require changes to the Governance Manual which will ultimately be presented to Session for final approval. Those changes will not be finalized in time for the August 16th Session meeting but will hopefully be ready for final action by Session in September.

This section of the session packet includes the following Ministry Reports:

- **Worship – Dan Wagner**
- **Outreach – Rev. Emmanuel Paulpeter**
- **Equipping – Rev. Caitlin Rhodes-Karahadian**
- **Children – Stacey Rockwell**
- **Community Life – Rev. Jon Crantz**
- **Communications & Media – Celeste Lanier**
- **Ministry Support (Finance, Facilities, and IT) – Hunter Johnson**

Each of the reports include the following information:

- **What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?**
- **Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry**
- **Upcoming Ministry Events**
- **Prayer Requests for your Ministry**

If you have specific questions or would like to follow up on one of the ministries, feel free to reach out to the staff member responsible for that area.

Ministry: Worship

Date of Session Meeting: 6/21/2022

Dan Wagner, Director of Worship

Ryan Bell, Director of Contemporary Worship

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- Chancel Choir Director Search
 - We are regrouping and refreshing the search
 - We are now expanding the job description to allow for the possibility of a full-time position
 - We are reflecting on our paradigm - while pragmatic issues are very important, we are taking a breath to agree in principle and practice that we are first and foremost seeking the person God desires to lead this ministry at FPC.
 - As time has passed, in conversation with Pastor Jim Birchfield, Jim has addressed the committee and choir with his recommendation that since we have capable leadership in place, that it now seems to make the most sense to discern our future in consultation and synergy with the new Senior Pastor.
- We are drafting the new 8:15 service (samples in this evening's materials) and assembling the music leadership and communicating worship design with the Pastors and other leaders.
- There are subtle changes in the Sanctuary service and bulletin that are derived directly from the worship strategy. The Director of Worship would enjoy opportunities to talk informally about these changes and how they begin to point us in a direction of flourishing worship.
- The New 8:15 Service - we are working with Communications in generating vision and enthusiasm around this service. A rough sketch of the description:
Where the historic and the contemporary come together and the rich repertoire of the Christian tradition is embraced: past, present, and future.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Ushers, Fall Choir participants, Wisely chosen musical leadership for the new service.

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- Sunday, September 4 - Worship emphasis on the Here to Serve: The Priority of Worship
- Sunday, September 11 - Combined Service loosely modeled on the new 8:15 format and mix of liturgical shape and poise and musical expression
- Sunday, September 18 - Launch of new morning worship schedule including the new 8:15 Service
- Sunday, November 6 - (All Saints' Sunday) Choral-led Service of Remembrance and Hope

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- For discernment and wisdom in our Chancel Choir and "New Morning Service" musical leadership. We need the Spirit's leading to be open to the options before us. We need to be released to envision paradigms we might have ruled out, if God is calling us to rethink things.
- For wisdom as we evaluate and formulate a wise, balanced and winsome series of special worship evenings/services/events
- For clarity in launching the Worship Encouragement Teams... scheduling, process and timing.
- For the fall season in worship - that all who are here will be refreshed and be glad they came.

Ministry: Outreach

Date of Session Meeting: 8/16/2022

Emmanuel Paulpeter, Assistant Pastor of Outreach

Mary Floye Federer, Director of Ministry Partnerships & Engagement

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- CFWI: Project Flourish will open for applications on August 29, 2022. Working with communications to launch a comprehensive PR campaign in an effort to attract a high number of quality applicants. Lyndsey Knight is working with past PF contestants, winners and participants to develop momentum for the upcoming Fall launch of Project Flourish. Working on incorporating best practices from similar programs in other contexts. Oct 2 nd will be the Project Flourish kick-off. Please reach out to Lyndsey with any suggestions or connections you may have.
- Mobilizing our Covenant Partners to engage and serve in our city and beyond: Missions is introducing a new opportunity that we hope will attract more of our Covenant Partners to serve with our local priority partners. Beginning in September, we will offer a "Local Partner Field Trip" on the 4th Thursday of the month at noon. The "Local Partner Field Trip" is designed for individuals interested in going with others to visit and see first-hand the ministries seeking volunteers. Participants will either meet at FPC and carpool or meet at the ministry location depending on the specific partner. Reservations are necessary and can be made by emailing lbyrd@fpchouston.org. Thurs. Sept. 22 at noon will feature the Nehemiah Center. Meet at FPC and we can walk over.
- Evangelism: In collaboration with Formation and Community Life, using the All Church Sunday school avenue to equip congregation to know what it means to reach out. Gearing up for Fall Alpha – both the Evening Alpha (Sept 29 th) and the Morning Alpha (starting Oct 25 th). Organizing the Safe Invitational Gospel Spaces (SIGS), Movie Groups, Taco Socials, Ted Talk Discussions for non-Christians to engage with our community.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Project Flourish is volunteer intensive program. We want to see as many Covenant Partners as we can to see engaged in Project Flourish and also with the work of the Project Flourish participants. Email lknight@fpchouston.org to know more about volunteering needs.
- It's time for the school year to begin which means many of our local partners are gearing up and will be seeking volunteers to help. Things here at FPC will also be getting busy as programming ramps up after the summer break. See the Upcoming Opportunities link on our website or contact the Missions office to learn more ways to engage and serve. School Supply Drives for the Nehemiah Center and Cullen Middle School, Bridges International 'Back to School' Welcome Party - Sat August 20.
- We welcome volunteers to help with the Move and Taco evening events, to invite their neighbors and also help in creating a safe and friendly environment for non-Christians who attend these events, hopefully paving way for relationship building that points to the Gospel. Email epaulpeter@fpchouston.org to know about volunteering needs.

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- On September 25, Scott Key of Every Shelter (formerly Rescue Floor) has agreed to speak in all three church services about how Project Flourish impacted his organization.
- Join Plant with Purpose on a vision trip to Oaxaca where FPC is partnering. This Vision Trip to Oaxaca will be a unique opportunity to gain understanding of Plant With Purpose's life-giving programs in Mexico and the challenges faced by rural farming families. To find out more about FPC and PWP's partnership, contact Mary-Floye Federer at mffederer@fpchouston.org.

- Evening Alpha will start September 29 th 7pm. Morning Alpha will start Oct 25 th 8am.

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Pray that we will create a robust network of entrepreneurs to benefit Houston and carry the gospel to the city and the world. Prayers that we implement the best possible program and find the right volunteers for the applicants who apply.
- Prayers appreciated for the SIGS events and also for Alpha – for Covenant Partners to invite their friends and for more non-Christians to experience the love of Jesus through our community and our events.

Ministry: Equipping & Sending

Date of Session Meeting: 8/16/2022

Caitlin Rhodes-Karahadian, Associate Pastor of Equipping and Sending

Catie Smith, Director of Discipleship

Cheryl Christie, Interim Director of Women

Young Adult Committee

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- **Adult Sunday Schools:** All Sunday morning Sunday Schools and Small Groups are a part of our All Church Sunday School Experience (for the entire month of August)
- **D-Groups:** Currently 9 groups meeting.
- **Small Groups:** Small Groups will resume in September and will go through the sermon-based series on the priorities of the church and Transformational Discipleship.
- **Parenting Small Groups:** Current Parenting Small Group has 25 people on the roster and had consistent attendance (10-15 people) every Sunday this summer. Attending All Church SS this month but meeting for lunch afterwards each week.
- **Future Parenting Small Groups:** Recruiting leaders for another parenting small group for parents with young kids; Also working with possible leaders to lead a group of parents from the previous LifeTogether Sunday School.
- **Curriculum Writing Team:** The CWT will resume writing responsibilities this month.
- **RightNow Media:** This fall, we will work to develop small group guides based on two RightNow Media studies for the spring: The Prayer Course and The Art of Neighboring. This spring we will begin curating resources to recommend for groups going forward we move away from a constant sermon-based curriculum. This is part of the relevant faith strategy.
- **Marriage Ministry:** Looking for Couples Night Out Speaker for November and working with The Stewarts and Reeds to plan for marriage Beginnings this fall.
- **Mom's Groups:** Planning team for the entire year went great. Lead team consists of Lisa Hickey and Stephanie Fleck (Tuesday morning group) and Sarah Bell and Laurel Simmons (Tuesday evening group). Our Mentor Mamas include Claudia Stewart, Carol Taylor, and Stacey Rockwell (Tuesday mornings); Mary Alford (Wednesday mornings); and Julie Harrie, Susan Mickette, Chris Athon, Holly Crantz, and Sheila Heinle (Tuesday evening Zoom). All groups are open to anyone but the Tuesday morning in-person group will be from 8:30-9:45 and will focus on outreach to Pres moms; the Tuesday Zoom group will focus on outreach to working moms; and the Wednesday morning group will focus on outreach to KDO moms. This fall we will read through *Talking with your Kids about Jesus: 30 Conversations Every Christian Parent Must Have* by Natasha Crain. We also have many events for moms (and their entire family) on the calendar.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Mentor couple for our next parenting small group

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Wisdom as we begin parenting ministry

YOUNG ADULTS

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- It has been a fairly quiet summer as folks have been in and out of town, but we have kept Sunday School and Small Group going
 - Sunday School is covering the Sandra Richter video series on her book Epic of Eden
- The women's YA small group just refreshed to engage more women, and are now meeting bi-weekly over dinner at Bonnie Miller's house. They just had their first meeting; it was a big success with large turnout and great discussion.
- Mo Ranch had a large showing from the YA group which was a great opportunity to get the young adults integrating with the other groups at church
- One-off social events like two-stepping, Astros game, and fourth of July BBQ have done a good job of engaging folks and continuing to build relationships. They are great events to invite people into who might be new to the church or outside the church.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Mentoring and discipling YAs

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- End of summer social
- Back-to-school volunteer event
- Hops & Hymns on Sept 18!

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Praise that young adults continue to find and join our community, and prayers that we are able to welcome and serve them well
- Praise for Bonnie Miller "sponsoring" the women and prayers for the study she is leading
- Wisdom and endurance for our lay-person YA leadership team as we shepherd our ministry
- For the search for a young adults pastor/director. That God would bring the right person at the right time to this community.

WOMEN

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- **Women of the Word (WOW) Tuesdays In-Person - LC080 or Online.** This summer the WoW groups have continued to meet. The in-person group met one Tuesday a month in June, July, and August and read Comer's *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. The Zoom groups met six to eight times this summer. One group studied the book of John while the other group had a prayer gathering each meeting. For the fall semester, all three groups will study Dane Ortlund's newest book entitled, *Deeper*. Becca Herbold, Karen Meikle, and Cheryl Christie have written a study guide to go along with the book.
- **Salt and Light - Thursday 7:30 - 8:30 pm - Online.** Salt and Light took a break for the month of August. They finished our study of the *Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* on July 14. They will start the 9-week book study of *Deeper* on Thursday, September 22 and will continue to meet over zoom at 7:30pm.

- **First Place for Health - Mondays 6:30 - 8:15 pm - Online.** This has been on hiatus throughout August. They will begin a new session on September 12 and meet Monday nights from 6:30 pm to 8 pm. They will meet in person instead of Zoom. They will begin their nine-week study by author Debbie Behling. The book is entitled, *The Joy Adventure*. This book examines the four-sided parts that are the foundation for the First Place for Health program focusing on the lens of joy. As we travel through our fitness journey, joy can empower us to make healthy choices and keep our focus on God, the Author of joy.
- **Fellowship Circles. Four circles meet monthly.** Circles will kick off the fall with the Dougl's Connelly's *Elijah's: Living Securely in an Insecure World*. All Circles will meet in September.
- **Sojourn Book Group.** This group will meet on Tuesday, August 23 to discuss *Eighty Days: Nellie Bly and Elizabeth Bisland's History-Making Race Around the World* by Matthew Goodman. The group will meet online from 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Hostesses for the fall ladies luncheon

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- Women's Fall Luncheon - Thursday, Sep 15, 2022 from 11:30 to 1:00 pm

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Pray for all of the women's groups as we begin a new semester together.
- Pray that women who have not returned to WoW since Covid would return in the fall.
- Pray for the teachers this semester as well as the small group leaders.
- Pray for the fall luncheon: the planning, for the attendees, and for the entire event.
- May the ladies feel welcomed and connected and may the Lord be glorified. Your prayers are very much appreciated!

Ministry: Children and Family

Date of Session Meeting: 8/23/2022

Stacey Rockwell, Director of Children and Family

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- **VBS** - At the start of the summer we invited almost 400 campers and volunteers to experience God's love in a fully immersive way! From FPC kids to Presbyterian School; Nehemiah Center to grandkids of members, our building was full of laughter and fun all week! Our camper's learned about God's Monumental love through large group worship, special songs, hilarious skits, tasty snacks and fun games. Many families and church members volunteered to spend time with our kids and their help was invaluable. They created relationships with our kids and their families and proved that we are a church who serves even the littlest among us. VBS is an evangelical tool that introduces many families to our church. It is impossible to pull off without the help of the FPC staff, church leadership and lay leaders/volunteers. We were so grateful for their "buy in" and are already looking forward to next year when we can minister to even more families!
- **VBS Camp Mission** - for Preteens was a week filled to the brim with fun, friendship, and faith building. The kids had the opportunity to really dig into the Joseph story through crafts, scenarios, and snacks - it was really impressive how they were able to put themselves in his shoes and imagine what he felt like in different seasons of his life. The highlight of our week was going to the Houston Food Bank where we got to serve shoulder to shoulder as we filled bags of rice and boxed up the filled bags. The kids made a big impact with their efforts and it was evident that the experience made a big impact on the kids!
- **Mo Ranch** – CFM spent mornings at Mo with the children of FPC exploring the story of Jesus' baptism. We were able to bring several extra helpers to provide care for younger children during Vespers and Sunday Worship at Mo.
- **Staff Transitions** – Our part time Events Coordinator, Katie Hill, is now also filling the role of PreK Sunday School Coordinator as a full-time staff member. Part time staff members Kelli Hebert, CFM Coordinator, and Lindsay Colvin, Childcare Coordinator, have accepted positions elsewhere to meet family needs. Devon Lewis will fill both of their roles as a full-time staff member.
- **Preteen Splash** - Rather than a traditional Bible Study this summer, we decided to take our Sunday evening Bible time poolside in the Lillards' backyard. It was hard to beat pizza, cookie cake, and many rounds of Marco Polo as the precursor for our time in the Word. We focused on 1 Thessalonians 5:11 and discussed who the Lord calls us to be when He reminds us to "encourage one another and build each other up" - especially as we head back to school this month! I know that our CFM team is slightly biased, but in my opinion, you won't find a finer group of fourth and fifth grade students no matter how hard you try. Some of them are outwardly taking ownership of their own faith as they prepare to head to middle school. They are eager to learn more about who Jesus is and what His calling is on their lives. They are bright, kind, energetic, intelligent, and lovely kiddos - it is such a privilege to get to spend time with them!

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- We are rebooting our volunteer recruiting strategies to line up with our new discipleship model outlined in the Formation Priority presented to session. Our focus will be more relationship centered. Children love having their parents visit class and it's a great way for them to be involved in their child's faith journey. Experienced lay leaders will be identified and invited to support and mentor peer parents to engage with their children and friends during Sunday School. The Lead Parents will model sharing faith with children to provide inspiration and practice for the Peer Parents to build confidence and connection with their children.

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- **8/21: Promotion Sunday** including Blessings with Backpacks at the 10:45 service and a Back To School lunch for the whole church family with activities for kids.
- **9/25: Worship Workshop** Families with children Kinder and older will be invited for lunch and activities to support the presence of children in worship. Each child will receive their own "worship bag" and supplies to bring to worship with them each Sunday. Parents will be equipped with strategies for engaging children in worship and an understanding for why this is such an important rhythm to establish early in life for individuals, families, and communities.

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Back to School is a busy season so prayers for energy and endurance would be lovely!

Ministry: Community Life

Date of Session Meeting: 6/21/2022

Jon Crantz, Associate Pastor of Community Life
Marty O'Rourke, Youth Director
Cheryl Christie, Director of Connections
Lija Shah, Director of Caring Ministry

COMMUNITY LIFE

- Mo Ranch was full again this year. We are attempting to add more rooms for next year and beyond!
- We said goodbye to Ryan Born last week. He served in our youth ministry for over seven years! He will be missed. Thankfully, our new youth director overlapped with Ryan last week. Marty O'Rourke comes to us from Virginia Beach. We'll introduce him during worship in the near future.
- The monthly prayer and worship nights will officially kick the year off on September 25th in the Grand Hall. Robbie Seay, local recording artist, will lead worship with our own Ryan Bell. We are inviting other churches around town with a specific prayer emphasis: Praying for our City. We've had very good attendance this year but want more people to come.
- The Community Life Committee will present during our session retreat. We've planned dates for Neighborhood Connect and will finalize the details soon.

YOUTH

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- The summer flurry of events is over. Trips, dives, discipleship groups...summer has come to a close. The youth interns were energetic, passionate, and focused on discipling the youth of our church. Each trip had its own feel. Many students re-dedicated their lives to Christ with dramatic spiritual growth happening in so many of our students.
- We are gearing up for the fall. A few retreats (MS and HS) will take place in the coming months.
- HS small groups will begin soon and MS D2 as well.
- Marty O'Rourke, our new youth director, started the first week in August. He's getting to know key volunteers, staff, and students.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- We will find additional Sunday morning volunteers for Middle School

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- MS and HS retreats in the next two months.
- HS Small groups and MS D2 will begin soon.

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- For Marty to get familiar with the ministry and with the people involved.
- For clarity on how best to get parents involved.

CONNECTIONS

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- Cheryl and Connections Team greeted and welcomed VBS families.

- Connections welcomed guests at the Evening of Prayer & Worship in Chapel, Sunday, June 26th.
- Connections planned all events, communication, childcare and master calendar through June 2023.
- Cheryl continues to meet with church attendees regarding possible membership. We are gearing up for Explore FPC, which is scheduled for August 20.
- Attended Active Shooter training.
- Cheryl taught about the gift and need for hospitality to be a welcoming Church at All-Church SS.
- The Connections ministry continues to plan and host the Fall Kickoff, which is September 11.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Small Group Leaders for Explore FPC.
- Greeters for new greeting team that will be established in the fall.

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- Explore FPC- August 20
- Joining Day – August 28
- Fall Kick Off – September 11

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Pray the people will feel welcomed when they visit the church this summer.
- Pray that God will show us how to demonstrate hospitality to all who enter FPC.

CARING

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- We are beginning a 6-week Book study on Wednesday evenings from 8/10-9/14 over Zoom. We will study the book *It's Not Supposed to be this Way* by Lysa Terkheurst. The book will touch upon our hopes and unmet expectations of life and how disappointments can be divine appointments for our souls to radically encounter God. We want to continue to cultivate a culture where as a community we gather to find healing from our disappointments, grief and loss
- Our Stephen ministers continue to meet for monthly supervision, Two of our six trained Stephen Ministers are currently matched up with care receivers. We are praying for the Lord to bring more care receivers/participants in need of care. We give praise to God for bringing Sheila Heinle to participate in Stephen Leader training. She will begin the 10-week training virtually on 08/11/22.
- We have had busy month with memorials and as of this past month have reinstated the tradition of asking elders to attend memorial services in honor of elders who have passed away.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- As we look ahead to hosting DivorceCare this fall, we would like to find and train more lay leaders (ideally a couple or a least a male facilitator) to share the facilitation responsibilities with the current DivorceCare group leaders.
- We would like to train two (2) more lay leaders to help share the facilitation responsibilities of our GriefShare group on Fall of 2022.
- To help expand and build more of a mental health ministry, we need lay leaders to be trained in the following areas:
- Individuals willing to train as support group facilitators to help those in our church who care for loved ones with a mental health challenge or illness (also offered by HHCI). We pray to launch a group for both adults and parents of teens/or elementary age kids who have been diagnosed with ADHD, Anxiety or Depression.

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- Discussion on the book “It’s Not Supposed to Be That Way” by Lysa Terkhurst. This 6-week book study will take place on Wednesday evenings, 8/10-9/14, over Zoom, From 7:30 – 8:30 pm.

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- Pray for the Lord to bring those at FPC in need of a Stephen Minister to come forward. Our Stephen Ministers are ready for care receivers and to minister to them.
- To expand our offering of various support groups at FPC. We are asking the Lord to bring us lay leaders willing to help facilitate support groups such as GriefShare, DivorceCare, and future support groups with FPC (i.e., support group for adults & parents/caregivers of a loved one with a mental health challenge).
- That the book study in August will continue to open doors to bring people who are struggling to find support and community.
- The Lord would guide us to begin a mental health ministry at FPC so that we can encourage folks to find help and raise awareness.

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Ministry: Communications and Media

Date of Session Meeting: 08/16/22

Celeste Lanier, Director of Communications & Media

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

Key Activities / Projects:

Communications

- **Support for Discipleship Pathways** - Deliverables to support Caitlin in fulfilling the Discipleship Pathways roll-out which was approved in her Discipleship priority proposal
- **Stewardship Campaign** - Booklets, emails, social media, testimony videos (Aug Kick-off)
- **Project Flourish - Round 3** - Promotion and communication support for the 2022/23 Project Flourish program - includes promoting internally for volunteers and recruiting externally for participants
- **Fall Kickoff** - Promotion and materials (signage, brochures, digital content) for kick-off of 2022/23 ministry calendar

Media

- **Projects/Current Activities**
 - Website updates: photos and videos
 - Stewardship projects: testimony videos, ministry videos
 - Ministry projects: GrandLife keynote video
 - Media support for Fall Kick-off outdoor event

Administration

- **Metrics Project:** Effort to better define metrics for evaluating church health (attendance, membership, ministry participation, giving, etc.)

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- None at this time

Upcoming Ministry Events:

- Participation in Fall Kick-off - FellowshipOne member photo station and event photo booth

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- For Lora Strutton, as she prepares to head out on maternity leave, prayers for a safe delivery and healthy mom and baby
- In celebration of Whitney Crump, who celebrated her 10th work anniversary on July 31!

Ministry: Ministry Support

Date of Session Meeting: 8/16/22

Hunter Johnson, Chief Operating Officer

Edith Price, Director of Events

Patrick Matthews; Director of IT

What is going on in your ministry and how is it going?

- Completed two sessions of active shooter training---with a third emergency preparedness session planned for August 28th. We are adding additional cameras and electronic door access over the next 8 weeks.
- Major repairs following a drain line failure in the kitchen have been completed, along with new flooring. Duct and air system cleaning campus wide has been completed; the new outdoor play space is nearing completion.
- The restrooms adjacent to the choir room are expected to be finished by Labor Day, renovation of the men's room near the sanctuary will begin as it completes. The ones next to the Chapel are expected to be finished by the end of September.
- Replacement of the sanctuary air conditioning system is tentatively scheduled for late September.
- We have implemented a portal for Session, Govenda, that Patrick Matthews our Director of IT will introduce at the meeting.

Volunteer Opportunities in your Ministry:

- Additional ushers in both services.

Upcoming Ministry Events:

Prayer Requests for your Ministry:

- For continued progress in completing the construction, and continued safety of contractors and our staff in these areas.
- A member of our team suffered a work-related injury this week, prayers for a quick and full recovery.