

MINUTES OF THE SESSION
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON, TEXAS
October 18, 2022

The October Stated Meeting of the Session began at 6: 00pm in the Fellowship Hall. Dr. Jon Crantz called the meeting to order with a quorum present and an opening prayer.

OMNIBUS MOTIONS

The following omnibus motions, provided to Session in advance of the meeting, were duly adopted:

- Resolved, that the submitted Session Meeting Minutes August 16, 2022, be approved.
- Resolved, that the submitted Session Meeting Minutes September 24, 2022, be approved.
- Resolved that the Covenant Partner Reports for August and September be approved.
- It is moved by the Governance Committee of the Session that the By-laws of First Presbyterian Church of Houston be amended in Article Four (Nominating Committees), Section 4.2 (Officer Nominating Committee), as well as the corresponding entry in the Table of Contents on page ii, to change the name “Officer Nominating Committee”, wherever it occurs in such by-laws, to “Elder Nominating Committee.” This proposed change is simply to reduce confusion regarding the meaning of the term “officer” and to recognize that the only office for which this committee nominates members is the office of Ruling Elder.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES+

Finance

Steve Oldham

The revenues for year-to-date are slightly under budget.

Hunter Johnson

The church has received 190 Stewardship Commitments thus far in the Stewardship Campaign.

Permanent Funds

Sara Robertson

There will be further discussion and a vote at the November Session Meeting on the restructuring of the Finance Committee.

Personnel Committee

Evelyn Smith

The First Presbyterian Church staff is being prayed for by the three Elder members of the Personnel Committee. Each member will pray for one third of the staff during the month of September. Each month the Elders will switch groups.

Pastor Nominating Committee

Chris Derden

The committee has issued a call to a pastor and the call has been accepted. The congregation will receive an email on Saturday, November 5 informing them of the nominee and the called Congregational Meeting for November 6. The Pastor Nominee will preach on that Sunday. Following the service there will be a Congregational Meeting in the sanctuary at which time the congregation will vote on the nominee.

Motions:

A. Move to call a joint worship service on Nov 6, 2022 in sanctuary at 11:00.

B. Move that Session change the purpose of the Nov. 6, 2022 Congregational Meeting (immediately following the 11:00 service) from the Annual State of the Church meeting to the sole purpose of hearing the report of the PNC and voting on Calling a New Pastor, name to be announced at an appropriate time. Notice to be sent out to the Congregation immediately.

C. Move that Session call a second Congregational Meeting on November 13, 2022 (immediately following the 11:00 service) to include the Annual State of the Church reports, voting on the slate of incoming elder nominees and ONC nominees and voting on the By-laws change from "Officer Nominating Committee" to "Elder Nominating Committee" and other appropriate agenda items. Notice to be sent out to the Congregation immediately.

A prayer was offered for gratitude and thanksgiving.

Advisory Committee (Clerk's Report)

Martha Barnes

- The session was thanked for their attendance at the Session Retreat and for their good work.
- The Presbyterian School Sunday was a wonderful experience and the children's choirs were beautiful.
- There will be a program Thursday night to train covenant partners on How to Serve Houston Refugees.
The session expressed interest in helping to collect dry goods the week before Thanksgiving to help the refugees. The session will adopt a service project each month in keeping with the Here to Serve program.
- A motion was taken by email to endorse the Standing Nominations Committee Slate of nominees for 2023 Officer Nominating Committee:

Paul Askensay
Ann Davis
Julie Harris
David Loveday
Jaisent Patel
Josephine Olmstead
Ann Smith
Candy Roberts
Eric Thomas

Alternate

Alan Sexton

Ruling Elders serving as Co-Chairs and Members for the 2023 ONC

Tom Brents

Kristen Foxley

- A motion was taken by email to endorse the Officer Nominating Committee Slate Of Nominees for Elder Class of 2026:
Gene Alford - Elder at St. Andrews Presbyterian
Jan Smith - Elder at First Presbyterian Church
Leo Espinoza
James Melchers
Mike Nichols
Wei Tse Yang

Pastor's Report

Emmanuel PaulPeter

- There was positive feedback for the presentations on Project Flourish Sunday.
- The Alpha program had 70 people in attendance.
- Presbyterian School will begin an Alpha program with the Presbyterian School parents.

Caitlin Rhodes-Karahadian

- What is your next step to grow at First Presbyterian Church?
- How to become more like Jesus?

Dan Wagner

- The 8:15 service has begun with a choral ensemble leading the music.
- There is progress in using our bulletins in the Sanctuary Services to facilitate and illuminate worship more effectively. By November there will be an implemented and even richer format, allowing for sidenotes to provide meaning, context, and opportunities for deeper study for worshipers.

Jon Crantz

- New people are attending worship and church activities.
- We will continue to emphasis growth in hospitality.

Governance Committee

Houghton Hutcheson

- There will be a vote at the Annual Congregational Meeting to change the name of the Officer Nominating Committee to Elder Nominating Committee.

Community Life Committee

Melaney Derden

- The Neighborhood Connect Program is being planned and the leaders will begin contacting neighbors in January.

Standing Nominating Committee Update

Brent Dorsey

- Thank you to the committee for the interviewing of candidates and thank you to the session for their endorsement of the slates for the next class of elders and for the next Officer Nominating Committee.

Communion was served by intinction by Rev. Caitlin Rhodes-Karahadian and elders Dade Dowdle and Kristen Foxley.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35pm with the singing of the doxology.

Martha C. Barnes

Rev. Jon Crantz, Moderator

Clerk of Session, Martha Barnes