

**MINUTES OF THE SESSION**  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF HOUSTON, TEXAS**  
**November 14, 2023**

The November Stated Meeting of the Session began at 6:00 pm in LC181. Rev. Curtis Bronzan called the meeting to order, with a quorum present. Michael Harada gave the 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, October 17, 2023, be approved.
- Resolved, that the October Membership Report be approved.
- Resolved, that the Session Dashboard be approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

Advisory Committee/Clerk's Report

Michael Harada

- We have begun a monthly schedule of communion. How communion will be served is still a work in progress. The plan for communion in the sanctuary will be to alternate intinction and traditional monthly.
- The Session Christmas party will be at the home of the Dowdles, Friday, December 15, 6.30 pm.
- Thank you to Dade Dowdle and Alicia Ten Eyke for their help with baptisms this past Sunday.

Finance

Keith Cole

- Prior to Sunday we had 121 pledges for \$1.2 million, since Sunday and the testimony from Michael Harada during the service, we now have 197 pledges for \$3.4 million. The average pledge is down this year, compared to last year, from \$21k to \$18k.

Community Life Committee

Jane Champion

- There will be one more gathering of a Neighborhood Connect zone in November to complete the fall gatherings. Open to ideas for how to incorporate service and scripture in these gatherings. For instance, these neighborhood groups might do a service project together. Evelyn Smith and Al Dupont's group, as an example, did a good job of having unstructured social time plus a planned devotional.
- Hunter Johnson is still working on the database clean up. A new spreadsheet will go out to neighborhood leaders in the months to come with their updated member information.
- Hunter Johnson reported we are moving some folks to inactive status. To be moved to inactive means they have not had any documented activity with First Presbyterian Church for the past 2 years and no giving for the past 4 years. Our current membership is slightly over 1700 members. We hope to learn from this roster clean up.
- Someone who is no longer a member can still receive emails.

### Personnel Committee

Evelyn Smith

- The Personnel Committee is working with Rev. Bronzan on the open staff positions and reviewing the job descriptions.

### Governance Committee

Dade Dowdle

- The Governance Committee recommends changing the By-Laws regarding the Standing Nominating Committee. A bylaw change can be approved only by the congregation, so the committee wants the Session to recommend the change and then call a special Congregational Meeting to approve the by-law change. Roby Norvell explained: Currently the Standing Nominating Committee is made up of six people: 2 ruling elders and 4 covenant partners that serve a 2-year term, so that every 2 years there are 4 new covenant partners. It is preferred that the covenant partners still serve 2 years but have the four of them serve staggered terms so that two covenant partners roll off every year, to retain some experience in the standing committee.

### Pastor's Report

Rev. Curtis Bronzan

- The National Gathering of ECO will be January 29 - February 1, 2024, in Greenville, South Carolina. Four elder delegates, one of which will be Doug Meikle, will be attending with the three pastors.
- Please pray for our Vision Team which meets monthly. The vision will hopefully be introduced to everyone in the spring to be rolled out in the fall.
- There are conversations amongst staff about their changing roles. The staff is working through a book called, Uproar: Calm Leadership in Anxious Times.
- Rev. Bronzan will work with Dade Dowdle on updating our By-Laws. They are not currently in concert with ECO polity.
- The conversation will continue around our Sunday morning schedule: worship and Sunday School with the Vision team. It would be helpful if the Session discussed it also.
- Rev. Bronzan is open to receiving names of those willing to serve on a pastor search team for the three and soon fourth open positions.

### ACTION ITEMS

- A **motion was made and approved** to make communion Sunday the first Sunday of the month in 2024 except for November, because of the time change, which would be November 10.
- A **motion was made and approved** to sell the Thorstenburg property.
- A **motion was made and approved** to have Shikha Hansen and Hilary Reed serve one more year on the Standing Nominating Committee, starting January 1, 2024.
- A **motion was made and approved** to have Meredith Cocke and Dan Morris serve a 2 year term on the Standing Nominating Committee, starting January 1, 2024.

### PRAYER AND PRAISE

The session participated in a corporate prayer, and Rev. Jon Crantz offered a Homily Reflection based on John 6:35.

The meeting was adjourned with the singing of the doxology.

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Rev. Curtis Bronzan, Moderator

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Michael Harada, Clerk