**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

**Stated Session Meeting and Annual Retreat**

**January 11, 2020**

**We Assemble in God’s Name**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Sorge, Moderator; Dane Byers; Chris Carlberg; Rick Comstock; Melodie Davis; Teresa Harris; Paul Klemt; Becca Lowrance; Dawn Ruple; Frances Sale; and Abby Streibig; and Jeff Carr, Associate for Pastoral Care.

**Incoming Elders Present:** Ellie Cale; Yogi Gillette; Mary Knapp; Judy LePera; and Carolyn Hinshaw, 2020 Youth Representative.

**Absent/Excused**: Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session; Bill Wilson. A quorum was present. Approved.

**Call to Order:** Stephanie called the meeting to order with prayer at 9:30.

**Devotional:** Frances led a devotional focusing on Matthew 6: 25-34, “Do not worry” and finding the beauty in the world around us.

**Election of Clerk-Pro-Tem**:

In the absence of Linda Bradley, Chris Carlberg was nominated to serve as Clerk Pro-Tem. Teresa made and Rick seconded a motion to approve. Approved.

**Election of Session Clerk for 2020:**

Linda Bradley was elected as Clerk of Session for 2020. Rick motioned and Becca seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

**Consent Agenda:** Stephanie introduced the items on the consent agenda and asked if anyone wished to take anything off this group of motions. None were mentioned. Dawn motioned and Rick seconded. All were approved.

1. Motion to excuse Linda Bradley and Bill Wilson.
2. Motion to approve minutes from the Stated Session Meeting December 15, 2019.
3. Motion to re-elect Jeannie Klemt as Treasurer and Vivian Hevener as Assistant Treasurer.
4. Motion to approve counters and depositors for 2020: Larry Brown, Linda Bradley, Rick Comstock, Mark Facknitz, Vivian Hevener, Paul Klemt, Becca Lowrance, John Parcells, Paul Sleezer, and Elly Swecker. Any new counters will be named and approved at future session meetings.
5. Motion to approve Special Offerings for 2020:
   1. Souper Bowl Offering, February 2 (To be used locally, with the youth group deciding how to use.)
   2. 4/Cents a Meal, on the 3rd Sunday of each month (25% stays local)
   3. GA One Great Hour of Sharing, April 12
   4. Mother’s Day/Sunnyside Offering, May 10
   5. GA Pentecost, May 31 (40% stays local)
   6. GA Peace and Global Witness, October 4 (25% stays local)
   7. Thanksgiving Offering, November 22
   8. GA Christmas Joy Offering, December 20

**Examination and Approval of elders.** Elder training was held on December 16 with another training session set for January 12. The Youth Representative doesn’t need to be examined/approved.

New elders joining the Session in the Class of 2022 shared from their faith journeys and why they agreed to serve on Session. All will be installed on Sunday, January 19, 2020. Yogi, Mary, and Ellie will also need to be ordained to the office. Rick motioned and Theresa seconded to approve candidates. Approved unanimously.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was served during worship as approved on Sunday, January 5. Becca Lowrance and Vickie Carothers served communion as an extension of the table that afternoon to two persons at VMRC.
2. Betty Allen passed away on December 20. Her memorial service was held at Trinity on December 26.

**Pastor’s Report:**

**For Action**

1. Stephanie requested that the Session create an Ad Hoc task force to study and prepare suggestions/proposals for use of the environmental bequests. At the fall congregational retreat, Virginia Bethune, Paul Sleezer, and Mark Facknitz all had indicated willingness to help with this. Judy LePera and Becca Lowrance offered to serve on the team. Rick suggested the fund be ongoing (like the Skip Whitmore Fund) rather than singularly project focused. It was suggested that Elly Swecker might serve as a liaison but asking her to serve might be a conflict of interest; however, she should be kept in the loop on task force discussions. Melodie motioned and Rick seconded approval of the Ad Hoc task force. Approved by unanimous vote.
2. Stephanie requested that the Session create an additional standing team to review requests for, and allocations of, benevolence monies. This would be chaired/convened by the Mission Marks Elder, likely meeting quarterly or so. We would ask for volunteers interested in serving on this task force each year. This would be included in the Manual of Operations through the proposed revision to section IV (see pages 11-15). Additions are in red. Other revisions are simply shifting the rest of the standing teams down by one letter. Teresa motioned to amend the Manual of Operations and Yogi seconded. Discussion: The team would have the authority to receive requests, review them, utilize the history of what Trinity has done in the past, and designate those funds. They would advise any changes to standing benevolences. Approved by unanimous vote.

**For Discussion**

1. Stephanie will have additional child care needs now that Andy has entered the Air Force Chaplain program. This will impact her schedule, and she will need to compensate in a variety of ways - calling into meetings sometimes (as she has done a few times with Finance Team), potentially having more time or even meetings with sons with her in the office, flexibility of working from home or odd hours, and arranging for more childcare for other times. The childcare falls under two categories - childcare when others might potentially use it (if there are other participants with smaller children), and childcare when others wouldn’t be using it (if she is the only one with young children).

During ensuing discussion of how to go about arranging for and paying for childcare in these circumstances, suggestions included using JMU students, our nursery coordinator Kristen, or discretionary funds. It is important that Stephanie be comfortable with where the boys are and who provides child care. Paul suggested that Jeannie as treasurer might have some thoughts on this – that in the long run, the money should not come out of the discretionary fund so that it’s easier to track for budgetary reasons and planning. Dawn summarized that there appeared to be broad consensus to support Stephanie having funds available to cover child care for work-related functions and that she may need some flexibility. Stephanie suggested that no budgetary changes are needed now, but since we are be unsure of the impact to the budget, it might be a good idea to see how this plays out over the next six months and then revisit options for meeting her childcare needs.

**Sharing Joys and Concerns:**

1. Numerous prayer concerns and joys for members and friends of the Trinity congregation were shared. Stephanie led the Session in a moment of prayer.

**We Celebrate Both the Present and Our Vision for the Future**

**Seasonal Teams Review:**

The Session reviewed the first year of having Seasonal Teams. There were two categories – items anticipated and lined out in the manual of operations but then forgotten, and unanticipated items that fell between the cracks. There also appeared to be some ambiguity about the roles of Marks leaders and Seasonal Team Conveners.

1. What needs to be clarified? The roles of Marks Leaders and Seasonal Team Conveners seemed to be least clear. There were different approaches by the conveners. The seasonal notebooks haven’t really been updated yet.
2. What might need to change? Nurture with the children. Teams should have an idea of what nurture looks like for children. Teams should work directly with Kristen for any childcare needs beyond the standard ones.
3. What holes have teams seen or experienced? Responsibility for fellowship/coffee hour and communion bread falls to each Seasonal Team to coordinate.
4. What questions have come up? Communion—We should always have gluten-free option with a cup that not everyone is dipping their bread into. Teams should try having one communion line hold both options. Transitioning to gluten-free bread for everyone could also be an option. These options should be noted in the bulletin on each Communion Sunday.
5. Any thoughts or suggestions as teams begin a new year?
6. Spread out initial Seasonal Teams planning meetings, perhaps having two shorter initial meetings rather than one longer one to kick off the season.
7. Explore possibilities of planning meaningful nurture offerings.
8. Myrtle Project: Building up within Trinity Community of Faith—What does it mean to be a spiritual leader? Maybe this should be passed along to the seasonal teams, and Myrtle could help with this.
9. Maybe have two shorter team planning meetings instead of the initial long one.
10. Maybe have Lent be the final team to sign up for—Lent convener to have a date in advance.
11. DeAnne, Joe, and Carolyn need to know whenever there are any AV needs - including microphones, recording, etc.

**New Business**:

**Team Calls and Chairs for 2020**

* **Indicates a position that needs to be assigned**

Standing Administrative Teams

Building and Grounds Communication and Outreach

\* **Chair: Dane**  \* **Chair: Mary**

Other Elders: Yogi Other Elders: Chris

Finance Nominating

\* **Chair:** Linda \* **Chair: Abby**

Other Elders: \* Second Elder: Becca

Pastoral Care Personnel

\* **Chair: Frances**  \* **Chair: Larry Barber**

Other Elders: Other Elders: Ellie

Benevolence (to be led by Mission Marks Leader)

Seasonal Teams

Lent Easter

\* **Convening Elder: Chris C.** \* **Convening Elder**: Melodie

Other Elders: Becca Other Elders:

Pentecost Harvest

\* **Convening Elder: Bill Wilson**  \* **Convening Elder**: Mary

Other Elders: Other Elders: Ellie

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany 2021 Lent

**\* Convening Elder: Judy** **\* Convening Elder: Becca**

Other Elders: Mary Other Elders:

Marks Elders

**\*\* Fellowship: Frances \*\* Mission: Judy**

**\*\* Nurture: Melodie \*\* Worship: Becca**

\*\*Indicates that each Marks Elder will also serve as a convening Elder for one of the seasonal teams.

House Steward Signup

FEBRUARY Dane AUGUST Abby

MARCH Chris SEPTEMBER Ellie

APRIL Becca OCTOBER Linda

MAY Mary NOVEMBER Judy

JUNE Melodie DECEMBER: Yogi

JULY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ JANUARY ’21 Frances

Session Devotions Signup

FEBRUARY Dane AUGUST Abby

MARCH Chris SEPTEMBER Ellie

APRIL Becca OCTOBER Linda

MAY Mary NOVEMBER Judy

JUNE Melodie DECEMBER: Yogi

JULY \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ JANUARY ’21 Frances

Commissioners to Presbytery Meetings:

Saturday, February 22 First, Waynesboro, 9:30am

Primary Melodie Alt. Becca

Tuesday, May 19 Cook’s Creek, 9:30am

Primary \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Alt. Judy

Saturday, August 22 First, Winchester, 9:30am

Primary Linda Alt. Mary

Tuesday, November 17 Massanutten, 9:30am

Primary \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Alt. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Stated Session Meetings, 2020**

FEBRUARY 2/16/20, 4pm AUGUST 8/16/20, 4pm

**MARCH 3/22/20, 4pm** (SS out 3/15) SEPTEMBER 9/20/20, 4pm

APRIL 4/19/20, 4pm OCTOBER 10/18/20, 4pm

MAY 5/17/20,4pm NOVEMBER 11/15/20, 4pm

JUNE **6/28/20, 4pm** **(Father’s Day)** DECEMBER 12/20/20, 4pm

JULY 7/19/20, 4pm JANUARY ’21 **Jan 16, 9-4 PM**

**ACE Team**:

No report

**Lenten Team:**

The team will meet on Sunday, January 19, for the first time.

**House Churches and Marks Groups**

Reaching Out House Church

There is a good group of 10-11 members when everyone can attend. The last meeting was snowed out.

Sanctuary House Church

No report

Backpack Program

Dane spoke about the fundraising efforts of the Backpack team, including seeking out grants and hopefully having more financial support from Harrisonburg Mennonite Churh. In addition, there is talk about more cooperation between the various backpack programs in the city as a way to streamline and better use resources.

Clothes Closet

No report

Dinner Church

The next Dinner Church gathering will happen on Sunday, February 2 at 5:00pm.

Earth Day Every Day

EDED will hold a bees-wax wrap event on Sunday, January 12.

Hearts and Hands

No report

Myrtle Collaboration

Encourage Sanctuary to set up VANITA dinner and Myrtle will help; Developing spiritual growth and practice center; Perhaps adding a chair lift to the exterior stairs heading up to the Harbor Room for the future use of it through Myrtle.

**Standing Teams:**

**Building and Grounds:** Paul Klemt, Dane Byers

For Information:

1. The windows in Wonshé’s office are being replaced.
2. Dane is working on the outside light (taking down the lamppost) and putting another light on the exterior of the building. The down payment has been made, and he is waiting to schedule the installation to put the switch on a timer.

**Communication and Outreach** Chris Carlberg, Melodie Davis

No report

**Finance Team** Linda Bradley, Rick Comstock

For Information:

1. Treasurer’s Report: The December Treasurer’s Report shows that we had a YTD actual income of $382,413, in comparison with a YTD anticipated income of $239,078 – an additional $143,335. Our YTD actual expenses were $286,076, in comparison with YTD anticipated expenses of $253,459 – $32,617 more than anticipated. This gives us an actual YTD positive difference of $96,337. Note that this surplus includes $70,000 in designated bequests and $30,000 in designated Myrtle Grant funds, which means an actual year-end deficit of $3,663.

**Personnel Committee**:

No report

**Pastoral Care Team**:

For Information:

1. Thanks to Session for approving Jeff Carr as interim Associate for Pastoral Care.
2. A list will soon be sent to all elders, ruling and otherwise, asking for volunteers to serve extended communion. Sign-ups will occur in March.

**Other Items of Business:**

No other items of business were brought before session.

**Closing Reflections, Hopes for 2020, and Prayer:**

Stephanie led everyone in a time of reflection where several hopes and prayers were offered for 2020. There also was discussion about the Session leading the way in welcoming and introducing themselves during worship to folks we don't know. The conversation included suggestions about welcoming practices, such as not making people feel pressured to introduce themselves in the worship service (or to be introduced), to introduce ourselves to people with, "I'm \_\_\_. I'm so sorry but I don't recall your name," or "I don't believe we've met before.” The purpose is to encourage all to learn the names of newcomers and members and to hope that all who come to Trinity will find a warm and authentic welcome. Thanks were shared for the service given by the members of Session who are rotating off: Dawn Ruple, Rick Comstock, Teresa Harris, and Paul Klemt.

**Next Meeting:** Sunday, February 16, 4:00 p.m. Dane Byers will have devotions.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned and closed with prayer at 2:26 PM. Dawn motioned and Rick seconded. Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Chris Carlberg Stephanie Sorge

Clerks of Session Pro-Tem Moderator