**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

**Stated Session Meeting (In-Person)**

**October 20, 2024**

**We Assemble in God’s Name**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Sorge, Moderator; Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session; Jason Brown; David Carothers; Mark Dewey; Yogi Gillette; Kandy Grant; Virginia Healy; Amy Lemmons; Mary Lou McMillin; Ginnie Reinhold; and Bob Schminkey.

**Excused/Absent**: Rick Comstock; Susie Phend; and Kim Shank, Associate for Pastoral Care. Approved. A quorum was present

**Call to Order:** Stephanie called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

**Opening Devotion**: Mary Lou shared a devotion about love, life, and how we will live this day, based on stories from the Old Turtle books and a reading on reflectivity from Richard Rohr.

**Sharing Joys and Concerns:** Stephanie and Session members shared prayer concerns and joys for members and friends of the Trinity congregation. Other pastoral concern items are contained on the Session website. Stephanie led a moment of prayer.

**Consent Agenda**: Today’s docket, the minutes from the Stated Session Meeting on September 18, 2024, the Called Congregational Meeting on October 20, 2024, and excused absences from this meeting were approved.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was observed during online and in-person worship on Sunday, October 6, as previously approved. The Rev. Bill Reinhold and Ginnie Reinhold served Communion as an extension of the table to one person at Bridgewater Retirement Community. Kim Shank and the Rev. Roxana Atwood served Communion to one person at the Phoenix at Harrisonburg.
2. The Rev. William Painter, a beloved congregant of Trinity and long-time member of Shenandoah Presbytery, died on Tuesday, October 10. A celebration of his life was held at Trinity on Saturday, October 19.
3. Linda shared recent thank you notes.

**Finance Team:**  Linda

Finances:

1. The Operating Budget Report shows that we had a total general year-to-date income of $216,081as of the end of September 2024 – which is approximately 111% of the general income anticipated year-to-date. This figure includes pledges, loose offering, building use, and interest.  In addition, in September we also received $148,202 in undesignated memorial gifts, which includes the final distribution from Vivian Hevener’s bequest; note that the Operating Budget Report does not yet show that this amount has been transferred over to our Fund Activity Report. The Fund Activity Report shows a current balance of $179,793. Our actual expenses were $229,364 – which is 98% of our anticipated year-to-date expense.

1. Edward Jones shows the following investment totals as of October 13 (this report **does** show the transfer of funds from Vivian Hevener’s bequest):

* Account with CD’s and money market   $182,602.34
* Account with Skip Whitmore funds           73,162.21
* Account with combined funds (managed)     528,346.03
* Total balance                       $784,110.58

1. Our new Balance Sheet has been uploaded to the Session website. It indicates where our funds are “parked” and also shows our current assets and liabilities.

For Action:

1. The Matthew 25 and Finance Teams requested approval of the revised Theology of Stewardship statement that has been uploaded to the Session website. Approved.
2. The Finance Team requested approval of the updated Time and Talent form that has been uploaded to the Session website. This update has some significant changes: Approved as amended.

* A number of duplications between several categories have been eliminated.
* Pastoral Care, Special Events, and Fellowship Support have been reorganized to more closely reflect their unique missions (see yellow highlighted sections).
* Specific Matthew 25 values have been embedded throughout the form as appropriate.
* In addition, we invited discussion of possibly renaming the document to better reflect a call to active service. After discussion, it was decided to add “What I Bring to Christ’s Table” as a subtitle
* Moved last financial commitment to pledge form
* Last statement – “or beyond”, not just “community”
* Put out on fellowship table on November 3, have in church office
* Time on November 10 to fill out, pens, copies. Online link for home and church.

For Information:

1. We discussed the following stewardship activities for this fall:

* A stewardship article was included in the October Nous.
* Mark will coordinate the Moments for Stewardship in October with the Harvest Team.
* 2025 Budget requests – we’ll need by November 10
* Giving statements through September 30 – will be distributed in October
* Stewardship packets – will be distributed at the October 27 congregational retreat

1. We realized that three major items are facing us in November:

* Development of the 2025 budget
* Development of our Standard Operating Procedures and review of the current house steward, counter, and depositor guidelines as they affect the Finance Team
* Development of a proposal for implementing the Endowment Policy already approved by the Session

We decided that this was more than we could handle in a single Finance Team meeting and will hold a 3-4 hour in-person retreat, date TBD in December, to tackle it all!

**Pastoral Care Associate’s Report**

For Information:

1. Kim continues facilitating Trinity weekly grief support groups are up and running.
2. Kim also is currently meeting with 3-4 Trinity folks on a weekly basis for pastoral care or spiritual direction.
3. Additional details are contained in the Pastoral Care Team report.

**Pastor’s Report:**

For Discussion and/or Action:

1. It was agreed to continue our Animal Farm discussions at the next month’s Session meeting. The topic will be “Road Kill: Naming and Embracing Our Epic Failures”.

1. Stephanie will poll current and new Elders to identify potential three-hour blocks for the required Boundary training.
2. Congregational Retreat – Jacob Cook will lead the retreat portion, with a focus on our changing realities change and recognizing that we are again in a time of discerning what God is saying to Trinity. We will be laying ground work for building the skills for that kind of deep listening work. Trinity has many gifts that will serve the work well.

For Information:

1. Stephanie presided over a ceremony of Christian Marriage for Greg Sachs and Jocelyn Chan on October 12.
2. She traveled to Richmond on September 30 for a graveside service with the remainder of Beverly Silver’s cremains.
3. She conducted a graveside and memorial service for Bill Painter on October 19.

Calendar Dates:

1. 2024 Vacation Remaining - November 22-30
2. 2025 Vacation - July 4-12, August 1-9, TBD
3. 2025 Continuing Education - May 5-11 (Montreat - subject to change depending on the Princeton program)

**Task Forces**

Misconduct Policy Task Force Bob

For Action:

1. Bob led a discussion of the draft *Harassment Prevention Policy*. It was recommended to delete the statement allowing an optional reference check instead of a background check (5th paragraph under Preventive Practices). Approved with this correction.

Grounds for Hope Task Force Mary Lou

No report

Library

No Report

**Marks Groups and House Churches**

Reaching Out Kim

No report

Sanctuary Ginnie

1. Sanctuary is beginning to focus on Palestinian concerns as it discusses its focus for the coming year.

Backpack Stephanie

No report

Centering Space Mary Lou

1. The Wine, Women, & Song class has been an inspiration for a labyrinth meditation and Rhythms of Prayer/prayer beads. This may serve as a nurture option in February.
2. Mark F.'s class on Christian Nationalism has been well-attended.
3. We held a dessert social on October 6 – 18 people attended. We share in the Friday email and on our website items related to the Middle East: [Wave of Prayers](https://sabeel.org/category/wave-of-prayers/) and information from Mennonite Action Committee.
4. A new Enneagram class is currently being scheduled among group members and led by Luanne Austin to build on the one we just completed.
5. We held a collaborative activity with Lizzy Healy to prepare single serving meals on Friday, October 18.
6. Mark Facknitz contacted New Bridges to find out what they need.
7. For the election:
   * We will create a labyrinth meditation and prayer for use with the prayer beads. We can set up the indoor labyrinth on election day if weather prohibits outdoor use. We will advertise that these are available to our members and through our Facebook page.
   * The Harbor Room will be open for those who wish to make use of that space. Virginia shared her yard sign, “I will vote: Faith, Hope, Love” that is posted outside.

Clothes Closet Susie

No report

Hearts and Hands Linda

1. The group will meet over Zoom tomorrow evening and expects to welcome two new members.

Valley Interfaith Action Bob

1. VIA will hold its next Core Team meeting on Tuesday, October 30.

**Seasonal Teams**

Harvest Stephanie

1. A social was held at Sunnyside this afternoon from 2:30-3:45, just prior to this Session meeting.
2. The congregational retreat will be held on October 27 at Massanetta Springs.

ACE Susie

1. The ACE Team continues to meet and plan for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany activities.

**Other Teams**

Benevolences Kandy

1. The team will begin meeting at end of October.

Building and Grounds Yogi

For Action:

1. The team requested that Trinity accept the cost estimates and landscaping plans from Fine Earth Landscaping Company and Bartlett Tree Experts to:

* treat the Sugar Maples located at the front of property, along Virginia Avenue.
* remove several dying White Pines near the lower parking lot by the basketball goal.
* clean up several trees near our sign in the front yard.
* "raise" and clean up the Norway Maples in the front near the memorial garden.
* remove the Norway Maple by the playground in back.
* provide needed yard maintenance and upgrading immediately adjacent to the building.

After discussion, Session approved this request and asked that Yogi provide firm costs from both companies. [Yogi later provided this total – $10,825, which reflected a discount of $185 for not removing the wood from the Norway Maple near the playground. Session then approved this total electronically and requested that the wood be made available to Trinity members and neighboring families for firewood.]

1. The team requested permission to present invoices for payment of one third of the costs and to implement the approved landscaping plan at a time convenient and appropriate to nature’s timing. Approved.

For Information:

1. Mold has been identified in the Commons HVAC system vents. Dane has cleaned them out. Yogi has called a mold remediation company for inspection. This must be addressed at an estimate of $800.
2. Some hex door keys and motion lights are not working. Yogi will check this out.
3. There has been a request to replace our old metal chairs? [Andy Sale and Yogi have since taken 39 metal chairs to ReStore. We currently have 145 soft chairs and 11 soft arm chairs. There are three racks that can hold 126 chairs. The sanctuary has a capacity of 150 without an allowance for streaming. The capacity is probably around 100 when we are streaming.  The capacity of the Commons is about 100. We will need to purchase additional arm chairs and also should include am additional rack to store the chairs.

Matthew 25 Stephanie

No report

Nominating Jason

For Action:

1. After the September Session meeting, the Nominating Committee requested approval to hold a Called Congregational Meeting to elect four Elders for the Class of 2027 on October 20. Approved electronically.

Outreach Mark D.

No report

Pastoral Care Mary Lou

1. We continue to provide meals and rides as needed.
2. The grief groups are going well. We have 2-3 people on our Wednesday group and 4-5 each Thursday. From feedback from the group, we coordinated with Lizzy Healy to have a food prep day for folks who are living alone on Friday, October 18.
3. We planned the service and reception for Bill Painter, who died on October 10.
4. We signed and addressed postcards for 19 persons having birthdays in October. Christabell has ordered additional cards for us. We will use this card through August 2025 and then design a new one or evaluate if we want to continue sending them.
5. Church directory pages have been put out in the Commons for folks to update on several Sundays.
6. We discussed creating a ‘Blessing Mix” to share with shut-ins, college students, and others sometime around the end of October or the first of November.
7. We reviewed and updated our portion of the Time and Talent Sheet and submitted it to Christabell.
8. Specific individual updates are available in the team report on the Session website.

Personnel Bob

1. The committee has posted its 2025 salary recommendations on the Session website, for information only.

Presbytery Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 12th at 9:30 am on Zoom. Trinity’s Commissioner will be Susie Phend. Bob Schminkey was approved to be the alternate.

Processing the Meeting

The following items were identified to include in the Friday Update Session Notes:

* Theology of Stewardship
* Time and Talents
* New landscaping will start in the coming weeks. link to diagrams.
* Harassment Policy

Next Meeting: Sunday, November 17, 4-6pm, at Trinity. Virginia will have the devotional.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 5:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session Stephanie Sorge, Moderator

Attachments:

1. Theology of Stewardship
2. Harassment Prevention Policy