**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

**Stated Session Meeting (Zoom)**

**April 16, 2023**

**We Assemble in God’s Name**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Sorge, Moderator; Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session; Jason Brown; Dane Byers; Rick Comstock; Mark Dewey; Kandy Grant; Virginia Healy; Mary Lou McMillin; Susie Phend; Patti Warner; and Gwen Carr, Associate for Pastoral Care.

**Absent/Excused**; Mark Facknitz, Nancy Hopkins-Garriss, Rick Orem. Approved. A quorum was present.

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

**Opening Devotion**: Kandy led a devotion based on Genesis 11:1-12, celebrating the beauty of the earth around us and our Creator’s love for us.

**Sharing Joys and Concerns:**

Gwen and Stephanie shared prayer concerns and joys for members and friends of the Trinity congregation, and Stephanie led a moment of prayer.

**Consent Agenda**: Approval of the docket and approval of the minutes from the March19 Stated Session Meeting. Approved.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was observed during online and in-person worship on Sunday, April 2, as previously approved. That day the Rev. Bill Reinhold and Ginny Reinhold served communion as an extension of the table to two persons at Bridgewater Retirement Community. Patti and Mary Lou also served communion to Joyce and John Lyon in their home.
2. The 2022 Session minutes were approved with no exceptions at the Presbytery review meeting on March 25 at Massanutten Presbyterian Church. *A copy of the approval is attached to these minutes.* Next year the Presbytery review will focus not only on Session minutes, but also on each church’s procedures for maintaining and archiving up-to-date roll books. This is a policy that we will need to address over the coming months.
3. Founding member Wilbur (Bill) Bedall died on April 2, 2023. A Celebration of Life service was held at Trinity on April 15.
4. Joanne Hughes has requested a transfer of membership to the Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mary Lou made, and Kandy seconded, a motion to approve this request. Approved.

**Pastoral Care Associate’s Report**:

1. In addition to completing regular weekly planning activities, Gwen made 14 in-person visits and numerous pastoral care contacts using technology. She attended meetings of the Pastoral Care Team, Session, Reaching Out House Church, and Centering Space. She traveled to West Virginia to participate in the graveside service and burial for Donna Cook and participated in the service for Bill Bedall on April 15. She also had one week of vacation during March.

**Pastor’s Report:**

For Information:

1. Stephanie has been in touch with at least one person interested in joining Trinity and another two persons potentially interested in baptism. She will be working on follow up for those and will announce specific plans for explorers.
2. Stephanie reminded everyone that next Sunday, April 23, we will be joining with other congregations for worship at the Turner Pavilion at 9:45 am. There will be a live-streaming option.

Upcoming Dates:

1. 2023 Vacation (subject to change) - March 10-18, June 26-July 2, July 24-30, 1 week TBD
2. 2023 Continuing Education - May 8-14, June 9-16 (coming back in time for the rehearsal for Caroline Kempfer)

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

Misconduct Policy Task Force

No report

**Marks Groups and House Churches**

Reaching Out Gwen Carr

1. The house church’s covenant is currently being signed and will be presented to the Session at its May meeting.

Sanctuary Rick Orem

1. Sanctuary is continuing its planning for the April 30 worship service.

Hearts and Hands Linda

No report

Backpack Virginia.

1. Persons from Hope Distributed will deliver Trinity’s food to both the Keister and Bluestone Elementary Schools on Thursday mornings through May at no charge. They will start again the third week of August. All Harrisonburg City schools now have a backpack program. Virginia will be serving on the advisory board for the Harrisonburg Education Foundation and will help to support the backpack project.

Centering Space Mary Lou

1. Centering Space is investigating the use of Myrtle Grant funds for assistance in refurbishing the Yoke Room. It will also use the two larger rooms of Centering Space as an alternative worship space for our younger disciples. The worship service can be streamed while also offering stations with resources that engage children’s bodies and minds. Teresa and Stephanie are working on this, and Gwen has also offered to help develop stations for the children.
2. The new yoga class beginning May 2 is full with 13 people. Reservations are still encouraged for the contemplative book study of *The Hidden Gospel* that will begin on April 20 and the prayerful art retreat on April 29. Kathryn House will join the art retreat and then host supper at Taste of Thai with participants and invited guests who have been involved in Centering Space activities. The intergenerational “pour art” nurture session will be held on Sunday, May 21. The Enneagram class with Luanne Austin is currently being publicized and will run from Monday, June 5, through a concluding half-day retreat on July 29 or August 5.

Clothes Closet Susie

1. The one-bag-per-adult policy started back in November is working well. If there is a lot of inventory, clients may take two bags. The 2023 statistics through the beginning of April are available on the Session website.
2. Switchover Day was a big success. Martha and Dick Kleckner and Kathy Gillette did a lot of prep work the day before, which helped make it go smoothly. There were 20 volunteers, including many Trinity folk, as well as volunteers from UKirk and the Boy Scouts.
3. The Clothes Closet is revisiting its masking policy to be consistent with Trinity’s current policy, which encourages, but does not mandate, masks. They will still make masks available to anyone who wishes to wear one.

Guns to Gardens: Susie

1. Some members participated in a Zoom meeting this month with Action Circle cohorts from across the country. In a break-out session, they learned that Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church is having their Guns to Gardens event on June 11, with a fundraiser beforehand. Trinity’s next gathering is set for Sunday April 23 at 12:30 at Trinity. Susie will now be the Session contact for Guns to Gardens.

Valley Interfaith Action Rick O.

1. Mo Gallagher-McLeod attended a meeting to discuss child care issues.

**Seasonal Teams**

Lent/Easter Rick O.

No report

Pentecost

1. The team requested that the local portion of the Pentecost offering (40%) be designated for at-risk children through the Boys and Girls Club. Approved by consensus.
2. A number of exciting activities are planned for the summer:
3. Pentecost Sunday is May 28 and will include a very interactive and creative Sunday worship.
4. The team hopes to create a prayer station outside to which neighbors could add a prayer.
5. Instead of Summer Night Studies plans are being made for a fun summer of different intergenerational activities with the following possibilities:

* United Way-led tour of local ministries that they support
* Another Mission/Nurture/Fellowship event that focuses on the neighborhood and the community
* Blacks Run learning activity through Clean Stream

1. Fellowship activities for the summer include random neighborhood walks “Penny Walks for Pentecost” at10am on Wednesdays beginning May 31 through August 8.
2. An outside concert with Mike Lee will be held on June 25, from 6-7.
3. A welcome back and blessing of the backpacks for students and teachers is planned for August 22.
4. There is a need for liturgists and guest preachers throughout the summer. Mark Dewey has agreed to be our guest minister on June 11 for a service that will be entirely in Spanish.
5. Fellowship time will continue in the Commons after worship.

**Standing Teams**

Benevolences Kandy

No report

Building and Grounds Dane

1. Senger Roofing has completed our sanctuary roof repairs but is also recommending snow guards, given the roof pitch and the new guttering. They will send estimates, which should be around $1,000.
2. Larry Brown has planted a new fringe tree in Marty’s memory in the area of our pollinator garden. Its placement does not interfere with mowing.
3. Trinity’s mower malfunctioned again and hopefully has been fixed. There is a mowing schedule for the next few months that includes Stuart Davis, Greg Sachs, Larry Brown, Paul Klemt and Dane Byers. The gas trimmer is not working properly, and Dane recommended consideration of an electric, battery powered trimmer and blower combination through Shrock locally for approximately $600-700 if we continue to have difficulty with it.
4. Retired Brethren minister, Rev Lee Kinsey, who owns a home next to Trinity property, has asked the church to possibly share the cost of removing two cedar trees that border the two properties near the far west part of the playground. The trees are problematic for him (his shed in particular) and us (during mowing). Dane recommended that Session approve sharing the cost of removing these trees for an approximate cost of $400-450. Approved by consensus. Dane will let other neighbors know about this in case there is any negative reaction. It was suggested that the tree chips might be used in our compost bin.
5. Commercial Repair Solutions was called because of concern about our dishwasher again. They found that it was in working order, although there was a bit too much water in the bottom that could have been caused problems. The technician explained that water should always be present at the bottom of the dishwasher and he removed some excess water there and so it should work fine now. The bill was $218.
6. Another kitchen concern is that hot water takes too long to get to the faucets (~5 minutes). Blauch Bros is scheduled to come Monday, April 24 to see if one of our hot water heaters is not working properly

Finance Team Linda

For Information:

1. The March 2023 Treasurer’s Report shows that we had a YTD income $228,481 as of the end of March– which is 88% of the income anticipated for the year. These figures include $57,574 in general income (pledges, loose offering, building use) and $170,904 in other income. Our actual YTD expenses were $95,635 – which is 107% of our anticipated YTD expense.

However, the budget figures for this month are skewed because of several unique issues discussed in the following section of the team’s report.

1. We were the target of check fraud in March. One check paid out to Bartlett Tree Experts for $1,950 was apparently stolen, manipulated, and cashed for an additional $9,000. This expense of $10,950 shows in the Treasurer’s Report on Line Item 5.100.145. We have the necessary supporting documentation and are working with our own bank, the cashing bank, the Harrisonburg Police Department, and our insurance company to resolve and recover those funds. Our bank indicates cases like this typically take 90-120 days to resolve.
2. We have unexpectedly and gratefully received two large donations, as shown in this month’s Treasurer’s Report:
   1. The estate of Bolling Nalle has provided us with a partial distribution of $150,000 in undesignated funds from his will. The Finance Team is recommending keeping $15,000 from these funds in our checking account to help defray the costs of recent roof repairs, and temporarily depositing the remaining $135,000 in our Edward Jones investment account while we investigate the best interest-bearing options for these funds. Our understanding from the estate lawyer is that there could be an additional distribution from Bolling’s estate once all claims on the estate are paid, which could take several months.
   2. We have also received $15,000 from Paul Sleezer in memory of Nancy Sleezer. Paul has recommended designating these funds as follows: $10,000 for capital reserves, $2,000 toward Trinity’s pledge for Massanetta Springs’ *Building a Place for All* Campaign, $1,000 for the Parish Nurse Fund, $1,000 for the Memorial Garden Fund, $800 for the tech team, and $200 to One Great Hour of Sharing.
3. Nancy and Linda have continued to meet with Janet Morris, Assistant Treasurer at Massanutten Presbyterian Church, to reorganize Trinity’s budget reports in Church Windows. Janet has been extremely helpful, and we are nearing the final formatting of some new reports that will make our budget figures and our special donations/offerings/bequests a lot easier to understand. Stay tuned, hopefully for next month’s Session meeting!
4. The team is exploring Paypal and Venmo as additional online options for congregational giving. More information on that to come.

For Action:

1. In March the Session asked the Finance Team to draft a proposal for Trinity’s participation in Massanetta Springs’ *Building a Place for All* Campaign. In consultation with Clayton Rascoe, Massanetta Springs Executive Director, the team proposed a Trinity campaign to fund one of two still available ADA accessible rooms ($50,000). Trinity’s name would be identified as the sponsor for that room. We would guarantee $10,000, and then promote a matching funds campaign where Trinity would match up to $20,000 of individual Trinity contributions, for a final total of up to $50,000. Pledges could cover a three-year period, so all the money would not need to be collected at once. Clayton would be glad to come talk to our congregation (even give Stephanie a week off from preaching), and has stated that Massanetta could help with providing a lunch at such an event. After discussion, this proposal was unanimously approved. Nancy will ask Clayton if individuals who have already pledged to the campaign can be included in our matching funds. Stephanie work with Clayton for a date to preach and have an orientation luncheon for the congregation.

The next Finance Team meeting is Thursday, May 18, at 6:30pm (Zoom).

Matthew 25 Nancy

1. Because of limited time, the discussion on a theology of stewardship was tabled until the May Session meeting.
2. Session members should also give input to Nancy on updating the three guideline documents on the Session website.

Nominating Jason

No report

Outreach Mark D.

1. Mark will work on updating the Trinity brochure.
2. He will also talk with Chris Carlberg about the feasibility of starting Dinner Church again, which attracted a number of people who didn’t normally come on Sunday morning.

Personnel Ellie

No report

Pastoral Care Patti

1. The team requested approval of the new Funeral Service policy. They followed the guidelines for Bill Bedall’s service on Saturday, which went well. Approved by consensus. After discussion, it was recommended that the policy be included in the Operating Manual as an appendix, as well as made available in the kitchen and the church office. It was suggested that there be a box in office with the guidelines, extra guest books, etc.

Presbytery Meetings:

Kandy is our Ruling Elder Commissioner and Rick C. will serve as alternate for the in-person May 20 Presbytery meeting. Future meeting dates are August 22 (Zoom) and November 4 (in person).

Processing the Meeting:

1. There was consensus that this was a very productive meeting with several critical decisions made.
2. A major discussion at the next Session meeting will focus on Trinity’s theology of stewardship.

Next Meeting: Sunday, May 21, 4 pm (planned to meet in-person). Jason will have the devotional.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session Stephanie Sorge, Moderator

Attachment:

1. Presbytery Review of 2022 Session Minutes