**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

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

**November 12, 2023**

**We Assemble in God’s Name**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Sorge, Moderator; Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session; Dane Byers; Rick Comstock; Mark Facknitz; Virginia Healy; Nancy Hopkins-Garriss; Mary Lou McMillin, Rick Orem, Susie Phend, and Kim Shank, Associate for Pastoral Care.

**Excused/Absent**: Jason Brown, Mark Dewey, Kandy Grant, and Patti Warner, Approved. A quorum was present.

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

**Opening Devotion**: Virginia led a devotion and meditation based on being open to change, reading from *The Creature of Habit*. She led a prayer about embracing change.

**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 in the Pastor’s Report on the Session website. Stephanie led a moment of prayer.

**Consent Agenda**: The docket and the minutes from the October 15, 2023 Stated Session Meeting and the November 5, 2023 Called Congregational Meeting were approved.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was observed during online and in-person worship on Sunday, November 5, as previously approved. Communion as an extension of the table was served as previously approved as follows: The Rev. Roxana Atwood and Susie served one person in her home, and Kim Shank and Virginia served one person in his home.
2. Trinity member Vivian Hevener passed away on October 30. A graveside service celebrating Vivian’s life was held at East Lawn on November 6.

**Pastoral Care Associate’s Report**

For Information

1. Kim has continued with pastoral care visits at church, in homes, and at the various retirement communities. She was pleased to be able to visit with Vivian Hevener before she died.

**Pastor’s Report:**

For Discussion and/or Action:

1. After discussion, Session set Saturday, January 27, from 10am-4pm for the annual Session retreat. Stephanie will coordinate this date with the incoming Elders. The location will be announced later.

1. Stephanie’s clergy Presbyterian Foundation consultation event was excellent! One of the presentations was by the Director for Planned Giving Resources, and Stephanie suggested that we invite him or someone else to come and speak about this or anything else (including endowments). It was decided to invite him and Sandra Moon to meet with the Session and then speak to the congregation. Stephanie will follow through.
2. With the recent passing of two long-time church members, Stephanie encouraged Session members to update their final wishes and make sure we have copies on file here at the church. She will focus on this in the December newsletter, with newly revised planning forms and resources and online versions for everything. This could also go hand-in-hand with planned giving education. Trinity has had some really great Nurture offerings in the past few years around death and pre-planning, but this is something we should all do, keep up-to-date, and also encourage others to do. Here is the link to the online planning document: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1obQ4Bcdm2vA0vj_Np_DZWpKKfzG84tY7rxs0uB1u57E/edit?usp=sharing>

And here is the link to the online form: <https://forms.gle/rFTd1D77a3qSHhMq8>

1. We have received an itemized request from Haresh Nag for $7,180 to help support his orphans for the coming year. After discussion, it was decided that Mark F., Melodie, and Kim will try to arrange a Zoom or WhatsApp meeting with Haresh to determine if this is our mission or whether it is our mission to connect him to other resources, including grants. Questions included whether we are the only church he has contacted, if it should be a line item in our budget, or if we might choose selected items to support.

For Information:

1. Stephanie is working to schedule training sessions with our new Elders.

Upcoming Dates:

1. 2023 Vacation (subject to change) - March 10-18, June 26-July 2, July 24-30, November 17-25
2. 2023 Continuing Education - May 8-14, June 9-16
3. Clergy Consultation - October 17-20

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

Misconduct Policy Task Force

1. Some sample misconduct policies may be available soon.

**Marks Groups and House Churches**

Reaching Out Kim S

1. Meetings are going well.

Sanctuary Rick Orem

1. Sanctuary held its first meeting last week.

Hearts and Hands Linda

No report

Backpack Virginia.

No report

Centering Space Mary Lou

For Information:

1. Recent and continuing offerings include a three-week session on Turning Tables: Hospitality and Breaking Bread, and a new yoga class.
2. Upcoming offerings include an art journaling workshop on November 18, four Centering Space stations in the Harbor Room and weekly meditations for the Friday email and website, Jan Richaredson’s online Illuminated Advent Retreat, and a four-session Bonhoeffer study to be led by Rick C and Mark F. during Lent.
3. Additional details may be found on the Session website.

Clothes Closet Susie

1. Activities are going well, and the Wednesday volunteers have been great.

Guns to Gardens: Susie

1. Guns to Gardens had a very successful G2G event on Sunday October 22nd. There were at least 50 attendees, and numerous volunteers. We were able to successfully dismantle 8 guns and began the process of turning them into works of art and gardening tools. Be on the lookout for a stained glass/mosaic art piece to be shared in the future. Our next meeting will be held on November 19th at 12:30. A chop saw has been donated to Trinity.

Turning Tables Kim

1. Fifteen persons came to the first meeting, and they took the left overs to shut-ins. Plans are to hold supper church once a month.

Valley Interfaith Action Nancy / Rick

1. Mary Lou attended the candidates’ forum at Bridgewater Church of the Brethren on October 26th. About 45 transportation surveys were received from Trinity. VIA will meet again on December 7th to get commitment from winners of the November 7 election. Trinity has committed to 15 people attending that meeting. All are invited to attend.

**Seasonal Teams**

Harvest Virginia

1. The October 27th family movie night very successful, and many kids from neighborhood attended. An excellent nurture program was presented by Alison Garcia, a licensed professional counselor and author, last week, and Susan Adamson from the Blue Ridge Free Clinic provided an excellent presentation this morning.

ACE: Mark D.

1. The Advent Season will be starting a week early, on Sunday, Nov. 26. There will be an Advent Fair to kick off the season that afternoon.

**Standing Teams**

Matthew 25 Nancy

At our October Session meeting we had the opportunity to discuss stewardship. The group was divided into random smaller groups of 3-4 people. Each group had three questions to address regarding stewardship After time to process in our groups, we came back to the entire body and continued the discussion. We came up with several overarching ideas.

Question 1: What do we mean when we say stewardship?

• Stewardship is more than money and one season- it’s year-round.

• It is taking care of things that don’t belong to us.

• Stewardship is giving ourselves through the work of the Lord and the church.

Question 2: What would be visible to people about Trinity?

• Trinity’s property has opportunities for our neighbors such as the playground, compost, and Clothes Closet. • Trinity members are active in the community.

• Others can see how we treat and love one another.

Question 3: How do we live out the idea?

• Members show love both through internal and external care.

• Visibly living our stewardship through such things as food donations for the Backpack Program and sharing our talents through the Prayer Shawl ministry.

• The work of house churches.

As we wrapped up our discussion, we acknowledged that money is necessary for these things to be happen, but the identification of the “why” for the money is so important to truly create a theology of stewardship for Trinity.

The next Matthew 25 meeting date will be December 14th at 7 PM by Zoom.

Benevolences Kandy

For Information:

The Benevolence team met on Thursday, November 9, 2023 and welcomed a guest, Jennifer Sensenig, from Church World Service. She shared information about CWS and how we as a congregation can help. Following our discussion with Jennifer we identified the following list of local benevolences. We feel these are consistent with Trinity’s vision and mission and local needs.

We also are requesting that once a month one of these agencies be highlighted to the congregation to bring awareness to our giving as well as sharing additional ways members can help when appropriate.

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| **Agency/Organization** | **2022 Giving** | **2023 Proposed Giving** |
| Big Brothers/Big Sisters | $ 300 | $ 300 |
| Coalition to End Gun Violence | $ 500 | $ 500 |
| Harrisonburg Fire Company No. 1 | $ 100 | $ 100 |
| Harrisonburg Rescue Squad | $ 100 | $ 100 |
| Blue Ridge Free Clinic | $ 550 | $ 500 |
| Hope Distributed | $ 300 | $ 300 |
| Mercy House | $ 300 | $ 300 |
| Pleasant View, Inc. | $ 850 | $ 850 |
| Refugee Resettlement (CWS) | $ 200 | $ 250 |
| Skyline Literacy Coalition | $ 400 | $ 400 |
| New Bridges | $ 300 | $ 300 |
| Gemeinschaft | $ 300 | $ 300 |
| **TOTAL** | **$ 4200** | **$ 4200** |

Building and Grounds

No report

Finance Team Linda

For Information:

1. Treasurer’s Report

The Operating Budget Report shows that we had a YTD income of $371,192 as of the end of October – which is 106% of the income anticipated for this time of the year. These figures include $206,317 in general income (pledges, loose offering, building use). We have also received $164,625 in other income YTD (which includes bequests and undesignated memorials). Our actual YTD expenses were $ 272,805 – which is 118% of our anticipated YTD expense.

The Fund Activity Report shows YTD Receipts of $93,572, including Transfer of previous carry-over monies, and Disbursements of $45,578. Please check your specific accounts for any extra funds you have received or spent this year! Also review any remaining budget amounts for 2023 and process any expenditures as appropriate before the end of December.

1. Giving statements have been sent out again so people will know where they stand with their pledges for 2023 and have a starting point for 2024. Our next meeting is Thursday, November 16, when we will begin pledge follow-up and start developing a budget for 2024.
2. After discussion about the draft Endowment Policy, it was decided to consider this as a framework and to invite two representatives from the Presbytery Foundation for Planned Giving to meet with the current and incoming Elders and the Finance Team to continue the discussion and clarify details. Stephanie will contact the Foundation to schedule this meeting.

1. After discussion about Larry Brown and Dane Byers’ proposal regarding affordable Habitat housing, it was decided to elect a committee to look at all possibilities for overall use of our grounds and to develop a master plan. Virginia and Susie agreed to serve on this committee. Approved. It was decided to increase the committee make-up and establish its charge in December. It is hoped that the Session could present a plan at the congregational meeting in February. Stephanie will draft an informational article to the congregation for Session review. Approved.

Nominating Jason

1. Four nominees were elected to serve as Ruling Elders for the Class of 2026 at the November 5th Called Congregational Meeting: Dave Carothers, Amy Lemmons, Ginny Reinhold, and Bob Schminkey.

Outreach Mark D.

No report

Personnel Susie

The Personnel Team and Victoria met Thursday 11/9/23 to interview two candidates for the Administrative Position. We are happy to announce that we have offered a job to Kelsea Miller who has accepted the position. She will begin training with Victoria on Tuesday November 14th. Victoria and she will be sharing office hours, with Victoria working one day a week and Kelsea working 4 days per week. Office hours will remain the same, 10-3.

Pastoral Care Patti

No report

Presbytery Meetings: Mark F.

1. The Presbytery meeting was held in person at Opequon Presbyterian Church in Winchester on November 4. Mark F. served as our Commissioned Ruling Elder. After an excellent worship service, the education hour focused on *Why Presbyterians Are Like That*, which encouraged a good discussion. Stephanie and Lizzy Healy were elected to attend General Assembly in June. Boundary training will now be required for session members.

Processing the Meeting;

Appreciation was expressed again for the meaningful discussion and ways that the Session members interact together.

Next Meeting: Sunday, December 17, 4pm. Susie will have the devotional.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 6:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session Stephanie Sorge, Moderator