**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

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

**June 25, 2023**

**We Assemble in God’s Name**

**Members Present:** Stephanie Sorge, Moderator; Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session; Jason Brown; Rick Comstock; Mark Facknitz; Nancy Hopkins-Garriss; Mary Lou McMillin; Rick Orem; Susie Phend; and Gwen Carr, Associate for Pastoral Care.

**Excused/Absent**: Dane Byers, Mark Dewey, Kandy Grant, Virginia Healy, and Patti Warner. Approved. A quorum was present.

**Guests Present:** Norie Smith and Carolyn Hinshaw, to meet with Session to join Trinity.

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

**Opening Devotion**: Mark F. led a devotion based on transitions, learning to let go and to be a beloved child of God. Trinity may be an ageing church, but it is also a young church. If you have love, you have lived.

**Sharing Joys and Concerns:** Session members shared prayer concerns and joys for members and friends of the Trinity congregation, and Stephanie led a moment of prayer.

**Consent Agenda**: The docket and the minutes from the May 21, 2023 Stated Session Meeting were approved.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was observed during online and in-person worship on Sunday, June 4, as previously approved. That day the Rev. Bill Reinhold and Ginnie Reinhold served communion as an extension of the table to two persons at Bridgewater Retirement Community. Virginia and Susie shared communion with persons at Sunnyside. Patti and Ann Held served two persons at the Phoenix. Linda, Mary Lou, Virginia, and Gwen also served communion to several persons in their homes.
2. Stephanie presided over the marriage of Caroline Kempfer and Adam Ware on June 17.
3. Jenny Bolt will be baptized during worship on July 23. Rick C. will present her to the congregation and will serve as her sponsor.
4. Bob Schminkey and the Rev. Sara Holben reaffirmed their vows and were welcomed by the congregation on Sunday, June 4.

**Pastoral Care Associate’s Report**:

1. Gwen made numerous calls and 32 in-person visits this month, in addition to her regular activities.
2. She reported that the ongoing assignments for extending the table have now been confirmed:

* Virginia and Susie- Sunnyside
* Melodie and Kandy- Broadway area, Brownswords and Bill Wilson
* Bill and Ginnie Reinhold- Bridgewater
* Patti and Ann- Phoenix: Elaine and Gloria Healy
* Virginia and Gwen - Bill and Ramona Sanders
* Mary Lou and Linda Bradley- substitutes for the present

**Pastor’s Report:**

For Action:

1. Stephanie requested approval to purchase pronoun stickers from More Light Presbyterians for members to add to name tags (<https://mlp.org/product-category/pronoun-swag/sticker-sheets/>) Susie made, and Mary Lou seconded, a motion to approve this request.. Approved.
2. Stephanie requested permission to apply for the Harrisonburg/Rockingham County Chamber of Commerce Leadership Program for 2023-24. The mission statement of the program is: *“Leadership Harrisonburg Rockingham (LHR) strives to create a lasting impact on Harrisonburg and Rockingham County by developing current and future leaders through community awareness, engagement, and education. The program is designed to expose current and aspiring leaders to the many different aspects of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County; educating them about the community’s past, present and future, including our strengths and opportunities that will help us build a better tomorrow. A strong emphasis on leadership development is woven into the program, beginning with a team building session.”* The cost for participating is $719 for the year, which would be split among her professional/continuing education/discretionary funds. The Leadership class meets on the third Thursday of each month from August to June, at different locations in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, with the exception of a class trip to Richmond in January. The application is due in July, and must be endorsed by the Session. Stephanie sees this as an opportunity to build connections and outreach into Harrisonburg and Rockingham beyond the usual church connections. Mark F. agreed to write a letter of reference attesting to Stephanie’s character and leadership potential. Susie made, and Rick seconded, a motion to approve this application. Approved.

For Information:

1. Karen Leigh intends to join Trinity by letter of transfer, but cannot come to Session until August. We’ll go ahead and request the letter (Bridgewater PC).
2. The Presbytery is taking bulk orders for hard copies of the Book of Order (with newly approved changes), Book of Confessions, and paper planning calendar. Elders who would like Trinity to order any of the above should let Stephanie know. All will be available in late August, and the Book of Order should also have an updated PDF available.
3. Stephanie led a graveside memorial service in Elkton for Margery Kite today. Her daughter reached out to Stephanie through a series of connections, looking for an inclusive minister.

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)

**Order of the Day**:

1. Norie Smith comes to Trinity by letter of transfer from Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Harrisonburg. Mary Jean Kempfer invited her to Trinity in 1989, and she felt right at home. She has returned to Trinity now because she sees Trinity as open and affirming, plus as having a strong focus on Matthew 25. She made her reaffirmation of faith during the Session meeting and also shared several of her gifts she felt she would like to share with Trinity. Susie made, and Nancy seconded, a motion to receive Norie into membership. Approved. Norie will be verbally welcomed by the congregation during worship in July.
2. Carolyn Hinshaw also met with the Session during this meeting; she will be baptized, make her affirmation of faith, and join Trinity on Sunday, July 9. She and Stephanie will meet throughout the summer to complete a confirmation curriculum together - not a Book of Order requirement, but for her own ongoing learning. Carolyn has been attending Trinity for many years with her family. She has been helping with the technical activities related to our online worship. She will be attending Shenandoah University in the fall to prepare for a nursing career. Mary Lou made, and Rick seconded, a motion to approve Carolyn’s baptism and membership. Approved. Mark F. will present her to the congregation and serve as her sponsor.

**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

No report

Sanctuary Rick Orem

No report

Hearts and Hands Linda

1. The group has shared several shawls and shoo boxes. Haresh and Hamitha in India sent a wonderful note and pictures of them wearing the shawls they received. We are planning to include a short article about this in the July Nous. As always, please let us know of anyone who might appreciate receiving a shawl or lap robe.

Backpack Virginia.

No report

Centering Space Mary Lou

1. Centering Space has:
2. Led a nurture series based on the book What Kind of Christianity? by William Yoo.
3. Offered a nurture session on understanding transformation through cooking led by Lizzy Healy on June 4.
4. Offered two creative expression sessions:

* A prayerful art retreat attended by 12 participants led by Ashley Iserhagen on April 29.  Kathryn House joined the art retreat and then hosted supper at Taste of Thai with 12 participants and invited guests who have been involved in Centering Space activities.
* A nurture session on Pour Art as creative expression led by Karen Aspinwall on June 11.

1. The group has also:
2. Completed a contemplative book study of The Hidden Gospel by Neil Douglas-Klotz with 5-6 participants.
3. Completed a six-week spring yoga class and have begun a six-week summer yoga class led by Robin Atwood. Both classes have been full with 12 participants.
4. Begun an eight-week Enneagram class led by Luanne Austin.
5. Expanded the use of the Centering Space to host young disciples during worship.  Stations (art, reading, kinetic sand, legos) are set up each week and the service is streamed into the Technology Room.
6. In other news:
7. Renovations to the Yoke Room have begun, with a great reveal next Sunday.
8. Tom Moore from Pennsylvania will visit here in August to see what Centering Space is doing.
9. New labyrinth meditations are available now.

Clothes Closet Susie

1. The Clothes Closet is looking for a group to take over 3rd Wednesdays; UKirk is no longer able to do so because of leadership changes. Kathy Gillette and Stephanie have reached out to a neighborhood group. Other ideas are welcome. They are also looking for sign-ups for change-over day on September 23.

Guns to Gardens: Susie

1. Guns to Gardens has at least three guns to be surrendered at its first event. Stephanie Sorge, Andy Sale, and Rick Orem are reaching out to the city police and the Sheriff’s Department to gain their support. They are still looking at some possible dates in the future including Monday, September 4 or Monday, October 9. They have also worked on completing paper work for the Matthew 25 team. The next meeting will be held Sunday, July 9 at 12:30pm.

Valley Interfaith Action Nancy

1. Nancy reported that the last VIA meeting was very exciting, with 149 people, including nine from Trinity, attending. The transportation survey will start July 1. They are aiming to hold 20 conversations by September 21. Nancy is part of the transportation group. They are encouraging neighborhood walks to talk with people in community about how they are impacted by transportation and child care. It was suggested that neighborhood walks might be combined with our own PennyWalkers, which also rode bus this last Wednesday. The child care group is working on increasing child care wages to a living wage.

**Seasonal Teams**

Pentecost

1. June 25 will feature Music on the Lawn by Mike Lee at 6:00 pm, with ice cream in the Commons. Sunday, July 9 will have a showing of “Won’t You Be My Neighbor?” from 3-5pm in the Commons, with refreshments provided. Tuesday, August 8, at 6:00pm will show “Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood” in the Commons, with refreshments provided.

Harvest Virginia

For Action:

1. The team requested approval of Friendly City Safe Space as the recipient of the 25% retained from the Peace and Global Witness Offering. Approved.

For Information:

1. The congregational retreat will be held at Massanetta Springs on Sunday, October 29.

**Standing Teams**

Benevolences Kandy

No report

Building and Grounds

No report

Finance Team

1. There are two new draft report formats for the May 2023 Treasurer’s Report – the Operating Budget Report and the Consolidated Fund Activity Report. The Operating Budget Report shows that we had a YTD income of $280,279 as of the end of May – which is 107% of the income anticipated for this time of the year. These figures include $116,004 in general income (pledges, loose offering, building use) and $164,275 in other income. Our actual YTD expenses were $174,529 – which is 117% of our anticipated YTD expense.

However, Jeannie is still in the process of transferring January-April fund activity donations to the Consolidated Fund Activity Report. It is currently accurate for May receipts and disbursements, but will be brought up-to-date in the near future.

Trinity had the following balances to our Edward Jones accounts as of May 31, 2023:

Music 24,575.90

Skip Whitmore 52,808.17

Parish Nurse 11,958.89

Memorial Garden 11,617.79

Solar -----

Reserves 278,058.85

Total 379,019.60

1. Trinity has met its challenge for the Massanetta Springs *Building for All* campaign. As of this week, we have received $22,390.50 in individual Trinity pledges. This amount, plus Trinity’s initial $10,000 pledge and the $20,000 that Trinity will donate for meeting this challenge, will allow Trinity to fund a new ADA room in the Massanetta Springs hotel! We send our first check to Massanetta Springs in July. This amount will include our original $10,000 pledge, the individual donations already received through June 30 (currently $10,565), plus our $10,565 match. Linda will provide Clayton Rascoe with the names and addresses of those who have pledged so he can send out thank you notes.

For Information:

1. The team will distribute the January-June giving statements to the congregation in July by email, church mail box, or snail mail.
2. Trinity has received a request from the Virginia Interfaith Center to submit an application to be recognized as a Living Wage Certified Church. Tier One is entry level ($15-18 per hour) and Tier Two is $16-24 per hour. We have two hourly employees- Gwen Carr and Victoria Riddle, and both already meet or exceed the Tier Two requirements. We will submit our application for this significant recognition in the next couple of weeks.
3. Six Trinity scholarship applications have been received so far:

* Skip Whitmore: Allen Awiti, Bethany Hinshaw, Morgan Sutphin
* Parish Nurse: Lizzie Healy, Carolyn Hinshaw, Kate Hoffmeyer

The application deadline is June 30. At that time, the team will decide electronically on the scholarship amount so that the awards can be processed in a timely manner.

1. In May the Session suggested that the Finance Team develop a draft policy to ensure effective management and oversight of Trinity’s reserves and also to ensure committed endowment funds whose principal is protected, but is able to provide interest resources in perpetuity. The team has also received a request to begin exploring ideas for the use of some of those funds for expanded community outreach in line with Trinity’s mission. Nancy Hopkins-Garriss and John Parcells will work on the draft endowment fund policy. Dane Byers, Larry Brown, and Mark Facknitz will explore possibilities for expanded community outreach.
2. Next scheduled meeting is Thursday, July 13, 6:30 (Zoom)

Matthew 25 Nancy

No report

Nominating Jason

No report

Outreach Mark D.

1. Pride Day on Court Square will be held on September 16 – save the date.

Personnel Ellie

No report

Pastoral Care Patti

No report.

Presbytery Meetings: Kandy

1. Future meeting dates are Tuesday, August 22 (Zoom) and November 4 (in person). Nancy was elected in May to be our Commissioned Ruling Elder for the August 22 meeting. Rick C. will be the alternate.

Processing the Meeting:

1. It was agreed that this meeting fostered may excellent discussions on critical topics.

Next Meeting: Sunday, July 16, 4 pm (in-person) Patti will have the devotional.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session Stephanie Sorge, Moderator