**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

**Stated Session Meeting**

**February 19, 2023**

**We Assemble in God’s Name**

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

**Absent/Excused**; Rick Comstock. Approved. A quorum was present.

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

**Opening Devotion**: Rick O. recalled one of his previous devotions based on turning swords into plowshares. He spoke about the recent shooting at Michigan State University and then of his own experience with gun violence 15 years ago while teaching on a university campus, during which six students, including the shooter, died. He said a Marks Group, Guns to Gardens, was called this month and also noted the beginning of Lent, a time of penitence, this month. He urged us all to discern how to support non-violence and to practice random acts of kindness. Rick then closed with prayer.

**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.

**Approval of Docket**: Approved.

**Approval of Minutes**: The minutes from the January 14 Stated Session Meeting and Retreat and the January 29 Annual Congregational Meeting were approved.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was observed during online and in-person worship on Sunday, February 5, as previously approved. The Rev. Bill Reinhold and Ginny Reinhold also served communion as an extension of the table to two persons at Bridgewater Retirement Community.
2. Clarence “Mac” Beard, a founding member of Trinity and a ruling elder, died on Wednesday, February 8. (Mac is also Gwen Carr’s father.) A committal service was held at Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church on February 10, and a Service of Witness to the Resurrection was held at Trinity on February 12.
3. Linda shared information from the 2022 Annual Statistical Report. Susie made, and Nancy seconded, a motion to approve this report. Approved. The report has been submitted to PCUSA and is attached to these minutes. Linda noted that the 2022 Session minutes will be submitted for Presbytery review at a meeting on March 25 at Massanutten Presbyterian Church.
4. The new Class of 2025 elders – Dane Byers, Mark Dewey, Mary Lou McMillin, and Susie Phend – were ordained (Mark) and installed (all) on Sunday, January 15, during worship.

**Pastoral Care Associate’s Report**:

1. Gwen expressed her thanks for Trinity’s support for Mac and her family. She also shared other pastoral concerns.

**Pastor’s Report:**

For Discussion and Action:

1. Due to some scheduling conflicts, Stephanie will reschedule her March retreat with other clergy.
2. Stephanie shared proposed amendments to the Book of Order that will impact some of our current work. We’ve already made a few of the changes in our Manual of Operations, but two proposed amendments will impact work of Trinity’s Misconduct Policy Task Force. Additions are italicized. Strikethroughs would be deletions.
   1. All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy. Each council’s policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, *and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.”*
   2. *“G-3.0106 Administration of Mission … … “*All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy *the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy.”*

The current plan is to present all provisions in an omnibus motion to Presbytery next week, with any that are pulled from the motion to be tabled for discussion and vote at the May meeting.

1. Stephanie asked that Session review the Black Lives Matter document approved in the summer of 2020. Several issues were raised during discussion, including its compatibility with our current diversity statement, findings of the Season of Repentance Task Force, and our commitment to Matthew 25. It was decided to refer the document to the Matthew 25 Team for updating on how it should inform our anti-racism policy. The document has been posted on the Session website. Elders were encouraged to keep up with reading and staying informed about this issue.
2. Stephanie has posted a preaching survey online and would appreciate feedback. This is for her learning process and goals for Sustaining the Preaching Life, the six-month cohort preaching program through Princeton Seminary. The survey link is: <https://forms.gle/F9YHZ2nZQeTM1sng6>. .

For Information:

1. Stephanie will be out the week leading up to the next Session meeting. Please make sure to send materials and reports to Victoria no later than 12 noon on March 17.
2. There is a new conference at Montreat in October that will look at how we make the “Holy Shift” coming out of the pandemic. Registration opens on March 1 at <https://montreat.org/events/holy-shift>. This would be a great opportunity to consider!

Upcoming Dates:

1. 2023 Vacation (subject to change) - March 10-18, 3 weeks 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

1. The task force has been on hold and will begin meeting soon. Members are Nancy, Patti, and Judy LePera.

**Marks Groups and House Churches**

Reaching Out Gwen Carr

No report

Sanctuary Rick Orem

1. Sanctuary has begun planning for the April 30 worship service.

Hearts and Hands Linda

1. Hearts and Hands continues to meet monthly over Zoom and recently has shared several prayer shawls. A new member will be welcomed at our February meeting.

Backpack Virginia

1. The program is preparing 120 bags/week for Keister and Bluestone. The Bluestone program has grown significantly. Thinking for the future includes looking at a possible program at Thomas Harrison Middle School, and also a food pantry type of arrangement where students voluntarily take what their family can use. Personal care items, not covered by SNAP, are needed at the high school. Martin’s has voluntarily been soliciting food donations from shoppers; you can also round up your bill there.

Centering Space Stephanie

1. Twelve people have enrolled in the Tuesday evening yoga class with Robin Atwood that begins March 7. Mark, Virginia, Mary Lou and Teresa attended the Fraught & Flummoxed conference at Montreat on January 30. The Lectio group is ongoing. The Sunday morning group has completed its study of Isaiah and moved to Job. March 25 has been confirmed for the playground clean-up. April 29 has been confirmed for an art retreat.

Clothes Closet Susie

1. An article on the Clothes Closet has been placed in the Friday Update. Volunteers donated over 700 hours to serve 1436 clients in 2022. A g group is needed to help on the 5th Wednesdays.

Valley Interfaith Action Rick O.

1. Nancy has been attending Action Circle meetings. The next meeting will be on March 21 at the Bridgewater Church of the Brethren. Trinity has committed to have 25 persons attend. VIA is working with the county to approve a feasibility study with JAUNT, from Charlottesville. A volunteer is needed to talk with Rick Chandler (District 3) about working with micro-transit with the city. Mo Gallagher-McLeod is working on the childcare initiative.

Guns to Gardens: Susie

1. Guns to Gardens was called as a Marks Group on February 5 and held its organizational meeting on Sunday, February 12. Sixteen persons attended, with several other persons expressing interest but unable to attend. Preliminary activities and responsibilities were identified. It will meet again on March, 12 at 12:30 in Yoke Room. Interested persons have been invited to participate in an online workshop series led by Deanna Hollis, Gun Violence Prevention Pastor for the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. Stephanie and Susie will meet with Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed this week.
2. Mark Dewey will be Session Communicator for Guns to Gardens.

**Seasonal Teams**

ACE Kandy

1. ACE is ending up an excellent season. Kandy enjoyed working on nurture study (and did an excellent job!).

Lent/Easter Rick O.

1. The Lent/Easter Team has sent out details of season activities, starting this week with Ash Wednesday. The team requested that the Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Center be designated as the alternative giving option for Easter flowers. Approved.

**Standing Teams**

Benevolences Kandy

No report

Building and Grounds Dane

1. A new freezer has been purchased and the dishwasher has been repaired. Sanctuary roof repairs are scheduled for the second week in March.

Finance Team Linda

For Information:

1. January Treasurer’s Report: This report shows that we had an actual YTD income of $13,631 as of the end of January – which is 54% of the income anticipated for this point in the year. These figures include $11,733 in general income and also the receipt of $1.898 in designated donations this month.

Our actual YTD expenses were $32,348 – which is 126% of the total anticipated expense for this point in the year. However, much of this discrepancy is due to expenses that are paid in full rather than being divided into 12 monthly payments. These figures also do not reflect designated monies carried over from last year’s totals.

Linda and Nancy are planning to meet with the treasurer at Massanutten Presbyterian Church to check on how they handle the tracking of designated gifts and bequests in Church Windows.

Please check the “How to Read the Treasurer’s Report” information on the Session website. Check with Linda or Jeannie if you have any questions.

1. Massanetta Springs: Massanetta has requested time at the March or April Session meeting to provide information about its “Building a Place for All” Campaign that is now underway.
2. Edward Jones: Our dividend income has increased since the start of 2023, but we will watch the balance in the Skip Whitmore Fund carefully between now and May. We will meet with Kathy Sutphin if necessary to review the guidelines for this account before advertising the availability of scholarships for next year.
3. Timeline for 2023 Finance Team Activities: We will update our 2023 timeline of activities at our next meeting, including a closer look at our year-round stewardship activities and other potential options for giving online.
4. Next meeting is Monday, March 6, at 6:30pm over Zoom.

Matthew 25 Nancy

1. The team met on February 13 over Zoom with Linda Bradley, Gwen Carr, Gloria Comstock, Rick Comstock, Mark Dewey, Kandy Grant, and Nancy Hopkins-Garriss attending. Since its last meeting, the team led Sunday morning worship with good feedback.

1. The team is continuing to explore ways to keep the Matthew 25 message in front of the congregation. It is reviewing the current House Church and Marks Group guidelines to suggest any edits for the next team and Session meetings. Other current activities include asking current House Churches and Marks Groups to add information to a comprehensive table that can eventually be shared with the congregation, adding a PCUSA slide on Matthew 25 to the Sunday announcements, and writing an article in the Nous.
2. The next meeting date will be March 13 over Zoom.

Nominating Jason

No report

Outreach Mark D.

No report

Personnel Ellie

No report

Pastoral Care Patti

1. The team requested permission to purchase an ice maker for the kitchen from the Fellowship budget. Approved.
2. The team requested formation of a Funeral Committee with responsibilities for coordinating food, parking, purchasing name plates recognizing members, as well as other responsibilities that span across several existing teams, especially Fellowship, Building and Grounds, and Pastoral Care. During discussion it was decided this would need a clear description for Trinity’s manual, identifying shared responsibilities with other teams and committees. Pastoral Care will flesh out more details at its next meeting on Tuesday and bring its recommendation to the next Session meeting.

Presbytery Meetings:

1. The next Presbytery meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 28 over Zoom. Rick Orem is our Ruling Elder Commissioner and Nancy Hopkins-Garriss is the alternate. Future meeting dates are: May 20 (in person), August 22 (Zoom), and November 4 (in person). Volunteers to serve as Ruling Elder Commissioners or alternates for future meetings will be identified at the March Session meeting.

Processing the Meeting:

Stephanie stressed the helpfulness of Session reports being provided in advance – Items for Action and Items for Discussion.

Next Meeting: Sunday, March 19, 4pm (tentatively in-person, with Zoom as an option). Rick C. will have the devotional.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session Stephanie Sorge, Moderator

Attachments:

1. 2022 Annual Statistical Report