**Trinity Presbyterian Church**

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

**May 21, 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; Mark Facknitz; Kandy Grant; Virginia Healy; Nancy Hopkins-Garriss; Mary Lou McMillin; Rick Orem; Susie Phend; Patti Warner.; and Gwen Carr, Associate for Pastoral Care.

**Absent/Excused**;

A quorum was present. Approved.

**Guests Present:**

Jenny Bolt and Bob Schminkey, to meet with Session to join Trinity.

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

**Opening Devotion**: Jason led a devotion based on persons having major concerns and troubles in their lives and the wonderful gift of others who love, care for, and support them. He closed with a meaningful prayer.

**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**: Approval of the docket and approval of the minutes from the April 16 Stated Session Meeting. Approved.

**Clerk’s Report:**

1. Communion was observed during online and in-person worship on Sunday, May7, as previously approved.
2. Founding member Ellen Beard (Gwen Carr’s mother) died on April 27, 2023. A Celebration of Life service was held at Trinity on April 30.
3. Linda shared general correspondence and thank you notes.

**Pastoral Care Associate’s Report**:

1. Gwen had one week of vacation in March and continued with her regular responsibilities in April, in addition to caring for her own family during this difficult time. She will be taking some time off for relaxation and restoration during the last week of May 28-June 3.

**Pastor’s Report:**

For Action:

1. Stephanie requested approval of Lizzy Healy’s application for the Shenandoah Presbytery scholarship. Susie made, and Nancy seconded, a motion to approve this request. Enthusiastically approved!

For Information:

1. Stephanie will be in Princeton, NJ Sunday, June 11 through Friday. June 16, for the Engle Institute of Preaching.

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**: Jenny Bolt and Bob Schminkey have just completed Trinity’s Explorer class. Jenny has lived in Harrisonburg since her college days at JMU. She and her husband, Les, have three children, and she has worked in marketing education in Staunton. She began coming to Trinity with a close friend and saw Trinity as being warm, small, and having good messages and good music. Bob and his wife, Sara Holben, were missionaries in Africa and met with our South African partners when they visited Trinity a number of years ago. Bob worked for Bread for the World and a number of other social service organizations.

Bob is coming by Letter of Transfer from the Presbyterian Church in Chestertown MD. Jenny is coming through Affirmation of Faith and baptism. Dane made, and Nancy seconded, a motion to welcome both Bob and Jenny as members and to approve baptism for Jenny. Approved. The date for Jenny’s baptism and for the two to be presented to the congregation will be determined.

**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. Reaching Out requested approval of its covenant for this year. Jason made, and Patti seconded, a motion to approve the covenant. Approved.

Sanctuary Rick Orem

1. Sanctuary shared a very meaningful worship service on April 30. They are continuing to work with Marisol and Lilyani, who now have been in the US for two years. Lilyani is now on a feeding tube, which has been difficult. Marisol has received her green card. VANITA hasn’t resumed full services and is not working directly with Sanctuary now. Sanctuary is still providing some medical transportation.

Hearts and Hands Linda

1. Hearts and Hands had a good gathering last Monday night.  We blessed about 10 beautiful shawls and lap robes and suggested sharing two of them with Haresh and his wife Hamitha in India, plus several with members and friends locally. Please let us know of anyone who might appreciate receiving a shawl or lap robe.

Backpack Virginia.

1. This has been a good year and the last backpack distribution will be held on June 8. Both Keister and Bluestone Elementary Schools have increased the number of bags provided /weekly. As a result, the volume of heavy food has increased, and Hope Distributed will not be able to continue delivering the food to the schools for packing. A new volunteer to transport the food will be needed in the fall. They are looking at summer demands at Keister.

Centering Space Mary Lou

1. Teresa and Virginia are coordinating the children going upstairs for nurture during worship. Children have contributed their ideas for what they would like to have available. Currently they are designing a comfortable reading area for looking at books related to our nurture and worship topics.
2. Centering Space noted the following activities:
3. May 28: Intergenerational fellowship time following worship will celebrate the wind of the Spirit moving among us as we celebrate the birthday of the church!
4. June 4: An intergenerational nurture session exploring “transformations” as we bake scones with Lizzy and Virginia Healy and consider the significance of diversity and unity in transformation.
5. June 11: Pour Art activity with Karen Aspinwall
6. New yoga class beginning June 20 – August 1 with no class on July 4.
7. Contemplative book study of *The Hidden Gospel* is underway with 6 people.
8. Prayerful art retreat on April 29 was held with 12 people registered. This has led to interest in future expression opportunities in the future.
9. The Enneagram class with Luanne Austin is currently being publicized. This will run from Monday June 5 through a concluding half-day retreat on July 29 or August 5. Five people have registered.
10. Mark and Stephanie reported that Kathryn House was pleased with the work that we’re doing in Centering Space.

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* 1. The group reviewed the Google doc from the Matthew 25 team and will meet virtually as needed for June and July.

Clothes Closet Susie

1. Masking is optional now. Clients are asked not to come in to the Clothes Closet if they have any symptoms. The Clothes Closet has recently received some major donations, which is a good problem to have. Some new volunteers are helping with Wednesday mornings and Wednesday evenings, which has been a welcome addition.

Guns to Gardens: Susie

1. The group had a very productive meeting on April 23, with 19 persons representing two local churches attending. Susie asked Session members to talk with persons who might be willing to surrender their guns for an eventual Guns to Gardens local event. A description of the group’s vision and purpose has been prepared by ta group member and will be shared with the four participating churches. This statement will be placed in the June Nous. Trinity’s next gathering is set for Sunday, June 4, at 12:30 at Trinity. Susie will now be the Session contact for Guns to Gardens.

Valley Interfaith Action Rick O.

1. There will be another regional meeting on Tuesday evening. The Transportation subgroup is investigating applying for grants to support a private transportation service, similar to Charlottesville’s JAUNT. The Childcare subgroup is conducting a survey now.

**Seasonal Teams**

Pentecost

1. Pentecost Sunday will be an exciting Sunday, with bubbles, whirligigs and balloons. There will also be an interactive prayer loom outside in the playground area, where members and neighbors alike can add their prayers. Thanks to Mike Strawderman for building this. A new meditation for the Labyrinth will be placed by the labyrinth.
2. Future events to look for: May 31, Wednesday Walkers will be walking each Wednesday from 10-12 starting at the church house. There will be music on the lawn on June 25, from 6-7 with Mike Lee - bring your own food and ice cream will be provided .

**Standing Teams**

Benevolences Kandy

No report

Building and Grounds Dane

1. Senger Roofing has given us estimates for snow stops for the new metal roof. Two choices are the plastic stops at $985, which will likely fail within a decade, or the metal ones for $1,645, which will last longer. After discussion, it was approved to purchase the more expensive metal ones, but not have them installed until the fall.

Finance Team Linda

For Information:

1. The April 2023 Treasurer’s Report shows that we had a YTD income $271,260 as of the end of April – which is 111% of the income anticipated for this time of the year. These figures include $96,555 in general income (pledges, loose offering, building use) and $174,605 in other income. Our actual YTD expenses were $150,010 – which is 126% of our anticipated YTD expense.

However, the budget income figures for this month are skewed because of several earlier bequests still listed under Income but not actually part of our budget. We look forward to our revised reports (still being finalized) clarifying this once the reports are ready!

1. The check fraud issue we shared at the April Session meeting has been resolved and the money has been restored to our Truist checking account! A big thank you to Jeannie Klemt for her hard work in resolving this!
2. Nancy, Rick C., and Linda have met again with Janet Morris, Assistant Treasurer at Massanutten Presbyterian Church, and then with Jeannie to continue reorganizing Trinity’s budget reports in Church Windows. 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. A switch-over date has not yet been determined, but should be coming soon.
3. Trinity scholarship opportunities will be shared again in the June Nous and the Friday updates. The application deadline is June 30.

For Action:

1. Guns to Gardens was called as a Marks Group after Calling Sunday this year and thus was not included in the 2023 budget. The Finance Team requests that $100 be added to the 2023 budget for any miscellaneous expenses the group might incur this year. Approved.
2. The Finance Team has received a request from Centering Space that Trinity update and refurbish the Yoke Room and front hall. They provided the following rationale:

Concerned about the dreariness of the Yoke Room, which is where the bereaved gather before memorial services, several members of Centering Space have enlisted the advice of Karen Silveira and are imagining a project that will transform the space, making it a more pleasant and comfortable spot for grief, joy, patience, wisdom, and sessional deliberations.  This transformation would include new lighting, window treatments, durable new and reupholstered furniture, a larger rug, and replacement of the existing double doors. It would also feature a special display for congregational *objets d'art*, with a significant emphasis on Trinity's history. Members of Centering Space are confident that Karen has a beautiful vision for the room and request approval of an amount up to $15,000 for this project, knowing that Centering Space is willing to share some of its funds as necessary and that individuals could be invited to share as well. This amount would enable us to refurbish the front hall as well as the Yoke room.

After discussion with Mark Facknitz and Mary Lou McMillin at Thursday’s Finance Team meeting, the team is presenting the following recommendation for Session approval:

That Session approve expending up to $15,000 in funds from our capital reserves for this project. Because timing is critical to take advantage of possible purchase opportunities, Centering Space might initially use some of its own funds and then be reimbursed through our reserves. Approved.

Linda noted that the Finance Team will be working on draft guidelines for balancing and handling our investments and bequests.

The next Finance Team meeting is Thursday, June 15, at 6:30pm (Zoom).

Extension of the Meeting

Mark D. made, and Susie seconded, a motion to extend this meeting to 6:20. Approved.

Matthew 25 Nancy

1. The team hasn’t been able to meet and would still like to have some Session input. Nancy and Linda will also meet with Stephanie about a possible stewardship definition. Nancy also requested that all Session teams, house churches, and marks groups fill out the Google Drive chart.

Nominating Jason

No report

Outreach Mark D.

No report

Personnel Ellie

No report

Pastoral Care Patti

1. Patti requested that Session members complete the survey for serving Communion as an extension of the table.

Presbytery Meetings: Kandy

Presbytery approved $125,000 for the Massanetta Springs building campaign. There are 97 churches with 100 members or fewer in our presbtytery. A new candidate for the ministry was introduced. The five amendments to the Book of Order that hadn’t passed previously were passed. Future meeting dates are Tuesday, August 22 (Zoom) and November 4 (in person). Nancy was elected to attend the August 22 meeting and. Rick C. will be the alternate.

Processing the Meeting:

1. Gratitude was expressed for our new members. Again there was consensus that this was a very productive meeting with several critical decisions made.
2. It was suggested that Trinity form a subcommittee to ensure Trinity can sustain itself over time, that our reserves will be actively managed to provide income generation for the future.

Next Meeting: Sunday, June 25, 4 pm (in-person) Mark D. will have the devotional.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 6:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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Linda Bradley, Clerk of Session Stephanie Sorge, Moderator