

**STATED SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
MARCH 21, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER / DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

**Rebekah LeMon**

The stated Session meeting for Trinity Presbyterian Church on March 21, 2023, was called to order in Old Fellowship Hall at 7:09 PM by the moderator, Rebekah LeMon. The clerk, David Carr, confirmed the presence of a quorum.

**DEVOTION**

**Allen Moseley**

Allen Moseley shared reflections on his lifelong affiliation with Trinity Presbyterian Church and on the profound impact the church has had on his faith and family. He expressed gratitude for all the men and women who have given so much time and energy to the church to sustain its work and program offerings over the last six decades. He concluded with a prayer that we might all follow the good example of those who came before us and continue serving God and each other.

**OMNIBUS MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA**

**Rebekah LeMon**

Rebekah LeMon directed session members to the omnibus motion in the meeting packet. She noted that the statistical report was not included in the session packet but was provided as a handout to be considered as part of the consent agenda. She also amended the upcoming baptism schedule as the dates had not been set at the time the session packet was distributed to elders. Specifically, John Stow, IV will be baptized on April 9<sup>th</sup> and Thomas Dixon and Clarice Mansfield will be baptized on May 14<sup>th</sup>.

The motion to approve the consent agenda as amended was unanimously approved.

**MODERATOR'S REPORT**

**Rebekah LeMon**

Rebekah LeMon began her report with gratitude for the opportunity to travel to Cuba alongside other Trinity members as they renewed partnerships that had been impacted in recent years by the pandemic. She also presented the slate of elders recommended by the nominating committee. The slate includes: Karen Bain, John Balch, Dean Cleaveland, Rebekah Groover, Jay Harris, Paige Keller, Nick Leet, Jon McRae, Catherine Quillian (youth), Helen Slawson (youth), Mary Kelly Speed, and Catherine Warren. The congregation will vote on the new elder slate on Sunday, March 26 at the annual congregational meeting. The annual report will also be presented at that meeting.

Next, Rebekah recapped the confirmand dinner that took place on March 14. All youth in attendance discussed their statements of faith and decided to join the church. Additionally, Rebekah praised the efforts of all those involved in Youth Sunday which was a success and inspiration to the entire congregation. She went on to announce upcoming events scheduled during Lent: Maundy Thursday Dinner and Service (April 6), Tenebrae Service (April 7), and the continuation of the book study of Diana Butler Bass's work *Freeing Jesus*.

Rebekah also reminded session members that new elders will be ordained and installed on Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>. She hopes to schedule time on May 20<sup>th</sup> for current and future session members to meet and share a meal.

In personnel news, the recently hired digital media specialist has moved on from Trinity for personal reasons, but a new Director of Finance and Administration has been hired and will start mid-April. Her hire will be formally announced next week.

Rebekah also announced the intent to add some form of worship (regularly but not every week) that is contemplative and meditative. This addition is in response to congregational requests and needs. Finally, elders were reminded to complete their check-in calls to all members of the congregation.

Lastly, Rebekah introduced the night's budget discussion and acknowledged that the church's financial

health should be approached with total openness and transparency. She noted that once the budget is adopted tonight, the summary will go out to the congregation in short order.

## **CLERK'S REPORT**

**David Carr**

David Carr began by reflecting on how much Trinity has accomplished over the last year. It was only one year ago (last March) that the Pastor Nominating Committee called a meeting to announce the nomination of Rebekah LeMon as our senior pastor, and Esther Stokes presented carpet and paint samples! He noted all the remarkable and positive things that have happened over the last twelve months. The church has come a long way in a short period of time, and that progress is a credit of the church's leadership. David also gave sincere thanks for all the personal outreach and messages he received upon the birth of his new daughter, Collins.

Next, David noted the receipt of nominations for the next assistant clerk which will be discussed in greater detail at the April 18<sup>th</sup> session meeting. The next Presbytery Meeting is scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup> (via Zoom).

Lastly, David noted that he would be disseminating 'minute templates' to committee chairs to ensure a more standardized approach to minute collection and review.

## **SPECIAL ORDERS & REPORTS:**

### **Trustees**

**Margaret Reiser**

Margaret Reiser provided a 2022 trust fund update. Last year, new estate gifts to the fund represented over \$500,000. There were also an unusually large number of disbursements in 2022—primarily because the trustees released (with session's approval) \$800,000 to cover a portion of the church's infrastructure work. Additionally, the TELC fund covered \$142,000 (roughly half) of the elevator repairs in the Welcome Center, and an additional \$136,000 went into the church's operating budget. The portfolio declined 16.8% last year, which is slightly less than predicted, and the year-end fund balance was \$7.6M.

Margaret also charged the session to think about ways in which the Love Ministry Impact Fund might be spent. Last year, the statement of intent for that fund—which is Trinity's largest—was revised to ensure utilization. The purpose of the Love Fund is to support a major project every year in one of Trinity's areas of ministry. The annual support amount is approximately \$33,000. Margaret also asked session members to consider a new trustee nomination. Trustees must have completed a term on session, be extremely trustworthy and well-respected, have demonstrated a strong financial commitment to the church, and serve as good fund stewards for the church. Margaret reminded session that the trustees have no role in the governance of the church, but they do serve as an informal sounding board for the senior pastor. The trustees are hoping to receive said nomination by May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Lastly, Margaret presented the following motion related to the counseling and enrichment fund and noted that the funds will be used to subsidize counseling fees for Trinity members who might not otherwise be able to afford these services from our counseling affiliates. The funds may also be used to provide psychoeducational and support group programming.

*MOTION: Approve the expenditure of up to \$12,000 from the Counseling and Enrichment Fund for 2023 for the purpose of providing counseling fee subsidies and psychoeducational and support group programming.*

The motion came from the Trustees so it did not need a second. After some discussion about the types of support group opportunities offered and the addition of counselors who specialize in work with both adults and youth, the motion was approved unanimously.

### **Commitment**

**Dave Higgins, Caroline Brown, Bonnie Harris**

The 2023 commitment chairs updated session on the success of this year's campaign and thanked elders for their support. Dave Higgins noted that as of March 21, the campaign had received 437 pledges (74% participation rate) representing a total of \$3,675,000 (5% above the financial goal). This year's average pledge was \$8,400 (versus \$7,300 last year). The median pledge in 2023 was around \$3,500. Of those who pledged in both 2022 and 2023, their pledges increased on average by 10%. Lastly, Trinity received \$7,300 in pledges from individuals who had never pledged to any previous campaign.

Bonnie Harris thanked Dave Higgins and Caroline Brown for their leadership, and she praised the team effort that contributed to another successful commitment campaign at Trinity. She noted, however, that while the giving total exceeded the goal (and the 2022 amount), the total number of pledges (or givers) decreased in 2023. Overall, seventy-five individuals/families that pledged in 2022 did not pledge again in 2023, and 82 additional individuals/families have not pledged in the last 2 years. She called on session members and pastors to conduct additional outreach to ensure the entire congregation feels spiritually connected to the church. Lastly, she announced an upcoming luncheon for the commitment advisory members where they will discuss ways to engage all members—especially younger members—in the financial health of the church.

### **Finance**

**Mark Stancil**

Mark Stancil began his update with a year-to-date summary, and he highlighted positive revenue for January and February (coming in at over \$1M). Next, he reminded session members that the 2023 budget process involved feedback from committee chairs on potential new projects, programs, and offerings. He then pointed session members to the proposed budget included in the session packet. On the revenue side, he presented current year pledges alongside non-pledged contributions and trust fund income. On the expenses side, Mark highlighted that personnel, property and mission account for approximately 80% of Trinity's budget. He noted an increase to personnel (approximately \$95,000) which is intended to address salary compression amongst some of Trinity's existing staff and help attract new candidates to vacant positions. The property budget also increased to reflect higher costs associated with church facilities, security, supplies and utilities. Mark also explained that the budgeted per-capita Presbytery contribution had been shifted out of the Mission section of the budget into the Finance and Administration section, and an additional \$34,000 in discretionary denominational support funds were added to the Mission committee's budget to enable direct giving to seminaries and other denominational partners.

Lastly, Mark noted that if all of Trinity's 589 "pledging units" (active members and potential givers) made pledges, it would take an average of \$6,600 per family/individual to run the church. However, with only 437 pledges, it takes an average of \$8,900 per family/individual to run the church. This amount exceeds the average pledge amount at Trinity.

**MOTION:** *Approve and adopt the 2023 annual operating budget.*

The motion came from the Budget committee so it did not need a second. After some discussion on matters related to budget monitoring processes for individual committees, personnel inclusions and outstanding staffing needs, the motion passed unanimously, and the budget was adopted.

### **OPEN FORUM**

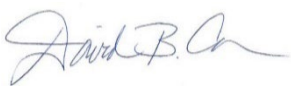
Lucy Strong noted that the congregational calls are yielding positive responses, Rebekah provided clarity on where the new elder slate could be located and reviewed, and the recent vespers service got positive reviews. Additionally, Congregational Life announced an upcoming "Jazz in the Courtyard" and Artwalk event on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **CLOSING PRAYER AND DEPARTING BLESSINGS**


**Rebekah LeMon**

A motion was made and affirmed to adjourn the meeting. Rebekah LeMon closed the meeting with prayer. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



David Carr  
Clerk



Bonnie Holliday  
Assistant Clerk

Trinity Presbyterian Church Session In-person Attendance (In Bold), March 21, 2023:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Name</b>
<b>Adams Jr., Tom</b>	<b>Roxanna Erwin</b>	<b>Reid Willingham</b>
<b>Bynum, Laura</b>	<b>Ginny Hobbs</b>	Kenny Kraft
<b>Carr, David – Clerk</b>	Bonnie Holiday – Asst. Clerk	Kristin Hunter
<b>George, Bess</b>	<b>Richard O’Donnell</b>	<b>Tom Owens</b>
<b>Guerry, Bill</b>	<b>Trey Reese</b>	<b>Martha Craft</b>
<b>Hope, Julie</b>	<b>Lane Rhoden</b>	<b>Drew Timmons</b>
<b>Jackson, Mary Elizabeth</b>	<b>Allen Spetnagel</b>	Tanner Adams (youth)
<b>Lewis, Dale</b>	<b>Cindy Stancil</b>	Duskin Balch (youth)
<b>Shepard, John</b>	<b>Adair White</b>	Meredith Daniel
<b>Tilley, Velma</b>	Neal Williams	<b>Allen Moseley</b>
		Chris Suh
		Lindsey Greene
<b>Staff Attendees:</b>	<b>Other Attendees:</b>	<b>Guests</b>
<b>Rebekah LeMon-Moderator</b>		<b>Margaret Reiser</b>
<b>Elizabeth Davis</b>		<b>Mark Stancil</b>
<b>Andrew Esqueda</b>		<b>Dave Higgins</b>
<b>Lucy Strong</b>		<b>Caroline Brown</b>
		<b>Bonnie Harris</b>