

**STATED SESSION MEETING MINUTES
TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
November 19, 2024
7:00 p.m.
Old Fellowship Hall**

CALL TO ORDER & DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Rebekah LeMon

The stated Session meeting for Trinity Presbyterian Church on **November 19, 2024** was called to order at **7:02pm** by the moderator, Rebekah LeMon. The clerk, Drew Timmons, confirmed the presence of a quorum.

DEVOTION

Tom Owens

Tom Owens shared with Session about evolution and adaptation and how we do that personally. January 3 will mark 20 years that he has been in the same job. He handles personal finance for government entities. His team from the beginning operated as “law of the jungle.” The bond business happens at the intersection of government and finance. Business was combat and winning was the ultimate goal. It wasn’t unethical but you pressed every advantage. 3 years into his career, his boss was arrested. Without him, the same strategies didn’t work anymore, so they had to change how they operated. Evolution was necessary in business practices. He helped a city and real estate developer come to agreement, but then a problem came up and the deal was going to be very favorable to the developer. They called the developer and talked about it – developer acknowledged the problem and they made changes. Success comes from grace in practice. He recalled a documentary on Netflix – Inside the Mind of Dogs – that explains at one time all dogs were wolves – wild and free, but eventually they discovered contact with people was beneficial. Dogs – no matter the breed – are similar genetically. Wolves still follow the law of the jungle. Modern dogs have found the best evolutionary strategy – survival of the friendliest. Giving and receiving grace.

OMNIBUS MOTION TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA

Rebekah LeMon

Rebekah LeMon directed session members to the omnibus motion in the meeting packet which included tonight’s meeting Agenda (as amended), Stated Session Meeting Minutes from October 15, 2024, the Financial Report for October 2024, and the Statistical Report for October 2024. The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved without discussion.

MODERATOR’S REPORT

Rebekah LeMon

Rebekah began her report with gratitude as always. She discussed that it’s easy to fall into a programmatic rut and measure life by events because we have so much going on. Events are not our goal, but they reflect important things about us. The group effort and time commitment are

significant. The Kittrell Lecture night with 700 people welcomed into the church. The event takes a year to plan.

Adult education has been a great success this year. Very consistent attendance to the three offerings. Ellen Ott Marshall's recent class on remembering God's presence in the midst of conflict. She encouraged attendees to have a different approach to these conversations and interactions. More to come related to healthy dialogue.

All Saints Day was a special day. It is a very powerful thing for community to remember. We remember the impact that people who came before us have on their community. Give Jan and Mack Irvin thanks for their work in the Memorial Garden. Hospitality staff deserve appreciation for all their work.

Evensong chapel service. The first evening service was very well attended. This will continue every other month.

November 17 – Mozart's Requiem performance and celebration of Norman M.'s 40th anniversary.

Celebrate Phil Hawkins and all he does. He did the celebration for Norman video, and he also did the Trinity anniversary video. Thanks for his gifts.

The anniversary video will be shown at 10:00am in the sanctuary with the video screens down.

New Wellness Director – Dina Blair. She is working on basketball and is looking to build a wellness calendar.

Commitment update – 89% of goal. Thank you to Martha Craft and Tom Owens. Confident that we will hit the goal.

Please come to the celebration on Sunday.

As board members, Session is responsible for the whole thing. Hope that Session will dig in and participate and be joyful. Reminder that Session holds this place. Encouragement to participate.

Hard season in our world. We have a unique opportunity in this community to see each other and take care of each other. We are planning to have opportunities to figure out how to be in this world and community. We have a chance to be something different from all the hate.

Jay Harris brought up Norman M.'s comments on Sunday related to the people who brought him to Trinity.

CLERK'S REPORT

Drew Timmons

Thank you for those who attended the Presbytery meeting in November. No Session meeting in December. Enjoy Advent and all that is happening. Please come to anything you can.

Upcoming Communion dates are December 1 and January 5.

The next Session meeting is January 21.

SPECIAL ORDERS & REPORTS:

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CLASS OF 2027

Rebekah LeMon

Session will nominate 2 people from the outgoing Session class to roll on to Nominating Committee.

Session will call a congregational meeting to elect the Nominating Committee.

Motion: To call a meeting of the congregation after 11:00 worship December 15, 2024 for the purpose of electing the Nominating Committee class of 2027. Motion carried unanimously with no discussion.

FINANCE & BUDGET

Heather Edmiston & Richard O'Donnell

Session took its first look at the budget. In October Finance committee liaisons worked with different ministries to go through the budget process. First drafts went through in early November. Finance committee went through line by line this week. Looking for final approval in January.

Page 12 in the Session packet has an overview. Some extrapolations in the expected revenue.

Jon Balch asked about position now versus years past for commitment. We are ahead in both amount and participants.

The big expenses are Mission and Property. The Finance committee has been working to properly calculate the Property budget to accurately reflect the costs. Heather is looking to prepare well for future capital needs.

Personnel is the largest expense.

Ministry to the Congregation – congregational care and wellness and recreation director.

1099 employees are reflected in their respective ministries rather than in personnel.

How do you determine how much money from trust goes into the budget? Right now it's 4% - it's an average of past 12 quarters. Undesignated fund is where the money that goes into the budget comes from.

The current budget gives more than what committees asked for.

Jay Harris - Addition of positions – will that severely impact if we hire all in 2025? No because have had positions that did not fulfill once vacant and other shifting of positions.

NOVEMBER 9TH PRESBYTERY MEETING REPORT

Gina Nana

The fall slated meeting for the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (PGA) was held on November 9th, 2024, at Mt Vernon Presbyterian church from 9AM to 3PM.

The meeting started with an opening prayer and songs from the children's choir at Mt Vernon School. Mt Vernon Presbyterian church is celebrating its 70th anniversary this month.

The executive presbytery report was presented by Aisha Brooks-Johnson. She introduced us to the virtues of integrity and kenosis. Integrity involves finding a deeper sense of identity by knowing who we are, why we do what we do, and where we are going, and kenosis is the practice of self-emptying for the good of others. She encouraged us to deepen our witness in our congregations and beyond. She also noted that each congregation will be receiving information per capita assessment and a request for the mission pledge. This will be sent via email with due date for the end of the year.

The stated clerk's report was presented and adopted.

Two candidates for ministry were presented and examined: Courtney Henry has been called to minister at Chaplain Resident at Children's Hospital of Atlanta, MJ Kim has been called as spiritual Health Fellow at Emory University Hospital. They were both approved for ordination.

New Church development commission report was presented by Lindsay Armstrong. She highlighted how the presbytery is growing with new worshiping communities, expanding leaders and financial contributions to support this initiative. New worship community highlight was presented by Francis Kimini Githieya who is pastor of Transformation Covenant Church. The church was started about 10 years ago in Thomasville neighborhood of Atlanta and grew to about 150 members. The members came from a wide variety of ethnicity and backgrounds. The building where they worshipped was sold and church had to relocate. They eventually found a new home with Stockbridge Presbyterian church. During this transition they lost 80% of their members but are currently growing in membership again with the support of Stockbridge Presbyterian and PGA. A preventing Harassment Policy was presented and adopted for update to the Presbytery Manual. A new Presbytery manual was presented and approved.

We moved on to Table conversations, where participants were asked to discuss on 4 questions. Each table had a leader to facilitate discussion, and they will provide responses back to the presbytery. Responses will be summarized and shared in a future meeting. The questions for discussion were:

- Describe a time when you were proud to be a part of the PGA.
- Describe a time when you were frustrated by or disappointed in being a part of PGA

- What is the one big dream you would have PGA do in the next 5 years?
- What does it mean to your church to be presbyterian? How does being Presbyterian impact your ability to reflect Christ in your community?

Questions were shared to bring back to the session.

- Name a time when the presbytery helped your church fulfil its mission
- Name a time when the presbytery could have been more helpful in assisting your church fulfil its mission
- What does it mean to your church to be Presbyterian? How does being Presbyterian impact your ability to reflect Christ in your community.

There was scripture reading and sermon by Jennifer Ayers.

The committee on preparation for Ministry presented AJ Shortley for enrollment at Northwest. He was examined and approved.

The meeting concluded with communion, a closing hymn, and prayer.

PRESBYTERY MISSION CONVERSATION

Rebekah LeMon

The future of presbytery is under consideration because of budgets and ability to sustain themselves. Committee formed to consider options – which resulted in these questions.

What's presbytery? In our hierarchy, each congregation is part of one layer up, the presbytery. The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta is the largest in the country, and some congregations are tiny. Presbytery is the connector of all these congregations. Several staff members of the presbytery. When someone is installed or ordained, the presbytery is involved.

Presbytery is most local version of connecting congregations.

They get their money from churches - \$28 per member. Part goes to presbytery and part goes to national church. Churches are also asked to give missional support. Not all churches give their per capita.

Every congregation has different experiences with the presbytery, so this is solely gathering feedback.

Questions for discussion:

- Name a time when the presbytery helped your church fulfill its mission.
 - Selecting a pastor.
 - Shalom team.
 - Rules were helpful when there was a problem with staff.
 - Allows us to find similar congregations to get to know.
 - Gateway to the connectional church.
- Name a time when the presbytery could have been more helpful in assisting your church to fulfill its mission.

- Shalom team. Mismatch of personnel to need.
- Inflexibility.
- No consequences for congregations that have the resources and do not pay.
- Difference in experiences with different presbyteries.
- Shorter meetings.
- What does it mean to your church to be Presbyterian? How does being Presbyterian impact our ability to reflect Christ in your community?
 - Value the Presbyterian tradition and its inclusive theology.
 - The connectional church.
 - Processes that are localized and welcoming.
 - More welcoming denomination.
 - More ecumenical than other denominations.

PERSONNEL: UPDATED CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

The Personnel Committee reviewed and revised the Child Protection Policy. The policy is in the Session documents in Realm. Session members are required to abide by the policy and enforce it.

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Meredith Daniel

Session approves the calendar of communion and the baptism dates per the Book of Order.

Motion: To adopt the 2025 calendar of communion and baptism dates as presented.
Motion passed unanimously with no discussion.

OPEN FORUM

Lucy Strong shared that the Holy Smokers are going to Black Mountain, NC to serve Thanksgiving dinner in Western North Carolina.

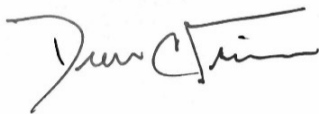
PRAYER AND DEPARTING BLESSINGS

Emily Beaver

Canterbury Court prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Drew Timmons
Clerk



Karen Bain
Assistant Clerk

UPCOMING DATES		
Communion Sundays	Dec. 1, Jan. 5	
Trinity 75th anniversary worship and all-church luncheon	Nov. 24th, 10:00 Video, 11:00 Worship, 12:00 Luncheon	
Church-wide Mission Brunch	December 1, 2024, 10:00am	
Women's Advent Service	December 3, Dobbs Chapel, 6:30pm – 8:00pm	
Baptisms	December 8, 2024	Christian Edward Belisle, son of Brooke and Andrew Belisle Frances Sutherland Long, daughter of Ellen and Crawford Long
Christmas Market	December 8, Williams Hall, 9:00am – 1:00pm	
Caroling in the Community	December 8, 6:00pm – 8:00pm	
Drive-Thru Christmas Pageant	December 15, 4:30 – 5:30pm	
Longest Night Service	December 19, 7:00pm – 8:00pm, Dobbs Chapel	
Wedding of Clare Pace and David Dorsch	December 21, 4:00pm, Dobbs Chapel	
Congregational Carol Sing	December 22, 7:00 – 8:30pm	
Christmas Eve Services	December 24: 4:00pm (children), 6:00pm (youth), 9:00pm (lessons & carols), and 11:00pm (chapel with communion)	
Baptism	January 12, 2025	Elizabeth Heather Maxwell, daughter of Sarah Robertson and Andrew Maxwell
Baptism	February 9, 2025	James Edward Anthony III, son of Hayden and John Anthony

Trinity Presbyterian Church Session In-person Attendance (In Bold), November 19, 2024:

Name	Name	Name
Reid Willingham	Karen Bain – Asst Clerk	Anne Blich
Kenny Kraft	Jon Balch	Scott Calhoun
Kristin Hunter	Dean Cleaveland	Brooke Chaplain
Tom Owens	Rebekah Groover	Dave Higgins
Martha Craft	Jay Harris	Mike Hobbs
Drew Timmons – Clerk	Paige Keller	Reese Jackson
Meredith Daniel	Nick Leet	Gina Nana
Allen Moseley	Jon McRae	Anne-Marie Spalinger
Chris Suh	Mary Kelly Speed	Michele Stancil
Lindsey Greene	Catherine Warren	Benjamin Walls
		Libby Gray Hall (youth)
		Connor Willingham (youth)
Staff Attendees:	Other Attendees:	Guests
Rebekah LeMon-Moderator		Richard O'Donnell
Lucy Strong		Tanner Short
Emily Beaver		
Heather Edmiston		