

## **First Presbyterian Church Tallahassee**

### **Minutes of the Stated Meeting of Session – February 16, 2025**

#### **Calvin Room, 12:30 pm**

The Session met in person and via Zoom at 12:30 pm. In attendance were Rev. Glenn Hodges and Session members Donna Barber, Debbie Gibson, Patrick Kennedy, Sue Safford, Jane Atkinson, Dan Bruno, Janet Fixel, Greg Riccardi, Eleanor Cleveland, Kay Crowell, Jon Dodrill, Mary Kutter, and Deborah Whisnant. Also in attendance was the Treasurer Don Winstead. Absent with notice Carolyn Bradley. The moderator called the meeting to order with prayer at 12:30 pm.

The agenda was presented by the Clerk. A motion was heard and seconded to adopt the agenda. The motion passed. A motion was heard and seconded that the minutes of the December stated session meeting be approved. The motion was approved.

#### **Introduction of new Session members**

Caitlin James gave a brief presentation about herself.

#### **Items from the Clerk**

The Clerk presented a Revised Session Manual. Some members pointed to errors in the Manual. Corrections will be made before the March meeting.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to move the April Session Meeting to April 13 to avoid Easter Sunday.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to allow the sale of merchandise at the Candlelight Concert on February 22. They will put a table outside the front door to sell candles and polaroid photos.

#### **Designated Pastor's Report**

The moderator reported on several items.

He suggested that Gail Hankinson represent First Church on the preschool board. General discussion and agreement followed. The Preschool Board will meet on Feb 17 to discuss the agreement between the Board and the Church about separating liability and insurance.

Rev. Hodges discussed the use of "kindom" vs "kingdom" in the Lord's Prayer. A motion was made, seconded and approved to add "pray as you choose" to the note in the bulletin about "kindom".

Rev. Hodges described his recent interactions with Lee Earl Daniels, who was sleeping on the porch before the recent cold weather. Lee Earl has been respectful to staff. He has not been seen sleeping on the porch recently. Dan Bruno reminded us that the Session previously voted to suggest that any aggressive or threatening behavior be reported to the police.

The Listening Team that met with the Session in November has prepared their report. A motion was made, seconded and approved to ask the Listening Team to send us their report for distribution to members. After the Session Meeting, the Clerk received the report and posted it in the Session Google Folder. The report of the listening team is at [tinyurl.com/oldfirstchurch-listening](https://tinyurl.com/oldfirstchurch-listening)

## **Budget and Finance Report**

This section has been renamed from “Treasurer’s Report” to reflect that we have a robust and active Budget and Finance Team that meets monthly, reviews the activities of the Treasurer, and presents this report. The report for February includes overall budget with income, expenses balance and cash on hand. It also includes budget and expenditures for each team and changes to the endowment. Details are included for income and expense by month and balance sheet. The report is included in the Session Packet for the February meeting.

Some members expressed concern that we continue to keep close watch on the Church finances. Kay Crowell, member of the Budget and Finance Team, described the ways that the Team evaluated the Church finances. The Treasurer added that he speaks with the Financial Secretary to review the books each month.

The income is robust, with 25% of the annual pledges (\$110,389) received so far. Expenses in January were \$25,835.

The Budget and Finance Team did not meet in February due to a schedule conflict. Ongoing work of the team includes development of specifications for a financial review of the church’s finances. While the Book of Order permits internal review, the team believes it would be prudent to pursue an external review, given that one has not been done recently. We anticipate bringing a recommendation to the Session on this issue in the near future. In addition, we will be following up on the review of the Legacy and Gifts plan as discussed in the January Session meeting.

The Team recognizes a need to have a Finance Manual.

## **Worship and Music Team**

The coat of one of the ushers was stolen from the narthex during the offering.

## **Personnel Team**

Claire Hodges is doing an excellent job in the Church office. She has committed to the job for 2 months. The Personnel Team continues to search for permanent staff.

The Team will begin annual staff evaluations soon.

## **Care and Outreach Team**

The Team held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Social in the courtyard on the day of the Presbyterian Women’s luncheon. While some people were concerned about a conflict, the Team felt that having 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday on its usual day was important for continuity.

They also made progress, in conjunction with Claire Hodges, on finding our visitor slips for the past several months, and have a system for tracking and greeting going forward.

## **Compassion and Social Justice Team**

Two donations of \$500 each were made to support churches in Cuba. These funds are primarily used for food and medicine.

Members of the team participated in a tree planting event at Independence Landing on February 15.

The covered dish following worship on Feb. 23 will feature Ted Ellis, director of the FSU Institute for Civil Rights, as speaker. This event is part of the Healing Racism Committee's education effort for the congregation as we consider ways to live into our commitment to repair historic harms.

The minutes of the February meeting are included in the Session packet.

### **Property Team**

Property Team made 3 requests for use of space by outside groups. The Session considered each and voted as follows:

1. FeverUp requests to add a Candlelight concert date on May 10, then one date each in October and December. A motion was made, seconded and approved to allow this use. The dates of the October and December concerts will have to be approved by the Session.
2. Phi Kappa Psi Florida Alpha Fraternity - formal initiation ceremony on March 6. A motion was made, seconded and passed to allow this use. They will be charged \$200 for the use of the sanctuary.
3. Defending Life Florida requested the use of our parking lot and restrooms during their March for Life on Saturday, April 5, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. However, the Presbyterian Women need unrestricted access to the Education Building and the parking lot to prepare for the luncheon on April 6. A motion was made and seconded to allow Defending Life Florida to use the building and parking lot as requested. The motion was defeated.

### **Presbyterian Women**

The 2024 First Presbyterian PW History is available at [tinyurl.com/oldfirstchurch-PWreport](https://tinyurl.com/oldfirstchurch-PWreport)

On Sunday, February 9, 2025 Presbyterian Women held their Winter Salad Luncheon Gathering following worship in the Westminster Room. Approximately 45 members and spouses attended. The Reverend Dr. Latricia Scriven was the speaker. She gave a very inspirational, personal presentation entitled "Justice in Action: Let's Face It". In addition, she had all in attendance attempt to put a "face on

climate justice" and share it with those sitting at their table and with the whole assembly.

The Least Coin Offering was taken and the CWS Blanket Offering envelopes were made available.

The PW Spring Gathering is scheduled for Sunday, April 6th.

Janet Fixel, chair of PW, suggested that we have a special offering for the One Great Hour of Sharing. A motion was made, seconded and passed to add that special offering. The Compassion and Social Justice Team will coordinate.

### **Next Session Meeting**

The next stated session meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2025 at 12:30pm.

### **Prayer Concerns, Closing Prayer, and Adjournment**

The meeting was closed in prayer by Rev. Glenn Hodges.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Gregory Riccardi, Clerk of the Session**