

**MINUTES OF SESSION
FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FAYETTEVILLE, AR
Sunday, January 27, 2008**

A Called Session meeting of First United Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville, AR was held in the Activity Center and was called to order at 12:45 p.m.

Elders Present: Ted Belden, Dennis Brewer, June Davis, Barbara George, Lyle Gohn, Nell Griffin, Carol Hart, Sara Koenig, Roger Koeppe, Frank Millet, Itrel Monroe, James Moore, George "Bo" Morton", Michelle Price, Steve Sisco, Jim Schneringer, Jane Steinkraus, Anna Stitt, Nancy Waite, Diane Warren, Ron Woodruff and Doug Wright

Elders Excused: Dennis Bailey

Teaching Elders Present: Rev. Stewart Smith, Moderator, Rev. Josh Leu and Rev. Lee Power. Rev. Maury Roberts

Others Present: Laurie Reh, Clerk of Session, Committee on Visitation volunteers: Tom Verdery, Lorraine Brewer, Martha Brewer, Jim Harter, Lin Oliver, Marti Sharkey, Terri Trotter, Bill Waite and Elder-elect Eric Ervin.

A quorum was declared present. Rev. Stewart Smith, Moderator, called the meeting to order, asked that joys and concerns to be shared and opened the meeting in prayer.

A motion was made and seconded *that the Committee on Visitation volunteers present be allowed to read the Committee of Five (COF) final report and the motion passed.*

It was noted that Sabra Martin, Dennis Bailey and Barbara Verdery would also serve as Committee on Visitation volunteers but were unable to attend the training. Elder Gohn agreed to facilitate an opportunity for them to read and review the report. A motion was made and seconded *to approve Elder Gohn as the session liaison for this process and the motion passed.*

Special Reports/Presentations

Committee on Visitation Training

The Committee of Five (COF) Final Report was distributed by Rev. Stewart Smith, moderator, to those present and time was allowed for reading of the document. Discussion followed under the direction of the COF. It was noted that Toney McMillan, Committee on Ministry (COM) representative, will now deliver the boxed COF documents over to the Presbytery of Arkansas for safekeeping. A letter to confirm the completion of this process will be sent to the Clerk of Session. The question of access still remains for future discussion.

A motion was made and seconded *to give newly elected-Eric Ervin voice as the newest*

member of the Class of 2008 and the motion passed.

Elder Wright reviewed the Goals and Purposes of the Committee on Visitation as follows 1) personal contact with the membership 2) pastoral care and 3) to provide a unifying experience for the session and congregation.

The Visitation Training Schedule was distributed and reviewed. It was reported that the letter to the congregation from the Committee on Visitation was sent out by bulk mail on Thursday, January 24th.

Tom Verdery, former chair of the Committee on Seven (COS), reviewed the approved *Terms of Dissolution Agreement* between Norwood V. Brown, III and the Congregation. Minutes from the called congregational meeting of November 18, 2007 were received via email in advance of the training.

It was noted that the date of March 16, 2008 would not only designate the completion of Mr. Brown's sabbatical and but have an effect on the parish associates and their work at FUPC. Also, before the formation of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) can be considered, COM's request that the session be led in the *Healthy Congregations* program by Rev. Bill Branch would need to occur, as well as consideration of an invitation to the Alban Institute, securing an interim minister and continuing with the healing process.

Elder Sisco reviewed the Financial Trends and 2008 Budget Information received by the COV volunteers and led the discussion that followed. The Committee of Seven process resulting in the final Terms of Dissolution with Mr. Brown was also reviewed.

Elder Gohn covered trends in membership and attendance between 2000 and 2007 at First United Presbyterian Church. The data provided was obtained from Church Annual Reports and the Presbytery web site. Discussion followed.

Rev. Lee Power and Rev. Maury Roberts gave an overview of listening and empathy skills the teams would want to utilize and be aware of when meeting with the congregation.

Elder Belden provided a list of suggested questions for use with congregational visitation. Discussion followed regarding the questions as well as the general concern of "answering" the congregation's questions and consistency of information. The called session meeting of August 26, 2007 was discussed in detail in order to provide clarification and answer questions.

Elder Moore gave an overview of the Team Assignments process which he and the Rev. Josh Leu had followed. With use of the church directory as a guide, assignments were announced and selected pages of the church directory were distributed to each volunteer present. The group was divided into 16 teams of two under the leadership of four (4) team leaders, with the support of Rev.'s Leu, Power and Roberts, as follows:

Lyle Gohn - leader
Barbara George and Beau Morton
Lin Oliver and Nancy Waite
Bill Waite and Jane Steinkraus
Anna Stitt and Lyle Gohn

James Moore - leader
Dennis Brewer and Terri Trotter
Diane Warren and Frank Millett
Dennis Bailey and Sabra Martin
James Moore and Martha Brewer

Sara Koenig - leader
Nell Griffin and Tom Verdery
Carol Hart and Itrel Monroe
Sara Koenig and Ted Belden
Steve Sisco and Lorraine Brewer

Doug Wright - leader
June Davis and Jim Harter
Michelle Price and Roger Koeppel
Jim Schneringer and Doug Wright
Ron Woodruff and Barbara Verdery

Alternate: Eric Ervin

Interim Pastor Nominating Committee (IPNC) Report

Chairperson Elder Price reported that IPNC members Michelle Price, Fred Shefte, Steve Sisco, Ann Vandergriff and Doug Wright had been meeting regularly and with that announced the selection of a candidate for interim pastor. Discussion followed. Elder Price reported the candidate's starting date would be April 1, 2008. The IPNC requested the session call a special meeting to meet the candidate and approve the committee's recommendation for interim pastor. It was noted that the IPNC has addressed the Parish Associate positions during this process. The IPNC's recommendation would be brought to the Committee on Ministry on February 5, 2008 for "approval if the way be clear". The IPNC requested that session consider a called meeting on either February 19, 20 or 21.

Adoption of the Agenda

A motion was made and seconded *to approve the agenda as presented and the motion passed.*

Approval of Minutes

A motion and a seconded *to approve the Stated Session meeting minutes of December 2, 2007 and the Called Session meeting minutes of December 17, 2007 and January 6, 2008 and the motion passed.*

Clerk of Session Report

A written report was included in the session packet and received. There was no moderator's meeting in December, 2007.

Correspondence was received from:

Rev. Carl McCormack, Corresponding Secretary, Committee on Ministry (regarding recommendations of COM for Rev. Norwood Brown on his 3-month sabbatical leave); Habitat for Humanity, Richard, Margaret and Robinson Rutherford, Bill Brandon, Jesse Cox, Jason and Cheryl Hatfield, Keeter Center at the College of the Ozarks, Rev. Leslie Belden (request to officiate a wedding at FUPC), Elder Philip Talbert (resignation from session due to health concerns).

Amy Commer (Calvin Street resident) regarding sidewalk renovation needs. Discussion followed as to the appropriate ministry to refer this information. A motion was made and seconded *to refer this request to the Properties ministry and the motion passed.*

Hugh and Martha Brewer - the clerk reported that appreciation, on behalf of the session, had been extended to Martha Brewer for her letter. Discussion followed as to the most appropriate method to accurately communicate the history of the pastors who have served our church i.e. during visitation meetings, the Focus, etc. A motion was made and seconded *that the Belonging and Evangelism ministry address Martha Brewer's letter and bring a recommendation to the session and the motion passed.*

The 2008 Session Devotional Schedule and Session Contact List were received for final editing.

Church Treasurer's Report

The monthly Budgeted Financial Statement was included in the session packet and received. Elder Sisco reported that we closed in December with meeting our outreach commitments and nothing outstanding. \$11,000 was needed from the restricted Building and Maintenance fund in order for that outcome to be realized and only \$21,000 *total* was needed from the account during the year to meet all our needs. He reported that pledging income was, as usual, at 94 -95%.

Ministry Reports

Belonging and Evangelism

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December.

Christian Education

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December. Ann and Dennis Bailey hosted a Christmas party for the ministry.

Deacons

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December.

Fellowship

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December. The Shrove Tuesday event was announced -- Tuesday, February 5th at 5:30 p.m.

First School

A written report was emailed in advance to the session and received.

Kitchen Hospitality

A written report was emailed in advance to the session and received.

Long Range Planning

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December. The ministry met

in January and will have a presentation for session at the February 10th stated meeting, The four (4) strategies will be reviewed as well as the proposed vision statement.

Outreach

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December. Special offerings for 2008 were approved on the January 12, 2008 consent agenda.

Personnel

A written report was emailed in advance and received. The following action items were addressed:

A motion was made by the Personnel ministry to hire Jamie Wetsell as the interim Kids CLUB Director, effective January 14, 2008 at \$15/hr. for 8-10 hrs/wk and the motion passed.

A motion was made by the Personnel ministry to hire Katie Jackson as interim Music and Chancel Choir Director for February and March, 2008 at a pay rate of \$250/wk, which includes support for child care in her home during rehearsal and performance times and the motion passed.

Personnel ministry action items postponed until the February 10, 2008 stated meeting (from December 2, 2007 and January 12, 2008 stated meetings for more information):

1 - Personnel Ministry recommends we replace with a cash equivalent up to one-half the cost of yearly tuition to Kathy Hairston for two children and Jennifer Meldrum for one child, January 1, 2008. (Their children have grown out of the program.) This will be funded by First School funds. Discussion followed. Raises were given to First School teachers last year, which were funded by tuition raises; however, following accreditation, the co-directors did not receive a raise. More discussion followed with concern of the precedent that approval of this action item would set. It was stated that when the co-directors were hired, in lieu of a higher salary, they were given the benefit of a reduced rate for their children. A motion was made and seconded to postpone action item #9 in order for the Personnel Ministry to obtain more information and the motion passed.

2 - The First School Ministry shall have line items in the budget corresponding to detailed expenditures consistent with the budgets of other ministries.

3 - In order to improve communication and address concerns raised by members of the congregation, personnel documents relating to annual reviews and related documents pertaining to the employment of Rev. Woody Brown shall be made available to members of the congregation, along with the Committee of Five report.

Properties

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December.

Stewardship

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December.

Worship and Music

There was no written report as the ministry did not meet in December.

Committee Reports

Forum Planning Committee

There was no written report. The 2008 liaison to session will be Elder George.

Hi-Acres Committee

There was no written report. Discussion followed as to the formation of a more formal committee and the appointment of a moderator. Elder Belden has voluntarily filled the role of leader but was previously recognized by the session, as such. He did provide updates and information to session upon request in 2007. It was moved and seconded *that Lorraine Brewer and Jim Harter be appointed to join Ted Belden on this special committee in order to address issues regarding Hi-Acres and the motion passed.*

Memorial Gifts Committee

There was no written report as the committee did not meet. Dick Forsythe is the nominee for the class of 2010. The 2008 liaison to session will be Elder George.

Nominating Committee

There was no written report as the committee did not meet.

Organ Feasibility Committee (OFC)

There was no written report as the committee did not meet. The 2008 liaison to session will be Elder Warren.

Pastoral Needs Assessment (PNA) Subcommittee

There was no written report as the subcommittee did not meet. Elder Wright announced that plans are in place to conduct a survey of the congregation, as approved in 2007.

Presbyterian Women

There was no written report as the committee did not meet in December. The 2008 liaison to session will be Elder Griffin.

Trustees/Endowment Committee

There was no written report as the committee did not meet in December. The committee plans to have action items for the February 10th stated session meeting.

United Campus Ministry

There was no written report. The 2008 liaison to session will be Elder Monroe.

New Business

A motion was made and seconded *to elect Lisa Higgins as the Church treasurer for 2008*

and *the motion passed.*

Discussion regarding the appointment of two First, Fayetteville commissioners to the 107th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Arkansas, February 15 & 16, Lyon College, Batesville was held. A motion was made and seconded *to appoint Elder Nell Griffin and Laurie Reh (Clerk of Session) as commissioners and the motion passed.*

A motion was made and seconded *to approve the proposed 2008 Ministry and Session meeting dates and the motion passed.*

The session recognized the following corporate members for the FUPC-BTV Rotation of Classes:

Class of 2008: Billie Jo McGuire, Dick Forsythe, Jim Harter & Alice Talbert; Class of 2009: Eva Stalker, Byron Haines, Howard Higgins and Class of 2010: Kyle Jenner, David Lashley & Bob Garnett

A motion was made and seconded *to appoint the following nominees to serve on the following committees:*

Personnel Committee At-Large Elders

Marti Woodruff class of 2009 (replace Chris Harris)
Jim Harter class of 2010 (replace Brian Horne/Jim Harter)

First School

Carol Hart, class 2010
Dennis Bailey, class 2010

Memorial Gifts Committee

Dick Forsythe, class 2010

Endowment Committee

Tom Verdery, class 2010

Discussion followed. Appointment of a First School teacher representative for year 1 to replace Rachael Langager was postponed to February as the nominee had not yet been made known. Elder Belden agreed to get clarification regarding the relationship between the session, the Congregational Nominating committee and the Butterfield Trail Village Board of Directors in regard to recognition or appointment of two members from First United Presbyterian Church to serve. With no further discussion, *the motion passed.*

Old Business

Healthy Congregations Program

Discussion followed regarding the invitation to Rev. Dr. Bill Branch to lead the session in the *Healthy Congregations* program, as recommended by the Committee on Ministry. A proposed date of Saturday, March 29th was suggested in consideration of the schedule of Rev. Branch and the church calendar. Discussion followed. It was moved and seconded *that the decision to hold this training be postponed until the IPNC is able to have a*

conversation with the incoming candidate regarding the implementation of this program and the motion passed. The IPNC chair agreed to inform the Clerk of Session after this conversation had occurred.

Cleaning of the Church Rolls

The Clerk of Session presented a list of members to potentially contact with a letter of inquiry regarding their membership status. Rev. Smith proposed the session consider postponing this until after the arrival of the interim minister and the session concurred.

Announcements

Rev. Lee Power distributed a copy of the book *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times-Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What* by Peter L. Steinke to each member of the session.

Rev. Smith closed the meeting in prayer and there being no further business, a motion was made and seconded *to adjourn at 5:10 p.m. and the motion passed.*

Laurie Reh
Clerk of Session