

**MINUTES OF SESSION
FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FAYETTEVILLE, AR
Saturday, January 12, 2008**

A Stated Session meeting of First United Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville, AR was held in the Library and was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

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

Elders Excused: Philip Talbert, Barbara George and Jane Steinkraus

Teaching Elders Present: Rev. Stewart Smith, Moderator, Rev. Josh Leu and Rev. Lee Power. Rev. Maury Roberts was excused due to health reasons.

Others Present: Laurie Reh, Clerk of Session, Toney McMillan, Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Arkansas and Bill Waite, By-Laws Committee Moderator

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.

Adoption of the Agenda

A motion was made and seconded *to approve the agenda as presented*. A motion was made and seconded *to move election of the Clerk of Session up on the agenda and the motion passed*. With no further changes, the agenda was approved as amended and *the motion passed*. A motion was made and seconded *to elect Laurie Reh as Clerk of Session for 2008 and the motion passed*.

Special Reports/Presentations

Interim Pastor Nominating Committee Report - Toney McMillan, COM and IPNC Members

Members of the new Interim Pastor Nominating Committee (IPNC), representing the session, will include Ann Vandergriff, Fred Shefte and Elders Doug Wright, Steve Sisco and Michelle Price. Elder Price, IPNC Chairperson, reported the committee would meet each Saturday until an interim is hired. As a committee of the session, and when appropriate, the IPNC will bring a recommendation to session. Toney McMillan, Committee on Ministry liaison to FUPC, will continue to support and advise the IPNC.

Elder Price reviewed a proposed timeline and on behalf of the IPNC, requested approval to begin communication with the congregation regarding this process to include a minute for mission, FOCUS articles, bulletin articles and the church email list.

A motion was made and seconded *that the IPNC be given permission to move forward with a plan for regular communication with the congregation and the motion passed.*

Elder Price also requested an allocation from the church budget in the amount of \$2000 for travel expenses and the designation of a salary amount. A motion was made and seconded *to approve an initial budget in the amount of \$2000 for miscellaneous travel and expenses for the interviewing process, with the understanding that more funds may be needed.* An amendment *to allot the \$2000 and to create a new line item in the church budget for IPNC expenses* was made. Discussion followed. Voting on the amendment, *the motion passed.* Voting on the amended motion *to allow the \$2000 and a specific IPNC line item, the motion passed.*

Installation Service of Nancy Waite, Elder Class of 2010

At this time, in order to allow elder-elect Waite the privilege of voting, Rev. Lee Power, Parish Associate and Laurie Reh, Clerk of Session, led the session in the installation service of Nancy Waite, Elder Class 2010. The session extended their appreciation to Elder Waite and welcomed her to the session.

IPNC/COM Discussion Continued

Toney McMillan, COM representative offered words of advice and encouragement for this session and expressed his admiration to members of the Committee of Seven for their impressive leadership during a very difficult situation. He reminded the session that on March 16, 2008, the parish associate positions of Rev. Lee Power and Maury Roberts would automatically end, as per the Book of Order. Session discussions will be needed regarding pastoral staffing beginning March 17th. Discussion followed regarding the parish associate's positions.

It was requested that Mr. McMillan obtain a letter of support from the Committee on Ministry to be sent to the session. Discussion followed regarding receipt of multiple letters from a particular church member. The Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery of Arkansas has responded and advised this member that the session of First United Presbyterian Church would not be asked to resign.

Committee of Five Final Report and Congregational Concerns

Discussion followed regarding the Committee of Five (COF) documents, forwarded earlier to Mr. McMillan's office by Elder Lin Oliver, past moderator of the COF, in order for the Committee on Ministry (COM) to hold the documents for safe keeping.

In that the COF was named as a special committee of the session, the decision of what to do with the final COF report would now fall to the session. Discussion followed regarding the release of this report as a public record. Mr. McMillan, on behalf of COM, supported copies being made available for the session, if requested. Issues concerning communication to and with the congregation were addressed and discussed at length. It was noted how diligently and confidentially the Personnel ministry, and the session of this church, worked with Rev. Woody Brown regarding staffing and management issues.

A motion was made and seconded *that the COF final written report be provided to active members of the session. An amendment was offered that the written COF final report be provided for session members to read and review at a future meeting of the session, and that Rev.'s Leu, Power, Roberts and Smith, Toney McMillan (COM) and Laurie Reh (Clerk of Session) be included, at which time the copies would be turned back in for safekeeping. An additional amendment was added that Rev. Brown also be provided with a copy of the written report.* Discussion followed. It was noted that Rev. Brown was present when a verbal report was given on October 4, 2007 at a meeting of the COF and COM, and on October 7, 2007 at the stated meeting. The amendment to provide Rev. Brown with the written report was withdrawn and the main motion, as amended, passed.

It was then moved and seconded *to call a special meeting of the session for the purpose of reading the COF final report in order for the Committee on Visitation to move forward with the healing process of the congregation and the motion passed.*

Mr. McMillan reported that a designated member of COM will continue to stay in touch with Rev. Brown during this sabbatical period. Rev. Smith agreed to work with Mr. McMillan in regard to the transfer of the COF final report. Other supporting documents are in Arkadelphia, currently housed in Mr. McMillan's law office. It was agreed that these materials would be transported to the Presbytery of Arkansas central office for safekeeping.

Following a brief break at 3:45 pm, Elder Price led the devotional by reading from *Truth for Each DayBegin with God* and followed with prayer.

Committee on Visitation Plan of Action - Elders Gohn, Koenig, Moore and Wright and Rev.'s Leu, Power and Roberts

The session requested that the **Committee on Visitation Proposal** be included in the minutes as follows:

Discussion and motion taken from the December 2nd stated session meeting minutes: Concern was again expressed regarding ongoing questions of the congregation and session. The session discussed the need to meet with and provide answers to the congregation with more information regarding Rev. Brown's departure from our church. The earlier proposal to bring new and current session members up to speed with an oral presentation by the Committee of Five was discussed.

A motion was made and seconded *that the session develop a plan to go into effect immediately after January 1st, 2008 to visit and call upon members of our church to respond to their questions and concerns, and, to properly bring current session members and the incoming class up to date, with Committee of Five members present to answer questions.* Discussion followed and the motion passed.

In order to develop a more concrete plan, a motion was made and seconded *that Elders Gohn, Koenig and Wright, and Rev.'s Power, Roberts and Leu, meet and bring a plan to the session at the stated meeting on January 12, 2008.* An amendment and a second were offered to add Elder Moore to this committee and *the amendment to the main motion passed.* The session returned to the main motion with all the above names included and *the motion passed.*

A lengthy discussion followed as to the details and feasibility of this plan. The congregational letter was viewed as the beginning of reaching out and with that, the pastoral staff, consisting of Rev. Lee Power, Rev. Josh Leu and Rev. Dr. Maury Roberts, confirmed their availability to meet with and respond to members of the congregation. Rev. Smith encouraged the session to make contact with those who they knew were hurting or angry and to consider visitation with the many different groups of the church, if possible. Several other ideas were proposed and discussed at length.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies regarding Visitation of Members

1. Goals/Purposes of Visitation

- a. To make personal contact by members of Session with all member units (individual or family units) of the church to listen to their concerns and questions, solicit their ideas, encourage their support and involvement, and to communicate as clearly and forthright as possible with answers to their questions.
- b. To re-establish to best of our ability a family of church members so that all members feel welcome, involved and not in any way splintered or in separate groups.
- c. To the best of our ability specifically reach out with pastoral care to church individuals/families that over the past few months or years may feel disenfranchised or frustrated and re-engage them in church community.

2. Objectives

- a. Obtain a list of all current individual/family units utilizing current directory and lists of regular visitors.
- b. Contact all individual/family units by phone requesting an opportunity to meet and visit individually or as a family unit to achieve the above Goals. For some members, perhaps a phone call will suffice, but it is our belief that personal visitations and interactions will prove to be much more beneficial not only for the members but also for Session members.
- c. When appropriate, some discussions may be held within established church small groups i.e. Butterfield Trail, Men's Breakfast group, Women's Circles, Tables of Eight Dinner groups. However, these should not be utilized as a substitution for the individual/family visitations.

3. Strategies

- a. To begin this process by mid January and be completed by mid March.
- b. Initially, a letter will be sent to members noting the purposes/goals of the visitations, indicating that phone call requesting an opportunity to visit will occur, information regarding the visits, some basic information about the church, and in a very pastoral manner, cover some of the concerns within the church family that may be addressed through the visits.
- c. Phone calls requesting scheduled visits should occur immediately with scheduled visits occurring during the months of February and early March.
- c. Session members, along with the Class of 2007 Session, will be the primary group making contacts and visiting with individual/family units. Other elders who have been actively involved may be asked to join Session members.
- d. Teams of two will participate in the visitations.

e. Team members will be given a small list (approx. 15-20) individual/family units to contact.

f. Team members will be asked to summarize visitations (names and confidentiality maintained) for future discussion by Session. Through the listening process of the visitations, valuable insights will be shared which can prove to be most beneficial for the overall future direction of the church

g. All Session members and/or other elders who are willing to assist will be given a basic training session in preparation of the visitations. This training session will include active listening and empathy skills, an opportunity to review the COF report and ask questions of the members of the former COF, or other related issues, an update on financial matters of the church, church membership and attendance trends, severance package for Pastor Brown, and plans for the future (interim pastor search, search plans for permanent pastor, update on other staff positions, etc.). The Training Session is proposed for January 27, but if a sooner date can be selected, such would be preferred.

h. A team of four elders, along with the support of the pastoral staff, will coordinate the process, training, and follow through of each Team with approximately 4-5 Teams reporting to each of the four coordinators. Elders Wright, Moore, Koenig, and Gohn are willing to serve as the coordinators.

Report/Proposal submitted 1/11/08 to Session by Elders Wright, Moore, Koenig, and Gohn and Pastors Powers, Roberts, and Leu

Discussion followed.

With 416 members and friends listed in the church directory; and in consideration of staff and session numbers, it was proposed that 13 visitation teams be developed. The session was polled regarding their willingness to serve on a team of two. The Committee on Visitation was asked to randomly assign names and provide session with their lists by January 27, 2008, with a deadline date of March 16, 2008 established for completion of visits. The committee team leaders (4) would divide the session into four groups and further divide each of the four groups into teams of two for visitation purposes. A proposed letter to the congregation was reviewed and amended and it was suggested that the Goals/Purposes of Visitation be included.

The session generally embraced the recommendations of the Committee on Visitation and a motion was made and seconded *to approve the plan and to allow this committee to begin its implementation and the motion passed.*

Sunday, January 27, 2008 was proposed as the date for training session on the visitation process. Noting the annual called congregational meeting scheduled on this date, it was agreed to hold the training session immediately following the 11:00 a.m. worship service in the Activity Center. Elder Koenig, Kitchen Hospitality moderator, offered to provide lunch. Rev. Smith requested that any elder not able to be involved in this process should contact Elders Gohn, Koenig, Moore and Wright.

Returning to the COF final report discussion, a motion was made and seconded *to have*

the COF final document made available for session at the called session meeting of January 27, 2008 and the motion passed. Rev. Smith agreed to assist in obtaining the final report and providing copies for the session.

Church By-Laws (final revisions) - Bill Waite, By-Laws Committee Moderator

Elder Waite distributed copies of the final By-Laws revisions for session review and asked that a motion be made to approve the By-Laws as revised for presentation to the congregation.

A motion was made and seconded that the revised By-Laws be added to the agenda for approval at the annual called congregational meeting on January 27, 2008.

It was suggested that a cover letter, stating the various changes made, accompany the By-Laws. It was stated again that the church is in need of a Manual of Operations. Discussion followed regarding distribution of the By-Laws to the congregation via the church website, email, mail upon request and/or as print copies to be accessed in the Church Office or in the Narthex on January 20 and 27, 2008. The Clerk agreed to upload the cover letter, current By-Laws and proposed By-Laws to the website and send out a congregational email regarding their availability.

2008 FUPC Church Budget

Elder Sisco, Stewardship moderator, discussed the ministry's process to-date regarding budget revisions and making personal contact with church members. The proposed 2008 Operating Budget, including the most current revisions made, was distributed and reviewed. Discussion followed.

The session expressed concern regarding the impact of budget reductions, particularly on Outreach Ministry line items. The option of shifting the entire outreach budget, with the exception of hurricane relief, to the last half of the year was discussed. On behalf of the Stewardship Ministry, a motion was made and seconded *to approve the 2008 Operating Budget for presentation to the congregation at the annual called congregational meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2008.*

Discussion continued. Concerns regarding CEO, outreach needs and the church's donation to the Presbytery of Arkansas were addressed. An amendment was made *that each ministry attempt to take at least a 10% reduction in their ministry budgets in 2008* (amendment was made in order to help fund the Outreach budget). Budgets of First School, Personnel and Properties ministries would be exempt from this amendment. There was no further discussion and *the main motion, as amended, passed.*

A substitute motion was *made that we increase our debt, not to exceed \$200,000 (or an appropriate amount as determined by the Stewardship Ministry), to help us meet our obligations in 2008 as soon as possible.* Discussion followed. It was suggested that the congregation be informed at the congregational meeting that we are \$208,148.25 short in looking ahead for the next 12 months and that appropriate measures are in place to rectify this debt. This proposal would allow the church to continue to fund Outreach projects.

At this time, the moderator, sensing a polity web that was confusing the discussion, requested that both motions made earlier in regard to the 2008 Operating Church Budget be set aside in order to provide more clarity.

On behalf of the Stewardship Ministry, a motion was made and seconded *that the 2008 annual budgeted amount for 12 months be adopted, knowing that an unbalanced budget would be presented to the congregation at the annual called congregational meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2008 and the motion passed.*

A motion was made and seconded *that the Stewardship Ministry be asked to renegotiate our debt by an additional amount of up to \$200,000, pending congregational approval. The By-Laws were consulted for further clarification and the motion passed.*

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes was postponed until the called stated session meeting of January 27, 2008.

Consent Agenda

ACTION ITEMS from the Clerk of Session

Approval of the following update of the church rolls was requested:

Transfer of Membership:

Black, Vale (#3032) to First Presbyterian Church, Springdale
James (#2011) and **Pam Gilbreath (#2012)** to First Presbyterian Church, Springdale, Arkansas.

Removed from the Active Roll:

Chomposy, Gideon (#4467)
Gray, Katherine (#686) and Thomas (#685)
Gray, Peter (#1532)
Halsell, Betty (#4477)
Hankins, Ed (#4575) Christian (#4576)
Hatfield, Jason (#4326) and Cheryl (#4327)
Hay, Taj (#4264)
Hudson, Deborah (#1195)
Robinson, Ruth (Mrs. Lusk #1579)
Rutherford, Richard, Margaret and Robinson)
Tam, Scott (#4460)
Webb, Rebecca Shannon (#4303)
Workman, Andy (#4507) and Michelle (#4508)

Baptism:

Joseph Grant Rouse, child of Philip and Vanessa Rouse; grandparents are Joe and Rosalee Rouse, Luiz Araujo Filho and Isabel de Fatima Arujo on Sunday,

December 16, 2007.

2. **Action Item (Wedding Request):** On behalf of Jean Kelley (church member) and Roy Ogden, the Rev. Leslie Belden has requested permission to officiate their wedding on May 31, 2008. Rev. Belden serves as Jean and Roy's Campus Minister and has met with the couple. Rev. Lee Power, acting Head of Staff, has been consulted and has extended the invitation to Rev. Belden to conduct the wedding. The couple met with Barbara Verdery, Wedding Coordinator.
3. **Action Item from United Campus Ministry Board:** The board is planning a visioning retreat for February 16th from 9 through 2 pm and has requested space in the Witherspoon Building main room. Rev. Leslie Belden is the contact person.
4. **Action Item from Kitchen Hospitality:** Kitchen Hospitality requests that the standard meal donation for events be four-dollars (\$4.00) per person or a maximum of twelve-dollars (\$12.00) per family, with children age three and under not charged. Catered meals are not included in this motion. Those events will request permission from the board for their charges on an individual basis.)
5. **Action Item for First Fellowship** (on behalf of Kitchen Hospitality): First Fellowship requests that the standard donation for the catered First Fellowship luncheon be raised to eight dollars (\$8.00).
6. **Action Item from Personnel:** The Session authorizes the Worship and Music Ministry to fill an interim director of music position beginning February 1, 2008 at a salary of \$250-300 per week. The Session is also requested to give guidance as to the type of position and its ongoing salary based on budgetary constraints.
7. **Action Item from Personnel:** The First School Ministry shall have line items in the budget corresponding to detailed expenditures consistent with the budgets of other ministries.
8. **Action Item from Personnel:** The Rev. Josh Leu shall be hired at 40 hours/week for the period December 17, 2007 through March 16, 2008. In addition the church shall pay Josh an additional amount equal to the cost of his private health insurance plan for this period of employment.
9. **Action Item from Personnel:** 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.
10. **Action Item from the Clerk of Session/Nominating Committee:** Request that the following be added to the Called Congregational meeting agenda of January 27, 2008: *To elect a nominee to fill the unexpired session term of Philip Talbert,*

Class of 2008.

11. **Action item from First School:** First school requests use of the first upstairs classroom of Knox building, for a Pre-K class. Enrollment will be for up to 12 students with 2 teachers, and be supported through tuition and registration fees.
12. **Action item from First School:** First School requests Calvin downstairs classrooms, hallways and offices are painted during spring break. Colors will be approved by the FUPC decorating committee prior to next session meeting and painting will be paid from the fundraising and donation line of the school budget.
13. **Worship and Music and Outreach Ministries** request approval of the following Communion, CEO and Special Offering dates:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Communion</u>	<u>Offering</u>
January 6 (and each Sunday thereafter)	8:30 a.m. Worship Service	
January 3 January 6	Butterfield Trail Village	CEO Offering
February 3 February 7	11:00 a.m. Worship Service Butterfield Trail Village	CEO Offering
March 2 March 6 March 20 March 23 (Easter)	Butterfield Trail Village Maundy Thursday Service	CEO Offering One Great Hour of Sharing Offering
April 3 April 6	Butterfield Trail Village 11:00 a.m. Worship Service	CEO Offering
May 1 May 4 May 11	Butterfield Trail Village	CEO Offering Pentecost Offering
June 1 June 5	11:00 a.m. Worship Service Butterfield Trail Village	CEO Offering
July 3 July 6	Butterfield Trail Village	CEO Offering
August 3 August 7	11:00 a.m. Worship Service Butterfield Trail Village	CEO Offering
September 4	Butterfield Trail Village	

September 7		CEO Offering
September 14		Habitat for Humanity Offering
October 2	Butterfield Trail Village	
October 5	World Communion	Peacemaking
Offering		
October 12		CEO Offering
November 2		CEO Offering
November 6	Butterfield Trail Village	
November 16		Gideon's Offering
December 4	Butterfield Trail Village	
December 7	11:00 a.m. Worship Service	CEO Offering
December 24	Christmas Eve Services	Christmas Joy Offering

A motion was made and seconded *to approve the consent agenda*. Action Item #'s 7, 9 and 11 *were lifted for further discussion*. Action Item #'s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 13 were approved and *the motion passed*. The session *postponed discussion on Action Items # 7 & # 9 until January 27, 2008 (postponed again until March 2, 2008)*.

Lifted Action Item #11 above was discussed further. The space requested would be used for a new pre-K class of children that would meet at the same time as First School typically meets. With no further discussion, *the motion passed*.

A motion was made and seconded *that on January 27, 2008, the session would receive training by the Committee on Visitation and hold a called session meeting to address remaining agenda items from the January 12, 2008 stated meeting and the motion passed*.

A motion was made and seconded *that thanks be extended to Martha Brewer for her letter (received by session on 1/12/08) and that she be asked to write an article for the Focus to communicate directly with the congregation, if so willing*. In discussion, it was suggested that her title as church historian and keeper of the records be stated. Following discussion, *the motion was withdrawn*. By consensus, it was agreed *that discussion would continue at the called meeting of January 27, 2008 regarding letter's received from Hugh and Martha Brewer*. The Clerk agreed to send a letter of thanks on behalf of the session.

In regard to the annual called congregational meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2008, Rev. Smith appointed Rev. Power to moderate the meeting, as he would not arrive until after worship services concluded at First Presbyterian Church, Springdale. Rev. Smith would moderate the called session meeting, immediately following the annual meeting of the congregation.

New Business

Lifted Action Item #14 was follows, was addressed:

Jessica Ezell and Ryan Sheets request the session to invite Rev. Lee Power to officiate their wedding ceremony on Saturday May 24, 2008. The couple met with Rev Power on December 23, 2007. With no further discussion, the motion passed.

The moderator asked that the session adjourn due to the late hour and to re-convene on January 27, 2008. A motion was made and seconded *to adjourn at 6:10 p.m.* and *the motion passed.* Rev. Smith closed the meeting in prayer.

Laurie Reh
Clerk of Session