

Session Meeting Summary
October 25, 2023

Beginning at 6:30 p.m., George Johnston (Ruling Elder) opened the meeting with prayer.

Building Report on Fire Recovery: Phil Toops

Report from October 19 Walkthrough –

East side of the church has new gutters. New roof over porch & offices. The air conditioner for the office sticks out a bit more than before for support. Office has all new windows/sills/blockwork around the windows. Carpet outside the front entrance will be replaced with colors that accent the glass. New glass replacing the stained glass at front entrance & between the foyer & narthex. Office area has floor plan changed from the original before the fire. Marble windowsills will be installed. There will be an L shaped counter in the office workroom and a bookcase. Pastor office has a closet & a bathroom. There will be shelves installed on the north wall as before the fire. The Choir loft has the new organ & Clavinova in place. All the walls in the church have been painted. The kitchen has new countertops coming in. Will be getting all new sinks as two had asbestos underneath. We had purchased one to replace the full sink & half sink on the north end with a full sink & installing garbage disposal. Murals in nursery & Sunday school nursery & hallway were able to be saved. Carpet is installed in the sanctuary & lights have been ordered.

A fire report was given on the following:

Kitchen countertops to be installed tomorrow (10/26). Bathroom counters also if ready to install those. Jay Macklin in installing the bathroom floors & will do at least enough to set the stools in place. Sanctuary lighting is on order. Six pendants & 10 sconces. Will be LED lights. The previous company that we were ordering from was in Webster Groves, MO with a cost of \$28-29,000 that insurance was covering. Now getting them locally through Butler Supply then will transfer to Burford Electric. Burford is giving us no upcharge on the lights. Aaron Toops is working on the security/Wi-Fi system with his company. Estimate of cost & freight is \$5700 out of contents. May possibly come out of the building insurance. Cat 6 cable to be run-will absorb this into the fire bid. There will be a rack in the office workroom for the equipment and patch panel which will be donated. Aaron's company will also monitor our internet & security system (cameras). Help desk available & will provide these services as long as he owns his business. Rachele Cekander/Eric Light/Kevin Caulkins (who did Cornerstone Christian Church) are working on the sound system with Bruce Bannister. They are working on integrating the sound systems. This system will be state of the art when finished. Most of the work is complements of the contractors working with us. Phil will be acquiring the TV's for the classrooms etc. & looking into sales to purchase them. Broom Lounge – Karen Schmitz & Joann Wear looking into replacing the furnishings. Phil is working with State Farm to see if the pew cushions will be covered under the building coverage. Approximately \$60-100,000 has been able to be shifted from content to building coverage after looking at our policy. Looking into purchasing office furniture. Tables/chairs for Hagman Hall – Phil has information on these & readily available to purchase. First Christian Church is donating some Sunday school furniture which is like new. There are 1300 boxes in Servpro's storage that contain cleaned church contents. Servpro saved many of the items in the church that they would normally not save.

Clerk's Report:

- **ACTION:** Approved Minutes of the September 21, 2023, Stated Session Meeting

- Necrology Report to be shared with Presbytery – Elders who have passed away between 11/1/22 – 10/31/23 – John Schimmelpfenning, and Janet Henderson.

Membership: No Change

Treasurer and Finance Committee Report:

There have been missing and questionable receipts for credit card charges going back to January. Pastor Katie has been working with Debbie Nolan and Tom Henderson to resolve the questions but there is still a considerable amount unanswered. Pastor Katie is planning full restitution to cover.

Financial Review -

Tom Henderson went over the financial report. In reviewing expenses, Montreat Youth Conference was considerably over budget and should consider more fundraising. Other youth activities were over budget as well with some reasoning of not having a meeting place. The Heartland office expense of \$2700 will end when back in our building. Pastor Katie's personal loss in the fire will go towards her Homeowner's insurance which is about \$18,000. In reviewing income, Schopmeyer gave less than previously. **ACTION:** Accepted the financial statements.

The Severance Payment to Pastor Katie was originally for two months. Since she has gotten full-time employment as of October 1, the second payment will not be owed to her.

2024 Per Capita has been received (based on 2022 membership of 133) of \$40/per person. Total \$5,320.00

- \$9.80 to General Assembly (10%)
- \$3.81 to Synod (15%)
- \$26.39 to Presbytery (75%)

Pledge Sunday was determined to be November 19.

George shared that Synod has \$1500 grants for mission initiative seed money.

Presbytery Meeting – Kristen Schoonover

The Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois met on October 14th in Mattoon. We took part in another one of the Big Conversations. We were presented with a draft of a new structure for the Presbytery. We first looked at the proposed list of Presbytery teams. We currently have Commission of Trustees, Commission on Ministry, Permanent Judicial Commission, Personnel Committee, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and Committee on Representation. After much discussion, some of us agreed that splitting the committees into several new ones could make it more appealing for volunteers and for those appointed to these committees. We also discussed that it could be an issue if we do not receive enough people willing to serve. Some of the new committees would also allow for more work to plan for the future of the Presbytery and its churches, not just deal with current issues as they come up. We then discussed the idea of Neighborhoods. Basically, those churches in a certain area would partner together. We suggested that some of the neighborhoods did not work well due to locations. With more work and churches participating in creating the neighborhoods, we did feel like they could be of benefit. We asked that further work and information on how to expect the new structure to work prior to voting on the new structure. The General Council felt that they could have that prepared by our November 9th meeting.

Committee Reports

Deacons Report -

There have been no in-home communions given since the last report.

Presbyterian Women – Nancy Joslyn

There was a Women's Gathering for ALL women on October 12 with a good turnout. There will be a new Love Circle formed that will meet quarterly as many members work with limited extra time.

Administrative & Worship – Chair Sharon Macklin – Liaison Roger Stevenson

Communion was on October 1, 2023. Next Communion is November 26, 2023.

Summary of Meeting Notes:

Reviewed old business – Revisited Roger Stevenson's idea for fundraisers open to the public as a way to bring the public into our church. Roger suggested that our Youth could sell soup to raise money for their next trip to Montreat. He really enjoyed this when our Youth did it for our congregation.

New business – 1) Roger Stevenson will be at the New Harmony pavilion by 7:30 a.m. on Sunday, October 22, to reserve the pavilion for our service that day. There will be a music rehearsal at 8:00 a.m. 2) Our committee discussed how many church services to have on Christmas Eve. Tom Henderson is going to ask Phil Toops and Dale Wolff about the possibility of using the sanctuary for these services. 3) Reviewed wedding and funeral policies. Looking for Fire/Safety policy. Rita Toops contacted Brian Toops and Brittany Althoff to see if they had a copy of this policy. Will be submitting these policies as soon as possible for Session approval.

Requests of Action by Session:

- The Administrative and Worship committee would like to recommend having two services on Christmas Eve. The first service at 10:15 a.m. and the second service at 7:00 p.m. Session discussion was that two services would not be enough if we are still in the Cross chapel. We would like to postpone action until we have an idea where we will meet which could be determined if we can legally occupy our building. If in the Cross chapel, we would like three services. If in our church building, two should be fine of 10:15 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. We realize pulpit supply might be an issue. An option was pointed out that it is okay to not have communion at both services. Maybe have communion only at the 7:00 pm service.
- Request for information - our committee would like to know what committee would be responsible for public fundraisers. Session discussion response was it depended on what the public fundraiser is for. Whichever committee is looking to have a fundraiser is the one responsible.

Faith Formation – Kristen Schoonover

Summary of Meeting Notes:

Youth Education:

- We still have 9 tickets left for the Polar Express Interactive Movie at EPC on December 9.
- Junior and Senior High youth to the Kinmundy Haunted Cabins and Trail on October 28th.
- Spring 2024- Kristen and Lisa will lead a 4-week High School study called *Faith in An Anxious World* prior to youth group or a separate time and open to the public.

Adult Education & Activities:

- *The Gathering Group*: College Age/Young adult (18 to Twenties) are planning a game night at Laurel and Ian's on Wednesday Oct. 18th at 6pm.
- Dinner club for October will be at El Rancherito on Saturday October 21st at 6:00 PM. We have reservations for 30. A signup form will be posted on Facebook, or they can call Kristen.
- Progressive Dinner is planned for Friday, December 1 at 6:30 p.m. Hors d'oeuvres will be at Laurel Light's, Dinner at Nancy Joslyn's, and Dessert at Henderson's.
- Chicks on Lit (Ladies Book Club) We are planning to go to the United Way Witches Ball. The book club will meet on October 23rd at Laura Linder's.
- Xenials: Will plan an event when back in the church and we can have daycare available as well.
- "Stages Not Ages" (All Adults)- We have 13 tickets remaining for the Branson Christmas Show at the EPC on November 18. We are evaluating a possible Bible study group after the first of the year, when we are back in the church building.
- Kristen is looking at some Mental Health First Aid classes that University of Illinois Extension offers and have them present at the Presbyterian Church. This would be open to the public.
- Lisa will also put on a program called *Meet Your Ombudsman: Learning about Long-term Care*

ACTION: Session approved

- Sunday School to begin October 15th 8:50 AM adults at Henderson State Farm
- Junior and Senior High youth to the Kinmundy Haunted Cabins and Trail on October 28th.
- Mental Health First Aid classes in Spring 2024 (for the community)
- *Meet your Ombudsman: Learning about Long-term Care* in Spring 2024 (for the community)
- *Faith in an Anxious World* – in Spring 2024 (for the community)

Additional Session Discussion - Confirmation – Kristen has the curriculum. **ACTION:** It was approved for Kristen to get Confirmation started spring 2024.

Mission – Theresa Harner – Amy Hoffmeister Session Liaison

Summary of Meeting Notes

- Manna Closet – October is stocking caps and scarves, and November will be socks. Elizabeth Hartke discussed with us what she envisions for the Manna Closet. Most calls are from the homeless or someone traveling through who is looking for something during transition (until they move on or get to a food pantry). There are two kinds of grab and go bags we want to offer – those with kitchen resources and those who are homeless. We also discussed how an outside free food pantry could work. Effingham has very limited resource hours for food pantries. Charleston has about 30 churches who have combined to provide a good food pantry. Elizabeth will get the contact information to see if we could learn more. This could be something listed as a 3-year goal depending on what we learn.
- El Shaddai Maternity Home –Volunteers must submit a resume and go through a background check. They are in current need of boys' clothes size 10-12 for the child of a current resident. They would also like calendar planners for residents to keep track of appointments and schedules.
- Church On-The-Go - October 22 when Worship is at Harmony Playground followed by community service/work. We will return to Evergreen Park for pizza after our work is done.
- Transportation – Linda Williams, the residential coordinator for Heartland Human Services called asking if we have pick up service for worship. Their residents go to several different churches and many of them ride in the van or wait after a church service for quite a while as they make

their rounds. Theresa explained to her that we do not currently have a shuttle for worship services but that we would discuss to see if we could come up with a solution. We currently have Michael and Natashia who attend and sometimes Angela.

- Operation Christmas Child – Ellen will provide Theresa with a deadline for monetary donations as the packing date will be mid-November. Ellen gave November 13 as the deadline.

No Requests of Action by Session

Buildings and Grounds – Ellen Ritz

Summary of Meeting Notes:

- Work is ongoing in the church. The city inspected/did a walk through in the church. Found a few items to complete, but OK on everything. Overhead & sconce lights in the sanctuary have been ordered. Checking into furniture for Broom Lounge.
- Still having issues with homeless camping behind the arbor. May trim the brush back in that area. Police are patrolling the area more.
- Trees have been trimmed along Temple Avenue and in the inspiration garden. Working on trimming the yews and trees between upper & lower parking lot.

No Requests of Action by Session

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

- Staff Reviews coming up – Dan Kingery, Rachelle Cekander, Debbie Nolan, Donna Stevenson and Judy Wiethop. If anyone has any concerns or comments they have regarding each personnel, please let a committee member know soon. Committee members are Tom Henderson, Eric Light and Barb Quick.
- Personnel Committee – Session will need to elect a new chair for the 2024 Personnel Committee which includes two at-large members, one to be elected by the congregation in December to serve a 2-year term. The Session member to be chair will be determined in January after new elders are elected.
- Rebecca Blair, Presbytery Lead Presbyter for Transformation and Stated Clerk would like to share with us next steps towards seeking an Interim Minister on a Zoom call. Theresa will contact Rebecca and get something set up. George shared that there is a new type of Pastor called Covenant Pastor. This is someone on a trial basis with the potential to become permanent.

Stated meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. with closing prayer by George Johnston

Next meeting is November 16, 2023, 6:30 p.m.