

## Session Minutes

### First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio

June 9, 2025, Westminster Hall and Covenant Hall

Officers' dinner program in Westminster Hall: Reception of new covenant partners (see Changes in the Church Register). Rev. Fuller reported on a visit he had with Lee Folkes, sharing some of his wisdom from many years in service as a deacon.

All elders were present save Martha Maynard, Bobby Mickler, Ed Moore, and Adam Sharpe. Rev. Scott Simpson was absent. Moderator Rev. Dr. Fuller was present, as were many staff and covenant partners, including members of the Church Plant Committee.

I. Call to Order at 7:05 p.m.

Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

II. Opening Prayer and Devotional

Elder Tyler Burnett

III. Approval of the Agenda

Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

The agenda was unanimously approved with several minor adjustments, including deletion of the Executive Session. Elder Ben McCaleb suggested that if a future Session wanted to further examine the McCaleb Motion Referral to Personnel, they were free to do so.

IV. Report from the Church Plant Committee      Chuck Bunn and Rev. Whit Anderson

Chuck began the committee's report with a summary of church planting at FPC during this decade. In 2021, the Session passed a resolution affirming that church planting is a central core value and practice at FPCSA from now until the Lord's return. Just prior to that time, during Covid, the San Antonio Church Planting Network was formed. All of the church's recent plant-partners have come from that group. In 2023, the committee brought another resolution to Session, also passed, which affirmed the planting of non-presbyterian churches which shared our theological foundation. Whit Anderson then presented more about their vision and plan--one of networking and collaboration, with FPC's financial stake as a driving force to recruit other established churches to join. **Church Plant Committee brings a motion: "That Session approves a release of \$100,000 each year for three years from the church plant money allocated in the foundation funds for the establishment of the San Antonio Church Planting Network."** After further discussion and clarification questions, the Session had a time of prayer and then voted. **Unanimously approved.** The Church Plant Committee was thanked by the Moderator and the Session.

## V. Clerk's Report

Elder Nancy Cross

a. Consent Docket. The Consent Docket was moved, seconded, and approved unanimously.

b. Communications. Nancy read a letter received by the Church Plant Committee from Wellspring. They expressed their thanks and shared evidence of the Spirit moving among them.

Other communications: Two officers-elect resigned, Bob Kilgore as Trustee and Kelsey Smith as Deacon. Three couples asked to be removed from the rolls and informed Session. Samantha and Hunter Verheul asked for their letter to be read aloud at the meeting; Carter Ray read the letter.

Bob Fuller offered to compose a Session resolution in memory of elder-on rotation Chuck Beatty, who recently went to be with the Lord.

## VI. Moderator's Report

Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

Bob asked us to pause and reflect after hearing the Verheul's letter; he led us in prayer.

VBS begins soon. Good news: The Children's Ministry Committee had prepared an Amazon Gift List for VBS which was quickly fulfilled.

Bob thanked Pam Ray, who organized the liturgists and others for the One Worship on Pentecost Sunday, as well as the luncheon afterwards.

Renewal of service for **Rev. Dr. John Kaiser and Rev. Dr. Paul Kacsur**. This is already budgeted but had only been approved for six months' service. Bob asked for **a motion to renew their service for another six months, which was moved by David West and seconded by Mike Charlton. Approved unanimously.**

## VII. Report from the Strategic Planning Director

Pam Ray

a. Pam described the current situation with the Activation Team: All members of the current team save David Youngquist, Bob Fuller, and Scott Simpson have resigned from the team. The Session and/or LNC will need to consider the way forward and staffing of that team. Pam presented a motion on behalf of the **Strategic Planning Activation Team: To pause all Strategic Plan Action Team (SPAT) activities and work until Session has provided a clear plan forward implementing the amended Presbytery Resolutions and/or until the Resolutions have all been complete. This also includes the employment of Pam Ray as Director of the SPAT. Unanimously approved.**

b. Open Pastoral Roles. Pam referred to documents included in the Session packet: Two job descriptions, a rudimentary/preliminary organization chart, and a chart the team used to identify various ministry areas from the strategic plan, divided by logical pastoral oversight areas. The two job descriptions are in process. The one titled "Assistant Pastor for Modern Worship and Outreach" is near final; the one titled "Assistant Pastor for Spiritual Formation" is in early draft form and is provided for information only. Pam asked the **Session to consider the first job description, Assistant Pastor for Modern Worship and Outreach, and approve, disapprove, or refer it to another team to continue the work.**

Pam described the process and work of the team in developing this work: The team met monthly and then, beginning in February, weekly via Zoom, with a focus only on these job descriptions. We met with directors and staff in person. Feedback was also solicited from Committee Chairs whose work intersected with Modern Worship and Outreach. The team reviewed feedback to identify next steps. They met with Personnel and received feedback and some edits. Pam recognized that this job description is a first step and needs goals and metrics. One question that arose was the idea of an Assistant Pastor versus an Associate Pastor and what that means. Bob described the differences. ECO is moving more towards the Assistant Pastor position, particularly in large churches.

Nancy Scheifele raised a point of order--she believed there was a procedural error related to the Activation Team's failure to get Personnel Committee's approval, as opposed to feedback, before bringing the job description to the Session. She then moved an amendment to allow the Personnel Committee to review and approve the job description in parallel with the formation of a search committee. David West raised a point of order, as the motion presented was two motions, only one being a motion to refer. The moderator recognized a second to Nancy Scheifele's motion by Charlotte Milner. After additional discussion Bill Oliver asked **for voice to be given to elders-elect David Youngquist and Eric Schluter, who are members of the Personnel Committee and attended the recent meeting. Several people offered a second. The motion was approved.** Ben McCaleb reminded the Session that both Personnel and the Strategic Plan Activation Team are committees of the Session. After further discussion, the moderator ruled that as the Strategic Plan Activation Team is a special committee of the Session, it is in order for them to bring this business to the Session and for the Session to discuss the merits of the job description. The Session may, if desired, refer it back to the Personnel Committee, but it is not required. The question was called by Trebes Sasser, with many seconds. The motion to close debate was passed unanimously. The motion before the Session was then "the Personnel Committee present to Session the finalized job description of the open pastoral position, that will focus on evangelism and outreach and require the ability to consistently point people to the grace, truth, and lordship of Jesus through Sunday morning worship services, sermons, and weekly teaching, for approval during its August meeting." With a vote by division of the house, the motion failed by a vote of 8 in favor, 11 against.

The motion then on the floor was approval of the job description for Assistant Pastor for Modern Worship and Outreach, as presented by the Strategic Plan Activation Team. Lynn Thompson proposed an **amendment**, seconded by Bill Oliver, that **the section titled "Reports To:" be changed to say "Reports to the Senior Pastor for pastoral direction, priorities, and initiatives. Works with and reports to Executive Director regarding administrative areas." Amendment approved.** After further discussion and agreements to "friendly amendments", the job description was approved as presented (understanding it is a living document which will be changed through the years), with the **other change being the title and position to Associate Pastor for Outreach. Approved.**

Pam thanked the Activation Team for their work and the joy of working with them. Ben McCaleb asked that the minutes reflect appreciation for the countless hours of work by members of the Strategic Plan Activation Team and especially the leadership of Pam Ray. Pam received a standing ovation from the Session and those present as the moderator declared the notice of appreciation "so ordered".

## VIII. Committee Reports

### a. Personnel Committee

David West

David West reported that the Personnel Committee had unanimously approved a summer schedule for the church staff which includes a 4-day work week, June 1-August 15. Bob declared that he had received good feedback from the staff on this.

b. Stewardship and Finance

Bill Sirakos

1. There are no substantial changes in the April financials; Bill, on behalf of the committee, requests approval of those financials. With no objection, the **April financials were approved.**

2. May financials. We are currently 17% below budget for giving. Even taking into account the fact that many contributions come in at the end of the year (a reality that is always taken into account in the budgeting process), we have the potential to be \$1.1M in the red at year's end. We were fortunate in that \$172,222 budgeted for expenditures through May of this year was not spent, primarily due to hires that were approved but did not yet happen. Employees have also forgone pay increases. We also were fortunate enough to be able to sell to an investor a tax credit that was generated by some repairs that were done to our historical church building. That totaled \$230,460. If the new hires had been made and other minor budgeted expenses had been incurred the red ink for the budget through May would have been close to \$500,000. Also, if FPC had not received the proceeds from the sale of the tax credit the YTD deficit would have been closer to \$729,000.

3. Additional budget information and recommendations: Betsy Baker, chair of Stewardship and Finance's Budget Sub-committee, had a good idea which Bill brings as a motion from the committee. Parking lot funds are currently going to property capital reserves which is well funded. **The motion is to direct the parking lot funds to the general fund, unless the property capital reserve gets below \$400,000, in which case the ensuing January we will return to directing the parking lot funds to this capital reserve fund. This practice is to begin July 1** and thus will help with the shortfall in giving in the amount of about \$300,000/year. **Approved unanimously.** Lynn Thompson suggested we do not have carve-outs from the parking lot income for Fiesta and special ministry gifts; this will be considered in the future. Bill stated that he thinks the Session will need to cut \$500,000 from the budget before the year's end, unless we use reserves. The funds from the parking lots will help but not solve the problem. We need to stay prudent, allow natural attrition to help with staff costs, and consider other measures. A question was raised: will Bob be gone for his presbytery-mandated rest period during stewardship season. Unknown.

IX. Old business

The Session received both letters from the presbytery, including the one approving Session's proposed amendments to the Essential Action Items. The other letter includes financial projections for costs of the Essential Action Items.

X. Point of Personal Privilege

a. Elder and Clerk of Session Nancy Cross announced that she was resigning both as Clerk and as a member of the Session, effective June 14. She was thanked with a standing ovation from the Session and observers.

b. Elder Carter Ray announced that he was resigning from the Session and read an impassioned letter regarding his reasoning. Nancy Cross thanked him.

c. Elder Cody Herff announced he was resigning from the Session.

[Note: all three resignations as well as three others from elders Morris Camp, Don Ryan, and Bill Sirakos, were received by the Clerk and shared with the Session in the next days.]

XI. Adjournment at 10:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Nancy Scott Cross

Clerk of Session during the meeting

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Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

Moderator

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Clerk of Session when approved

