

**First Presbyterian Church
Session Meeting
Monday, January 27, 2025**

A Session meeting of the First Presbyterian Church (Greensboro) convened in the Mullin Life Center on January 27, 2025, at 5:30pm. Rev. Dr. Jill Duffield served as moderator. There were 32 elders in attendance and 6 excused absences. In addition to Rev Duffield, attendees included Rev. Newton Cowan, Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care, Tim Millisor, Director of Property and Operations, Matt Bussell, Associate Pastor for Outreach & Mission, Christine Ciaccio, Director of Finance, Dan Kerns, and Erwin Fuller.

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Jill Duffield opened the meeting at 5:30pm by reading Psalm 136 and offering a prayer, followed by a reading of the Session Group Covenant.

Consent Agenda

No changes were proposed, and the consent agenda was approved by acclamation.

- From the Clerk: Minutes of the December 16, 2024, stated meeting, and January 19, 2025 Congregational Meeting
- From the Discipleship Office: December 2024 membership reports
- Committee reports: Adult and Children Formation
- Memorial Tribute for John Alexander Edwards
- Salem Presbytery Statistical Report

Receive New Members

Rev. Newton Cowan announced that Sydna Tripp has requested transfer out to Guilford Park Presbyterian in Greensboro, NC, and Van King requested transfer to Park Side Church in Charleston, SC. Mary Ellen Schiflett requests to be transferred to FPC Greensboro from Holy Trinity Episcopal in Greensboro, NC. These membership changes were approved without objection. The Discipleship Committee offered Mary Ellen a small welcome gift.

Scripture Reading

Lorie Jones read Ephesians 2:4-10.

Faith Sharing

Ginger Booker shared her faith journey.

Prayers of the People

Rev. Newton Cowan offered Prayers of the People, and both joys and concerns were shared.

Stewardship

Dan Kerns gave the Stewardship update.

2024 Pledge Results: \$2.8 million was pledged, of which we've received \$2.629 million, leaving a current shortfall of \$171,000. Year-end statements are being sent out to those with a remaining pledge balance, and we fully expect to reach the \$2.8 million goal.

2025 Pledge Update: \$2.8 million pledge goal. 403 current pledges total \$2,420,581. The average pledge amount is \$6,006. Currently, 80 church members that pledged in 2024 still have not pledged in 2025, and a letter will be sent to these 80 members during the week of January 27. If those 80 members pledge an average of \$4,750, FPC will reach the \$2.8 million goal.

Finance

Finance Chair Rob Peddrick reviewed the December and full-year 2024 financial reports.

As of Dec 31, FPC's checking account balance was in a good position at \$372,000. After receiving a bequest, we have completed funding of Neil Dunnavant Hunger Fund and brought the Property Reserve Fund back up to its maximum amount as specified by Session a few months ago.

Pledge contributions were down for December, reflecting a change in monthly giving trend compared to previous years, however, additional pledge dollars are expected to come in.

Non-pledged contributions were substantially down in 2024. Rob indicated that may be a result of this being a capital campaign year. Non-pledge contributions were budgeted at \$450,000 for the year but came in at only \$298,000. On the other hand, plate offerings were up in 2024.

FPC did not finish 2024 in positive budget situation. For 2025, we have the same pledge goal of \$2.8m, and we should all work together to encourage those who have not yet pledged for 2025 to do so. On a positive note, FPC has currently collected 95% of 2024 pledge gifts.

Rob shared that he believes the overall revenue goal should be \$3 million; expenses are lean and there's not much we can cut in 2025.

In terms of Capital Campaign gifts, \$512,000 was given in December, and year-to-date, members have given \$3.7 million.

There was a general discussion about the projected budget shortfalls in 2024 and 2025, and at what point the church should consider adjusting the revenue expectation and expenses. It was mentioned that currently only approximately 40% of members pledge, however some give but don't pledge.

Rev. Duffield shared that on Feb 20 in Redhead Hall, there is a meeting on year-long giving, open to all church members.

Also shared with the Session, a \$3,353,234 bequest has been offered to FPC. The priority previously established by Session for bequests is 1) repay debt, of which FPC currently has none; 2) fund the Neil Dunnavant Hunger Fund and Property Reserve Fund, both of which have been fully funded; and 3) apply the balance to the capital campaign. Rob suggested there be a discussion on whether to apply the sizable balance of the bequest to the capital campaign. Session members are encouraged to reach out to Rev. Duffield or Rob Peddrick with comments/ideas. In the meantime, the balance of the gift is earning interest in FPC's account until used.

Property

Alex Harrill reported on the status of gifting of Christ's Blessing, the Tiffany-style window currently on loan to the Greensboro Historical Museum, during the church's 200 year anniversary.

The loan agreement signed in 1990 has been located and reviewed. The Property and 200-Year Anniversary Committees are no longer recommending a formal gift to the museum since the existing loan agreement offers protections important to FPC.

A motion was made to have Session vote on the existing motion to gift the window to GHM. The motion to gift the window failed. FPC will retain the permanent loan agreement.

Greensboro Historical Museum will need to be informed of the Session's decision.

Nominating Committee

Nancy Moore, chair of the 2024-25 Nominating Committee, provided Session with an update on the Committee's nominees for a single slate of six (6) elders for the class of 2028 and one (1) trustee for the L. Richardson Trust in the class of 2030.

The election of the new slate of elders is proposed for Sunday, March 2. Information will soon be sent regarding each nominee to all church members.

Andy Brantley
Allison Cochran
Tom Gillespie
Alice Moore
Anne Wagner
Hugh Williams

L. Richardson Trustee: Louanne Clarke

The Nominating Committee thanks the congregation for its support in submitting names for consideration, and Nancy thanks the Nominating Committee for their work.

Call for Congregational Meeting March 2

Rev. Duffield asked Session to approve a congregational meeting at the end of the Traditional service on Sunday, March 2, 2025, to elect the slate of elders and vote on changes in terms of call for pastors. Prior to the congregational meeting, bios of each member of the proposed slate will be shared with the congregation. The congregational meeting was approved with no objections.

New Business – For the Good of the Session

Rev. Dr. Duffield reminded Session again of the Generosity Training to be held on February 20, 5:30pm in Redhead Hall, and she thanked those Session members going to Salem Presbytery on February 11, where there will be votes on the Book of Order.

Thanks to Nancy Abrams & Julie Wade for arranging the recent Women's Retreat, attended by approximately 150 women.

Rev Duffield will be speaking at First Presbyterian in Salisbury, NC this upcoming weekend and will not be at church on Feb 2.

Closing Prayer

Rev. Jill Duffield offered the closing prayer and adjourned the meeting at 6:43pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendi J. Cimino
Clerk of Session
2024-2025