



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN EVANSTON

Session Summary **June 23, 2015 Session Meeting**

Following are highlights of the June 23, 2015 Session Meeting. *For further clarifications and/or questions, please feel free to contact one of the elders listed at the end of this summary.*

After a time of prayer, dinner, and fellowship, Pastor Ray called the meeting to order in prayer. Elder Olga Ricketts-Peart reflected on the fourth chapter of the book *Pursuing God's Will Together – A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups* by Ruth Haley Barton. She began by reviewing the previous chapters and reading from Psalm 133. In this chapter, entitled “Community at the Leadership Level,” the author discusses the difference between secular teamwork and being in spiritual community: a team assembles around a task which it is committed to until its completion; a spiritual community gathers around Jesus Christ and is unified by their commitment to be transformed in the presence of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. Haley Barton then discusses “conversion community” where a leadership team, or board, moves to define itself as a spiritual community. Creating a community for leaders isn’t easy. You need clarity and intentional commitment to values, shared practices, and a clear covenant. Every church has its own culture which can remain for long periods of time. Leadership groups committed to spiritual transformation will automatically begin the process to change the culture, transform values and behaviors, and over time, reshape the spirit or ethos of the place.

The devotion closed in corporate prayer.

Associate Pastor Search Process

Commission on Ministry (COM) representative, Rev. Jessica Gregory will be FPCE’s new Presbytery liaison due to the illness and subsequent resignation of Rev. Mike Nevling. As we formally begin our search for a new associate pastor, Rev. Gregory reviewed the three possible associate pastor search categories: interim, designated, and permanent. She outlined the differences between the three. An interim associate pastor would serve for a specific time period (one – two years) with no possibility of being permanently hired. A designated associate pastor is contracted for two-year periods and involves a shorter search process with candidate applications (PIFs) disseminated through the Chicago Presbytery. A designated associate pastor could ultimately be hired as a permanent associate pastor if the congregation agrees to do so. In order to start the search for a designated associate pastor, the church must meet certain criteria and be vetted by the COM. A permanent associate pastor search moves through the usual pastor search process and can take as long as two years to complete. This is the typical process used by churches and past First Pres search committees. Rev. Gregory fielded questions from the elders and noted that she was praying for our church and would return at a later date if requested. The Session would need to make the decision as to which associate pastor search route to take.

Ministry Inquirer under Session's Care

William Jordan, a member of FPCE, graduated from St. Olaf College in Minnesota this past year. He has been accepted into Princeton University’s Theological Seminary for the fall. He has met with Rev. Jan Edmiston, Associate Presbyter for Ministry. The elders questioned William regarding his faith testimony, his sense of call, his reason for choosing this denomination, and what he views to be the challenges of being a pastor in the 21st century. William feels that FPCE is a “church of Jesus” and therefore, has requested that our Session take him under our care during the various phases of his ministry. Ron Ehresman and LeRoy Klemt volunteered to serve as William’s liaisons. The elders voted unanimously to receive William Jordan under the care of Session as he moves into the ministry inquirer stage. He was sent out with prayer.

2015 TCC (The Counseling Center) Budget

Elder Jim Wildenradt, chair of TCC’s Board, presented the 2015 budget which had been approved by the Board of Trustees at their June 16, 2015 meeting. He stated that TCC’s revenue is increasing and that the Center plans to hire two additional counselors, in addition to retaining an intern.

The Session unanimously approved the 2015 TCC budget.

Jim and Rosemary Mauck (Trustee representative to the TCC Board) were thanked for their leadership.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN EVANSTON

Redefinition of Marriage Forums

David Greising elicited comments from the elders regarding the letter which will be sent out to the congregation describing the redefinition of marriage forums. In addition, he distributed the proposed reading list which will be linked to the congregation letter. He also outlined the three sessions and named the presenters. The next step will be to work out the communication plan and determine the exact logistics.

Session approved the congregation letter for the redefinition of marriage forums to be held on August 9, 16, and 23, 2015, the reading lists, and the line-up of presenters.

120th Anniversary Building Dedication Celebration

Katy Ingle reported that the three assigned elders working on the preliminary plans for the 150th Anniversary of the church have met twice with the Rev. Lou Haase, one of our church archivists. They would like to have a small celebration to honor the 120th anniversary of the church building dedication on Sunday, August 30, 2015. This would include a "Faith in Action" segment during the worship service, a booklet giving the church building's history, an exhibit, and a cake(s). This would serve as an early kick-off to the 150th Anniversary Celebration to be held in 2018. The group is requesting \$200.00 to cover expenses for the building dedication celebration. The request was approved.

Staff Report

Director of Youth Jonathan Barney reported on the Youth Ministry activities: Fundraising for the Youth Mission Trip to the Yakama Service Camp (August 2 – 8) was coming up a bit short. However, after the Youth Sunday piggy bank collection, a sufficient amount of money was collected. Eleven teens will be attending the trip and Jonathan asked for prayers. The National Youth Ministry "Rooted" Conference will be held at our church from October 22 – 24, 2015. Prayers were also requested for more volunteer leaders to disciple and train our youth, as well as partnering with and training parents.

In addition, Jonathan reported on behalf of the staff: Several staff directors will be taking much needed vacations in the coming weeks. The Children's Ministry Church Camp was a great experience with good leaders. A prayer was said for Jonathan and the youth at the conclusion of his report.

Senior Pastor's Report

Announcements:

Trip to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, July 7-18

Pastor Ray, Judith Hylton, and Caryl Weinberg will be visiting our sister church, Bethlehem Lutheran, from July 7 – 18. Guest preachers have been lined up: July 12 – Rev. Bob Hecker; July 19 – Rev. Charles Miyamoto; July 26 – Doug Wilson.

Speaking Engagement at Fellowship Gathering of Presbyterians, August 18-20 (San Diego, CA)

Pastor Ray has been invited to speak at the Fellowship Gathering of Presbyterians to be held in San Diego, California from August 18 – 20.

Administrative Personnel Changes

Suzanne Daley, program assistant, submitted her resignation in late May. First Pres. member Marcia Neuhart is filling the position on an interim basis.

Choir Director Search

Choir Director, Craig Johnson, has also submitted his resignation effective at the end of July. The Personnel Ministry Council has put together a choir director search team headed up by Eleanor Ehresman. The goal is to have a qualified person in place by September.

"Our Covenant with Each Other: People Before Programs"/Discipleship Pathways

The "People before Programs" element from our Vision Plan's Covenant was focused on this month: "Christ came to serve people, and as we seek to follow him, we will maintain a focus in our service programs on discerning the needs of people and growing relationships inspired by our love for God and for each other."



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN EVANSTON

Pastor Ray commented that this element ties into the "Discipleship Pathway to Growth" model which is being developed by the program directors. He outlined the various phases (e.g. discover, explore, join, follow and empower) as it relates to visitors coming into our church and moving towards membership. It is hoped that this model can be used with the new member class this coming fall.

Clerk's Report

Chicago Presbytery Meeting, June 16th, 2015

Clerk Laurie Kaeser reported that, in addition to herself, Commissioners Clark Robinson and Bob Sefton, as well as Rev. Hylton, attended the Chicago Presbytery meeting at Flossmoor Community Church. The Rev. Mike Miller preached on change, the future, and thinking about how we are transmitting our message of Christ's love for us. A draft proposal on Presbyterian-Jewish relations in the Presbytery of Chicago was discussed at length. A new Korean congregation of nearly 100 members, Joyful Community Church of Skokie, was welcomed into the Presbytery. Laurie also noted that she has been elected to the Commission on Ministry and is working on the "Verge" Task Force, a group charged with evaluating and redesigning the Chicago Presbytery. (Note: For more on The Chicago Presbytery Meeting, please see the meeting summary.)

Ministry Updates

Evanston Community Outreach

Ron Ehresman reported that a small team from the Mission Council has been meeting with key representatives from the city of Evanston in order to partner and help with issues facing the Evanston community. They recently met with the mayor and an alderman on the topic of how FPCE can get involved with curbing violence in Evanston. Many Evanston youth are lacking in math skills and therefore cannot get into trade schools. Suggestions were given as to possible ways these children could be helped.

Cancer Support Group Training

Olga Ricketts-Peart attended a Cancer Support Group Training Workshop on June 11 and 12 at the Cancer Treatment Center in Zion, Illinois. She felt the training was very well done and beneficial. She will work with Friends in Christ in working out the next steps and possibly forming support groups.

Praying Pelicans Missions Overnight Stay

The Youth Council will sponsor an overnight stay of the Praying Pelicans Missions from July 11 – 17, 2015. The group will consist of approximately 17 teens and adult chaperones and they will provide mission work in the Rogers Park area. Dave Sloan and David Greising volunteered to stay two of the nights. Additional volunteers or staff will be needed for the remaining nights.

Laurie Kaeser, Clerk of Session

Teaching Elder/Ordained Pastor

Rev. Ray Hylton, Moderator of Session

Ruling Elders

Laurie Kaeser, *Clerk of Session*

Ellie Bruce (*Worship Ministry Council, Stewardship Committee*)

Ron Ehresman (*Mission Ministry Council; Nominating Committee Co-Chair*)

David Greising (*Personnel Ministry Council Co-Chair*)

Katy Ingle (*Adult Discipleship/Membership Development Ministry Council*)

Laura Jones (*Pastoral Care Ministry Council*)

Stephanie Keene (*Worship Ministry Council, Nominating Committee Co-Chair*)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN EVANSTON

LeRoy Klemt (*Adult Discipleship/Membership Development Ministry Council, Budget Committee*)
John Powell (*Personnel Ministry Council Co-Chair, RWG Chair*)
Olga Ricketts-Peart (*Pastoral Care Ministry Council*)
Clark Robinson (*Adult Discipleship/Membership Development Ministry Council, Budget Committee*)
Ricki Rosengren (*Children's Ministry Council*)
David Sloan (*Youth Ministry Council, Stewardship Committee*)
Stephen Smith (*Worship Ministry Council*)
Tom Sullivan (*Mission Ministry Council*)
Jim Wildenradt (*The Counseling Center Board Chair*)

Please see the Membership Directory for email addresses and/or phone numbers.