

Session Meeting Minutes
First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio
Westminster Hall, the Sanctuary, and Covenant Hall
April 14, 2025
As Approval by the Session May 12, 2025

Officers' dinner program, Westminster Hall: The officers were joined at dinner by the members of the 2025 Confirmation Class and their family and friends, Youth Division staff, and Confirmation leaders. After the confirmands were dismissed to the sanctuary, a **new Covenant Partner, Barrie Cogburn**, was received by the session. (See Changes in Church Register.)

Reception of Confirmands, the Sanctuary:

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| I. | Call to Order, 7:01 p.m. | Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr. |
| II. | Opening Prayer | Elder Charlotte Milner |
| III. | Introductory remarks and thanks from staff | Kyle Bowen, Director of Youth and their Families, Preston Miller, Associate Director of High School and their Families, and Savannah Schatte, Associate Director of Middle School and their Families |

The staff recognized and thanked the confirmands, parents, and teacher/leaders (Ellen and Mike Meadows, Ashley and Jobe Jackson). They described the experience and process. The staff also encouraged the confirmands to see this as a beginning rather than an ending. The confirmands were invited to begin attending High School classes, groups, and mission trips beginning after Easter.

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| IV. | Presentation of Faith Statements | The Confirmands |
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The Confirmands each shared their personal faith statement, describing what they have come to know and believe about God, and giving testimony as to how they experience God's work in their lives.

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| V. | Charge | Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr. |
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| VI. | Taking the Vows and Reception as Covenant Partners |
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The Confirmands, as a group, took their vows and and, by action of the session (with many elders voicing both the motion and the second), were welcomed as full Covenant Partners of First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio. The vote of the session was unanimous. Confirmands of the FPCSA Class of 2025, now full **Covenant Partners: Gio Alvarado, Ella Armstrong, Marvelous Bukari, Callum Campbell, Ruth Carawan, Ingrid Christiansen, Jack Cosper, Charlie ("Bear") Fulton, Adele Hamilton, Ellie Hodge, Foster Jenne, Carolyn Lutz, Katelynn Matthiesen, Harper Meabon, Tommy Musselman, Charlie Mouynes, Case Parish, Caleb Peavy, Jack Pickett, Finley Wier, and Caroline Wommack.** (See Changes in the Church Register.)

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| VII. | Confirmation closing prayer; recess of the session meeting, 8:40 p.m. |
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Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

The Session reconvened in Covenant Hall.

All elders were present. All save Mike Charlton were in the Sanctuary/Confirmation portion of the meeting. Staff members present: Hank Cherry, Hector Flores (for part of the

meeting), Sheila Figueroa, Rev. Dr. John Kaiser, and Pam Ray. In addition, all staff in the Youth Division attended the Sanctuary/Confirmation portion of the meeting. Many Covenant Partners, teachers, family, and friends attended the Sanctuary/Confirmation portion of the meeting. Several Covenant Partners attended the Covenant Hall portion of the meeting.

VIII. The session was called out of recess at 8:52 p.m. Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

IX. Approval of the Agenda Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.

Additions to the agenda as New Business were offered by Rev. Fuller: questions regarding the Columbarium, the inquiry from the Presbytery's MPT about the meeting on the 23rd and a letter, and distribution of the ONC and LNC guidelines for future action. **The agenda as amended was approved.**

X. Clerk's Report Elder Nancy Cross

a. Consent Docket. The minutes of the March session meeting were removed from the consent docket. The remainder of the consent docket was approved.

b. Proposed amendments to the March minutes.

1. Nancy Cross, per Lynn Thomas's emailed suggestion, changed the language on Pam Ray's Strategic Planning Director report, page 2, b., line 4, from **"as the session had requested" to "as the Activation Team had requested". Approved by consent.**

2. Lynn Thompson moved another amendment, seconded by Charlotte Milner, also on page 2, b. The amendment would add the following language just before "The Discipleship pilots": **"Further discussion included information that anyone can send information to the ONC through the regular nomination process or other written communication. The policy and practice of the ONC has never included personal visits from non-committee members." By a vote of 10 yes, 8 no, and 5 abstaining, the amendment to the minutes passed.**

3. Charlotte Milner moved another amendment, seconded by Lynn Thompson, also on page 2 of the minutes under the Moderator's Report, XIII. b. To add: "Wayne asked the Elders to put down the rocks and look to the Word and reconciliation, and to not vote No Confidence for your Senior Pastor but to wait and let the Presbytery do its job, and to trust the process. Wayne gifted FPC with a plaque of 'Jesus First'." Motion failed by a vote of 13 no, 10 yes.

4. Charlotte Milner moved another amendment, seconded by Lynn Thompson, to add, under IX, Committee Reports, 1. Adult Education Committee Report, **striking "good attendance" and inserting "indicating January and February had the highest attendance in the past six years." Motion passed by voice vote with some no's.**

5. With those amendments, the moderator asked if the session was ready to approve the minutes. Receiving affirmation, he declared **the minutes perfected and approved.**

c. Communications. Nancy Cross had received several communications which were in your packet as a consolidated document. An out-dated letter was mistakenly included. An email via Sheila Figueroa sent to the session this morning contains the correct version.

d. Praying for one another. Nancy distributed cards and a collection bag for prayer names.

XI. Committee Reports

a. Property Committee

Elder Allen Casey

1. Our facility has two chillers, one of which went out of service at the end of January. The Property Committee learned that its repair could be accomplished somewhat economically but for the cost of new coolant. The pricing of a replacement has been estimated at \$400,000, hence a repair was determined the best approach. The contractor is Dynamic Systems, our regular service provider. **On behalf of the Property Committee, Allen moved that the session approve an expenditure of \$24,965 for chiller repairs, such expense to come from the capital reserves. The motion passed with no dissent.**

2. Pursuant to the congregation's action, the trustees have closed on the Grace Lutheran parking lot properties.

b. Stewardship and Finance

Elder Bill Sirakos

1. Bill, on behalf of the committee, asked the session to **approve the final February financials**; there was no change from last month's preliminary report. **With no objections, the moderator so ordered.**

2. At the request of the Property and Stewardship & Finance Committees, Bill moved **that the session request reimbursement from the FPC Foundation for the \$[redacted] expense for the parking lots across the street. Such reimbursement will go to the unrestricted fund. With no objections, the motion passed.**

3. Bill reported that elder-elect Eric Schluter had been working with Hector Flores and Janet Slayden on replacing our current HR/Payroll software with a new product which has more features and will save the church about \$12,000/year when fully implemented. Eric had been working on this issue on behalf of the Activation Team and the Personnel Committee.

4. March financials. There had been a mistake made in the budget -- our severance payments to Becky Pritchard and Mitchell Moore had been inputted for two months rather than the three months approved by the session. Some savings were reflected in the financials; some of those were based only on timing.

5. Giving. As reported at our last meeting, giving had been down significantly since October; Bill and the S&F budget team intended to meet April 9 to explore options. Since then, on both March 30 and April 6, giving was up, so the April 9 meeting was postponed indefinitely. Bill asked Hector to prepare a more detailed analysis of the giving on March 30 and April 6 to determine whether the giving on those dates represented a trend or an anomaly. Hector distributed some charts for the session's use. Explanations and discussion ensued, with differing opinions offered. The budgeted giving is approximately 10% higher than last year's actual giving. An additional stewardship campaign could be considered. Improved communication with the congregation -- beyond the weekly financial update--is needed. Prayer and gratitude are urged. Bill reminded the session that the 2025 budget does not include any funds for replacing the two associate pastor positions or the connections coordinator. Bill affirmed that analysis of this type, as well as careful consideration of all giving trends and cost savings, is being fiscally responsible and prudent. Bill concluded the report and received our thanks.

XII. New Business

a. Rev. Fuller reported that the church had received a request regarding use of the Columbarium which is counter to the guidelines, though the guidelines have not been well-followed. He asked for volunteers to review the request and the guidelines and processes for the Columbarium. Elders Lynn Thompson, Katie Farrimond, and Allen Casey volunteered and were thanked.

b. David West distributed current guidelines for the ONC and LNC to the session for information. He reviewed some history of the ONC guidelines. David suggested that in light of the strategic plan, the changes in the church's organization, and the session's desire to reevaluate leadership development, these guidelines be reviewed. He suggested the Strategic Plan Activation team might receive these, but no motion was proposed.

c. The Moderator referred to and read aloud a letter in our packet from Roland Zavala, Chair of the Presbytery's MPT, regarding the next meeting with the MPT and the letter they had proposed sending to the congregation, with options. Based on our last meeting with the Listening Team, April 23 at 7 appeared to be a good date, and we've been operating under that assumption. Bob asked that the elders-elect be included in the meeting. Discussion ensued in which the concept of having a congregational Town Hall meeting was proposed; this, in order to be transparent with the congregation and communicate more fully on the issues we've been facing.

The main issues were 1) whether or not the meeting should be open to the congregation, private (as our last meeting, and as suggested by presbytery) with the inclusion of the elders-elect, or an official meeting of the session in executive session, in which we could conduct limited and specified business; 2) what kind of a letter to receive from the presbytery for review and forwarding to the congregation, and when; and 3) if we do hold a town hall, what would be the content, timing, and preferred moderator.

After further discussion, it was agreed that we would go around the room so that each person could briefly express their preference on these issues. **The Moderator then declared a consensus, to which no one objected, that the meeting would be private but not in executive session, the 23rd at 7 p.m. with only Presbytery, session, and elders-elect.** If the session desired to make a limited decision at that time, it could be done via consensus.

The consensus also appeared be that we do not desire a letter from Presbytery at this time, though we might reconsider on the 23rd.

While some elders hoped that the entire report of the Presbytery would be shared with the Town Hall, **the consensus was that the Presbytery's report would be a part of the meeting, but other simmering issues would be addressed.** The suggestion was made that the session solicit questions from the congregation in advance, and prepare to respond to the top 10-15.

Again by consensus, **our preference is that the moderator of the Town Hall meeting be from Presbytery if available** -- hopefully a member of the Listening team. That person could make a brief report on the process and recommendations of the MPT and then moderate the rest of the meeting. **Martha Maynard and Lynn Thompson were asked and agreed to organize the Town Hall meeting.**

The date and time preferred was Sunday, April 27, 3 p.m.

In anticipation of the Town Hall, and to counter much mis-information in the congregation, a motion was made by Ben McCaleb, seconded by Bill Sirakos, to **release session members from the confidentiality of executive sessions held since September, with the exception of certain employee issues and names. Motion passed.** In further discussion, we agreed to take care in reporting opinion versus fact.

XIII. Executive Session

At 10:34 p.m., the session entered Executive Session. Guests and staff, other than the moderator, were thanked and excused.

Minutes of the Executive Session will be recorded and approved separately.

IXX. Adjournment and closing prayer

At 10:44 p.m., the session exited Executive Session. **Charlotte Milner moved adjournment, with many seconds and a unanimous approval.** Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr. voiced the closing prayer and benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Scott Cross
Clerk of Session

Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, Jr.
Moderator