

Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church
Austin, TX

The stated monthly **Session meeting** was held on Tuesday, **February 22, 2011**, in Room 200 at the church.

Members present:

Rev. Dr. Peter Barnes	Vicki Gabriel	Ray Mashburn	Mike Ward
Rev. Dr. Carol Friesen	Barbara Humphrey	Mary Mills	Wally Warrenburg
Rev. Peter Haas	John Hurst	Rick Milvenan	Sarah Wehner
Drew Beckley	Jim Johnson	Dennis Pauling	Weldon Whiteside
Mike Douglas	Jim Little	Kerry Pollard	Fred Wilder
	Liza Martin	Sheryl Streder-Becker	

Guests: Rev. Dr. Jim Bankhead

Members excused: Jarrett Anderson, Phil Haag, and Helen Marrow

Dr. Barnes called the meeting to order and Elder Rick Milvenan shared a devotion on evangelism. He said that evangelism is a weak area in most churches and the main reasons are fear of rejection and questions about Jesus and his experience. In John 5, Jesus admonished those, including his own disciples, for their lack of belief in him as the Messiah. In thinking about our own attempts to evangelize, even Jesus did not always bat one thousand, but that does not excuse us from carrying out the call we received in the Great Commission. Our failure to evangelize has brought us where we are today. The devotion was ended with prayer.

Approval and Reception of Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the [January 25, 2011](#) Stated and annual Board of Trustees meeting. Additional motions were made and seconded to accept and receive the minutes of the Session division meetings.

The motions carried.

Communications and Matters of Record:

A motion was made and seconded to receive and approve the Membership Report and the related information concerning membership as follows:

Motion: To approve the Membership Report of [February 14, 2011](#), and the motions related to membership.

1. Baptisms

- a. Lloyd Ross Harvey II and Elizabeth Patton Harvey, son and daughter of
- b. Shannon and Jason Harvey
- c. Jack Stanley Roberson, son of Lindsey and Phillip Roberson
- d. Henry Chase West, son of Jennifer and Tim West
- e. Rachel Bailey Turk, daughter of Susie and Jeff Turk (Subject to parents(s) becoming new members in April. Baptism is planned for Mother's Day, May 8, 2011

2. Remove from the membership roll:

- a. Doris Johnson and Sam Hahs, as they have returned to Presbyterian Church of Lake Travis

4. Clerk's Report

- a. Motion: That Session approve the PC(USA) Church Record, 2010, the annual statistical report of the church.**

The motions carried.

Financial Report: A motion was made and seconded to approve the financial reports for January, 2011. Elder Wally Warrenburg reported that revenue for the month is ahead of plan by \$22,079 and expenses are under plan \$3,405. The Finance Committee believes that members are paying pledges earlier this year and it is not indicative of a trend.

The motion to accept the report carried.

Old Business:

1. Budget Committee Report. Dr. Barnes reported that the Budget Committee worked to balance the budget while maintaining staff, programs, and mission giving. The 2011 budget is currently underfunded by \$168,000 and the Budget Committee was directed to bring a balanced budget to the Session to approve at this meeting. A proposal to revise general and personnel contingencies, modify current budget allocations, and reallocate general designated account funds was presented. Bud Reynolds prepared a report showing the details of accounts that could be used to close the budget gap. A motion was made as follows:

Motion: That Session approve the 2011 Budget as presented by the Budget Committee

A concern was raised about the use of any designated funds to meet operating expenses. Bud's review of the church's designated accounts showed that there were general unspent funds in many of the accounts that could be used as the first dollar spent in their ministry area and would offset otherwise necessary budget cuts. Elder Wally Warrenburg emphasized that financial gifts that were designated for a specific purpose within a ministry were not included in the totals or in the proposal. It was noted that the donations were meant to be used, not accumulated in designated accounts, and that it is important in the future to "right size" the budget. In reviewing the ministry areas that would have their budgets reduced, Elder Liza Martin made an appeal for the Youth Ministry and asked that it not take the brunt of program budget cuts. Elder Kerry Pollard also asked for a review of the cuts to the Community division budget. The Session reviewed the proposal again and asked if designated funds in the Mission division could be used to restore some of the budget allocations to the Youth Ministry and Community areas. A friendly amendment was made to the motion by Elder Drew Beckley:

Amendment: As appropriate, to restore, up to \$20,000, program budget amounts to the Youth Ministry and Community division and balance the budget with designated Mission funds.

The amendment carried. The amended motion was presented and carried. Rev. Peter Haas offered prayer.

New Business:

1. **Year of the Child.** Elder Weldon Whiteside presented the following motion:

Motion: That Session make “the Year of the Child” our WHPC theme for 2012

Elder Whiteside said that many current activities at WHPC are centered around or include children so the intent of the motion is not to create something new, but rather to more intentionally focus our efforts on children in 2012. A planning team has been formed to see where this theme will lead. Dr. Barnes added that the nurture of the next generation is a priority for WHPC and that our efforts in adoption and in encouraging youth already reach across programs and divisions. If the Session is in agreement, the Christmas Eve offering will be dedicated to the year’s events.

The motion carried.

2. **Personnel Report.** Personnel Committee Chair, Elder Ray Mashburn, reported that Rev. Dr. Carol Friesen has submitted a request for a two month sabbatical leave. The employee handbook states that Associated Pastors are eligible for two consecutive months of leave after six consecutive years of service in an ordained position at WHPC. Dr. Barnes asked that the leave be taken from July 18 through September 18 to accommodate the needs of the church. This time frame occurs shortly before her six year anniversary of service. A motion was made as follows:

Motion: To allow Rev. Dr. Carol Friesen to take a two month sabbatical from July 18-September 18, 2011, as outlined in her proposal and scheduled to accommodate the needs of the church.

The motion carried.

3. **Denominational Relations**

A. **Presbytery Elders.** Denomination Relations Chair, Elder Jim Johnson, made the following motion:

Motion: That Session approve the following Elders to serve as Commissioners for the March 4-5 Mission Presbytery Meeting to be held at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church in San Antonio: Mike Douglas, Rocky Engemoen, Paul Gamel, Georgia Hagan, Marvin Hagan, Jim Johnson, Mary Mills, Dennis Pauling, Kerry Pollard, Mary Reagan, Jim Strickland, Wally Warrenburg, Weldon Whiteside, and others as may be needed if any of these Commissioners are unable to attend.

The motion carried.

B. **Pastoral Support of Denomination Issues.** Elder Jim Johnson made the following motion, noting that pastors are expected to participate in the discussions of issues affecting the larger church:

Motion: The Denomination Relations Committee (DRC) recommends that the Session reaffirm the importance and

responsibilities of our pastors to be engaged in conversation and in attendance at conferences that deal with matters concerning the health and future of the PC(USA) and that budgeted church funds may be used to cover travel expenses for this purpose.

The motion carried.

C. Discussion Regarding Ordination Standards in the PC(USA). Dr. Barnes shared a report from a meeting he attended in Dallas on leadership for the Presbyterian church in the 21st century. He distributed copies of a letter that came from the conversations at the meeting and said that the church is in a time of transition and change. He referenced a letter to the Board of Pensions, of which he was a signatory, discouraging the Board of Pension's recommendation to extend benefits to same-sex partners of church staff and said that although homosexuality is an issue within the denomination, it is only one of many that has caused division between member churches.

Division Reports:

Mission- a "Save the Date" flyer is included in the March Mission Presbytery packet, inviting pastors, elders, and mission advocates to an event featuring Hunter Farrell, Mission Director PC(USA) who will visit WHPC on May 14 & 15. Carol Friesen asked the elders to add the presentation and dinner on Saturday night to their calendars.

Pastor Reports:

Peter Haas said that serving at Pilgimage the previous weekend was meaningful and blessed and that he has made a commitment to attend each February. He also reported that the oral evaluation for his doctoral degree is this month and that his five year journey to obtain his degree will end when he graduates in May.

Jim Bankhead spoke of the rewarding experience of working with church staff on spiritual growth.

Carol Friesen is leading a Midweek Moment class on Spiritual Gifts and will conduct a spiritual gifts inventory with the Session. She said that a questionnaire is forthcoming and that the elders should prepare to talk about their own gifts and ministry.

Peter Barnes expressed his gratitude for both the Session and staff.

With no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned and closed with prayer at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Wehner, Clerk of Session