

**Minutes of the Stated Business Meeting of the Session  
Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church  
September 13, 2011**

Members of the Session:

Rev. Dr. Peter Barnes	Rev. Dr. Carol Friesen	Rev. Peter Haas
Alex Allmann	Drew Beckley	Mike Douglas
Phil Haag	Betty Hood	Barbara Humphrey
Jim Johnson	Laurence Ligon	Jim Little
Liza Martin	Ray Mashburn	Mary Mills
Rick Milvanen	Dennis Pauling	Julie Smith
Sheryl Streder-Becker	Mike Ussery	Mike Ward
Wally Warrenburg	Weldon Whiteside	Fred Wilder

All members of the Session were present. Jim Johnson gracefully left the meeting early, with the gratitude of the Session for his courage and faithfulness.

Guests: Rev. Dr. Jim Bankhead; Dana Warrenburg; Edith Johnson; Nancy Gray.

**Call to Order and Opening Prayer:**

Jim Bankhead opened the meeting with prayer.

**New Business:**

Dr. Barnes reviewed the purpose of the meeting as originally envisioned as a time for the Session to seek consensus on how to express its expectations of sexual behavior for church officers. He called attention to the draft of a pastoral letter to the congregation (attached to these minutes), which was sent to the Session in preparation for this meeting. He noted that all four pastors had developed the first draft based on a similar letter written by First Church San Antonio, and that this initial draft had been presented to the Ad Hoc Committee appointed to plan for this Session meeting. The Ad Hoc Committee spent more than two hours in review, discussion, and reworking the language of the letter. Dr. Barnes noted that the revised draft, now before the Session, was acceptable to the four pastors on staff.

At the request of the Moderator, the Clerk made the motion to adopt the letter as presented. The motion was seconded and the Moderator invited discussion, noting that the Session had the right to table, amend all or part of the letter, or approve it as presented. He also called attention to specific language in the draft letter that would express a commitment of the Session to the “traditional standard for ordination,” noting that this language could be sustained as is, modified or replaced, or simply eliminated.

Several motions to amend the language or to end debate on various proposals failed.

Two motions to modify the language of paragraph three subsequently were adopted by the Session. The language of paragraph three is shown below, with the amended language underscored:

“After much prayer and discussion, we want you to know that as pastors and elders we continue to hold fast to the ordination vows we took years ago. In addition, we continue to believe that the Bible is God’s inspired Word and the ultimate authority for the living of our lives. We also continue to hold to the historic creeds, confessions, catechisms and declarations, which are found in our Book of Confessions. At the present, we have decided to continue to maintain the traditional standards for ordination that have guided our church since it’s beginning. As it relates to human sexuality and ordination standards, our practice will be to prayerfully discern each nominee’s sense of call to ministry or office and continue to require fidelity in marriage between a man and a woman and chastity in singleness.”

The Session assigned the amended draft to the Ad Hoc Committee to prepare a clean version of the letter to be considered and adopted at the September 27 meeting of the Session. The Ad Hoc Committee was given the assignment to recommend any additional changes that it thought necessary, consistent with the direction given by the Session.

The following motion was made: Move that the Session adopt the entire “fidelity and chastity” language from the Book of Order, G6.01.06.B, now repealed, as its direction to the Ad Hoc Committee. The motion was seconded, and after vigorous debate, the motion carried. A copy of G6.01.06.B is attached and made a part of these minutes.

### **The Meeting Was Adjourned with Prayer**

Jim Bankhead closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Phil Barnes  
Clerk of the Session