

# STATED MEETING OF SESSION

New Hope Presbyterian Church  
Tuesday, October 24, 2023



**Our mission: To glorify God and make disciples by living out the gospel together.**

Teaching Elders					
		Pastor Mike Jones	X		
		Pastor Paul Pepin	X		
Active Ruling Elders					
Class of 2023		Class of 2024		Class of 2025	
David Carpenter	X	Sandy Knipe	E A	Candy Engelman	X
Jerry Elliott	X	Mark Myers	E A	Jim LaRue	X
Carolyn Melton	X	Rodney Woosley	X	Jon Witenko	X
David Milligan	X	Doug Keno	Z		
P=In Person; Z=via Zoom; EA=Excused Absence; =Absent				Quorum:	Ye s
Others					
Chuck Knox – Treasurer; Signe Pagel – Clerk of Session					
Guests: None					

## AGENDA

1. The meeting open with prayer by Jim Larue at 6:03 p.m. Pr. Mike led a participatory prayer session (6:03 – 6:20), of which some of the topics were: healing for specific individuals, Israeli-Hamas conflict, Ukraine, the world and its church, our local community, and New Hope church with respect to pastor search, nomination of new officers, unity, staff.
2. Moderator's Report – Pastor Mike Jones
  - a. Sacrament of Communion – Pr. Mike reviewed the procedure for distribution of the elements for the purpose of reverence and efficiency. He noted that deacons (any officer, for that matter) are authorized to serve communion.
  - b. Christmas Eve Services
    - i. Real candles will be used this year, and battery operated ones will also be available for those who feel more comfortable with that option.
    - ii. Motion (Elliott/Larue/U) – to collect an offering at the Christmas Eve services.

- iii. Last Week's Meeting of the Presbytery – Pr. Mike reported that two students of theology were admitted to the Presbytery. Hope Community Church, Pembroke Pines, FL, is a newly planted church (to replace one that recently closed) and its pastor, Silver Feliz, will be ordained on Saturday, November 11. The next Presbytery meeting will be held in Pembroke Pines, FL.
3. Assistant to the Pastor's report – Pastor Paul Pepin
  - a. A recap of the recently completed trip to Cuba was given by Pr. Paul. Seminarians were trained on the Order of Salvation, and a large number of pastors also received training by the group of seven who led sessions at three different cities. Future trips are being scheduled for 2024 in the months of February, March, and May. Cuban pastoral leadership would like to add three more cities (for a total of six) to the future training schedule, so Pr. Paul will want to add people to the team. Those interested will receive training in advance of the trips to Cuba.
  - b. The classes for new members of New Hope have been well-received, with approximately seven participants. The intention is to hold these classes every 2-1/2 months.
4. Clerk of Session Report – Signe Pagel
  - a. Stated Session Minutes of September 26, 2023 – A correction to the draft of Minutes was requested by Ken Walker to state that he resigned from Session (not from New Hope church). Motion (Larue/Carpenter/U) to approve the September 26, 2023, Stated Session Minutes as amended. See attachment.
  - b. Motion (Larue/Engleman/U) to approve the Minutes of the October 8, 2023 Congregational Meeting as amended (to note that Jerry Elliott closed the meeting in prayer). See attachment.
  - c. Items in previous month (September) recorded for EPC submission:
    - i. Lord's Supper – celebrated on September 3 at each worship service
    - ii. Ordination/installation of new deacons/elders – none
    - iii. New members – 3 by profession of faith; 2 by affirmation of faith
    - iv. Dismissal/deletions from membership – none
    - v. Deaths/births/adoptions/marriages/baptisms – Deaths: Dale Hart, Lollie Peckham
    - vi. Congregational meetings -- none
5. Executive Director of Operations Report – Flo Antuono (see attached report). Antuono was ill and not in attendance at this meeting. Pr. Mike reported that there is one more meeting to be conducted under the contract with Rick Clapp. Carpenter suggested that Clapp be asked to provide a final report to Session and to staff.
6. Treasurer's Report – Chuck Knox – There has been no dramatic fluctuation in income or expenses. The year-to-date deficit is approximately \$80,000. Knox anticipates lower spending in the next few months as well as rising income in the

final months of 2023, and is optimistic that we will end the year close to a break-even level.

7. Finance Committee Report – Jerry Elliott

- a. 2024 Budget – The committee is working on a budget for next year and plans to send elders a draft of it in the next couple of weeks so it can be reviewed and adopted at the November Session Meeting.
- b. Bliem House – There has been some interest in the house but an offer for purchase, at a price in accordance with the Finance Committee's expectations, hasn't yet been received.
- c. Piano – The Committee is doing further research on consignment stores to see if there might be one that will accept less than 50% of the sales price.

8. Personnel Committee Report – Candy Engelman – The Committee has no issues to report this month.

9. Sr. Pastor Search Team Report – David Milligan – N.L. Moore is scheduling the first round of candidate interviews for us throughout the month of November. It will be busy, but exciting. Pr. Paul commented that some of the people in the classes for new members expressed concern for New Hope's future when they heard about the search for a pastor, and that opened discussion about how much, or how frequently, information should be shared from the pulpit about the search process. Others acknowledged that members have expressed thanks to the Committee for the transparency in the search process and the frequency of receiving information. Pr. Paul expressed confidence that the Committee will use good judgment and a balanced approach.

10. Unfinished Business

- a. Elders' and Deacons' Handbook – David Carpenter – The Committee has been reviewing the Handbook to make suggested practical revisions as well as revisions that are necessary to conform to church By-Laws and/or Book of Order. Documents were distributed for review this evening with suggested changes to existing language in red.
  - i. In the second paragraph on Page 3, titled "The Deacon's Ministry at New Hope Presbyterian Church," change "7" to "5," as the number of deacons elected. Replace the next sentence with, "The number of deacons serving is dependent on the size of the congregation."
  - ii. Motion (Melton/Engelman/U) requested by Pr. Mike to change the Note in Section 5b Benevolence Funds, Page 10 of the "Accounting Manual 2022.06.30," to the following: "Pastoral staff may approve emergency benevolence up to \$1,000 per year, per family need. Benevolence requested over \$1,000 will be referred to a Deaconate/Care team which will gather information, coming alongside the situation for discipleship and

financial/growth and make recommendations for additional assistance in whatever ways might be best for long-term care.”

- iii. On Page 14, “4) Finance Policies; a. Privacy Policy,” revisions are requested due to the fact that there is no “privacy policy” and also to recognize that the pastor should be apprised when a family’s “pattern” of giving changes significantly, which could signal need for pastoral care. The Committee was directed to clarify the revisions for consideration at the November Session.
- iv. Section titled “Structure of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) as a Family of Churches” contains a number of suggested revisions which were discussed. These were referred back to the Committee for clarification and presentation at the November Session. In particular, Pr. Paul will help the Committee clarify the language on Page 16, “Section 7) Mission Policies,” and Milligan will help the Committee ensure that the suggested revisions comport with the Book of Order.
- v. A final draft of the Elders’ and Deacons’ Handbook will be presented for approval at the November Session Meeting.
- b. Concerted Prayer for Gospel Priorities – Elliott reported that he met with Jim Mayer to get appropriate information about the prayer meeting organized by two families (Church and McKinnon) one-half hour prior to monthly Session meetings. He learned that meetings are now publicized to the congregation. Keno suggested that at least one elder should attend this prayer meeting each month in order to be informed of anything appropriate to bring to the Session Meeting.

#### 11. Nominating Committee – Jon Witenko

- a. Motion (Witenko/Elliott/U) – a Congregational Meeting shall be called for December 10 to elect a slate of elders, deacons, and trustees as recommended by the Nominating Committee. The slate of officer candidates will be published one week prior to the Congregational Meeting.

#### 12. New Business -- None

#### 13. Other Reports from Committees/Ministries – see attachments, except where noted as “no report”:

- a. Deacons – Sue Morton, Secretary
- b. Family Ministries – Michelle Myers, Director
- c. Property Council – Ed Harger, Director (no report)
- d. Finance – Brad Starner, Director
- e. Missions/Outreach – Jim Mayer, Director (no report)

- f. Worship Attendance (Files OL05 & OL08) – Angel Dobson
- g. Sunday School Attendance (File SS00) – Angel Dobson
- h. Membership Reports (File MS01, RPT09H, RPT14P, RPT09F, RPT09G – Angel Dobson

14. Milligan closed the meeting in prayer, and it was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Submitted by:  
Pastor Mike Jones, Moderator  
Signe Pagel, Clerk of Session