

**STATED MEETING OF SESSION**

**New Hope Presbyterian Church  
Tuesday, November 28, 2023**



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

| <b>Teaching Elders</b>   |   |                      |        |                      |         |
|--|---|----------------------|--------|----------------------|---------|
|  |   | Pastor Mike Jones    | X      |                      |         |
|  |   | Pastor Paul Pepin    | X      |                      |         |
| <b>Active Ruling Elders</b>  |   |                      |        |                      |         |
| <b>Class of 2023</b>   |   | <b>Class of 2024</b> |        | <b>Class of 2025</b> |         |
| David Carpenter  | X | Sandy Knipe          | E<br>A | Candy Engelman       | X       |
| Jerry Elliott  | X | Mark Myers           | Z      | Jim LaRue            | X       |
| Carolyn Melton   | Z | Rodney Woosley       | X      | Jon Witenko          | X       |
| David Milligan   | X | Doug Keno            | Z      |                      |         |
|  |   |                      |        |                      |         |
| P=In Person; Z=via Zoom; EA=Excused Absence; =Absent                   |   |                      |        | Quorum:              | Ye<br>s |
| <b>Others</b>  |   |                      |        |                      |         |
| Signe Pagel – Clerk of Session; Flo Antuono – Exec. Dir. Of Operations |   |                      |        |                      |         |
| Guests: Steve Shimp  |   |                      |        |                      |         |

**MINUTES**

1. Pr. Mike led a discussion from the Book of Revelation on the letters to the churches in Ephesus, Pergamum, and Thyatira. The meeting opened with prayer by David Carpenter.
2. Moderator’s Report – Pastor Mike Jones
  - a. Two elders are needed for the ad hoc committee on December 10 when the next class of potential members will give their profession of faith. David Carpenter and Candy Engelman volunteered.
  - b. Rick Clapp Final Report – Highlights of the report were discussed. It was noted that the report suggests a Leadership Connection Gathering be held a minimum of once a year to foster communication and transparency among those who are serving at New Hope with all levels of leadership.
    - i. In light of that, Pr. Mike proposed a Leadership Connection “Town Hall” Gathering be held on Sunday, February 25, at 3:00 p.m. The proposed agenda for this meeting will be discussed with Session at its January meeting.

- ii. Motion: Carpenter/Elliott/U – It is determined that elders and deacons should meet together at least quarterly.
3. Assistant Pastor’s Report – Paul Pepin
  - a. History has shown that the Christmas and New Year’s holidays are very difficult times for many people and, with that in mind, Pr. Paul has been talking with leadership of the Board of Deacons and with the counselor housed at New Hope to identify people who may have emotional needs during the holidays.
  - b. The classes for new members of New Hope have been well-received. A second Pathways group will begin on December 10, with subsequent classes beginning Jan. 7th.
4. Clerk of Session Report – Signe Pagel
  - a. Stated Session Minutes of October 24, 2023 – An amendment to the draft of Minutes was made to item 10.a.i. on page 3, to delete reference to the Board of Deacons being made up of 15 deacons. In its place, the following sentence was added: “The number of deacons serving is dependent on the size of the congregation.”
  - b. Motion: Engelman/Larue/U to approve the October 24, 2023, Stated Session Minutes as amended. See attachment.
  - c. A vote of acceptance was given from Session for the 2024 housing allowance for Pr. Mike of \$60,000, which represents no change from the 2023 housing allowance.
  - d. Items in previous month (September) recorded for EPC submission:
    - i. Lord’s Supper – celebrated on October 1 at each worship service
    - ii. Ordination/installation of new deacons/elders – none
    - iii. New members – none
    - iv. Dismissal/deletions from membership – none
    - v. Deaths/births/adoptions/marriages/baptisms – none
    - vi. Congregational meetings – October 8 for the purpose of electing an officer Nominating Committee
5. Executive Director of Operations Report – Flo Antuono (report distributed in advance of Session).
6. Treasurer’s Report – Chuck Knox not in attendance.
7. Finance Committee Report – Jerry Elliott
  - a. Revenue was strong in October (about \$18,000 over expenses), and that is encouraging. It appears that revenue at year-end will be \$1,733,000, even with everything that has transpired this year.
  - b. 2024 Budget – The committee is presenting a faith-based budget of \$1,750,000 for 2024. Items worth noting are that senior pastor salary is

planned to begin in April, youth director salary is planned to begin in May, grade school and student expenditures will go down for program costs and changes to VBS and retreats, and property/liability insurance costs are planned to be higher.

- i. Motion from Finance Committee to accept the 2024 budget as presented passed unanimously.
  - c. Piano – A member of New Hope would like to purchase the piano, and the Finance Committee will sell it for \$12,500, which is the approximate net amount the church would receive if the piano were placed on consignment.
8. Personnel Committee Report – Candy Engelman – The Committee has no issues to report this month.
9. Sr. Pastor Search Team Report – David Milligan & Steve Shimp – The committee has been working tirelessly to review candidates presented by N. L. Moore, and three candidates and spouses will be coming on-site – one each on the dates of January 13, January 20, and January 27 – to meet with the Search Committee, elders, and staff. Milligan asked elders to prepare questions they would like to ask the candidates (same questions for each candidate). Candidates will also attend worship services (incognito). Elders will also be asked for their feedback on the candidates. It was noted that it is not the Session that approves the final candidate; that is the privilege of the congregation. Once a candidate is chosen, and before the congregational vote on said candidate, a salary package will be drawn up by Steve Shimp (Search Committee), Jerry Elliott (Finance Committee), and Chuck Knox (Treasurer).
10. Membership Committee – David Milligan
  - a. Motion: Larue/Engelman/U to restore the membership of Jill Zaiser to active, per her request.
  - b. Motion: Milligan/Elliott/U to remove Molly Rockafellow from membership, per her request.
11. Nominating Committee – Jon Witenko
  - a. The slate of candidates for elder, deacon, and trustee officer positions (class of 2026) was presented by the committee and will be voted on by the congregation at its meeting on December 10.
  - b. Motion Witenko/Myers/U – to approve the appointment of Scott Connel to serve as elder for the remainder of Doug Keno’s term, through 2024.
  - c. Pr. Mike asked for guidance from Session on whether, and how, to explain at the December 10 Congregational Meeting that less deacons would be presented for ordination than called for in the New Hope By-Laws. The By-Laws call for a minimum of 18 deacons spread through three classes and, with those being presented on December 10, the total number of deacons will

be only 11. He noted that the Nominating Committee was unable to find enough people willing to fill the role of deacon. Both Session and Pr. Mike felt it important to be transparent with the congregation about this issue. Thus, it will be recommended to the congregation by the Moderator of the Congregational Meeting (Pr. Mike) that the By-Laws for the number of deacons required be suspended for a period of 12 months.

12. Unfinished Business – Elders’ and Deacons’ Handbook – Candy Engelman reviewed with Session the revisions requested to the Elders’ Handbook at the October meeting of Session.
  - a. Section 1c, page 13 shall be replaced with: “Only active elders, and substantive witnesses at the invitation of the moderator, may attend an Executive Session meeting. In the event an Executive Session is necessary, Session will abide by the form as prescribed in *Robert’s Rules of Order*.”
  - b. Section on Finance Policies A, page 14 shall be replaced with: “New Hope believes that what a person gives to New Hope is between that person and God. Individual or family contributor data is normally not shared by the finance department with others. However, if extreme downward fluctuations of giving occur among the giving patterns of those in the congregation, the pastor(s), acting as the chief shepherd of the church, shall be informed. This is necessary so that any significant changes, which may be indicators of a loss of income, a personal crisis, a crisis of faith, or distancing from the church, may be addressed.
  - c. Section on Mission Policies: 9-a, page 14 shall be replaced with: “The Session requests that the Mission Council take steps, over time, to maximize the financial support given to our missionaries/partners by examining the total number of missionaries supported. Our goal is to optimize the limited funds available for those missionaries/partners we support. When deciding whether to grant financial support to a missionary applicant, consideration should be given to New Hope members over non-members.”
  - d. Motion: Committee/U – to accept the above revisions to the Elders’ Handbook.
13. Other Reports from Committees/Ministries – see attachments, except where noted as “no report”:
  - a. Deacons – Sue Morton, Secretary (no report)
  - 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. Member/Participation Statistics – Angel Dobson

14. Motion: Elliott/Carpenter/U – to adjourn the meeting. Woosley closed the meeting in prayer.

Submitted by:

Pastor Mike Jones, Moderator

Signe Pagel, Clerk of Session