

October 24, 2006
The Meeting Room

The Webster Presbyterian Church Session held its stated meeting on Tuesday October 24, 2006 in the Meeting room. The meeting was opened with prayer by the Moderator, Reverend Mark Cooper at 7:03 PM.

A quorum consisting of the following was present: Moderator Reverend Mark L. Cooper, Associate Pastor Reverend Helen P. DeLeon; Ruling Elders: Carl Allen, Jennifer Carr, Watson Dupont, Johnny Jones, Diane Kane, Phyllis Koenig, Ross Looney, Al Manson, Chuck Moede, Carlos Noriega, Judy Ota, Roy Phillips, Marjorie Seiter, Reese Terry, and Clerk of Session James E. Paden. Elders Carol Bachtel, Karla Bradley and Stacey Menard were excused. Elders Susan Anderson, Kathy Dixon and Evan Lapka were absent. Treasurer Priscilla (Pat) Koester was also present

The minutes of the stated meeting held on September 26, 2006 were approved with minor corrections.

CORRESPONDENCE

Several pieces of correspondence were received by the Clerk and disseminated to the Session members.

CLERK'S REPORT

Statistical information as of September 26, 2006	703	399
Gains:		
Transfer of Letter	+ 0	+ 0
Profession of Faith	+ 2	+ 1
Profession of Faith & Baptism	+ 0	+ 0
Losses:		
Transfer of Letter	- 2	- 1
Removal from Roll	- 2	- 1
Death	- 1	- 1
Membership as of October 24, 2006	700	397
Baptized persons who have not made Professions of Faith:	141	
Total children, youth and adults:	841	

Communion was celebrated at both worship services on October 1, 2006.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Pat Koester presented the financial status of the church year to date through September 2006. WPC is still \$71,000 in deficit. Discussion included what actions should the Session take to make up this deficit by the end of the year. The Treasurer also reported that to date 86 pledges have been received including 7 new pledges totaling \$27,000. Sixty three have increased their pledge by 19%. The report was received by Session.

New members:

The Session suspended its business to receive new members. Joe and Penny Halloin met with Session seeking membership. The members of Session welcomed them and introduced themselves. Following informal conversation with the couple they were asked the following questions:

Who is your Lord and Savior? (Jesus is my Lord and Savior)

Do you trust Him? (I do)

Do you intend to be a faithful disciple, obeying God's word and showing Christ's love? (I do)

Will you be a faithful member of this congregation and will you seek the fellowship of the Church wherever you may be? (I will).

The Session having heard these affirmations of Faith, voted to receive into the full fellowship of Webster Presbyterian Church: Joseph M. Halloin by transfer of his letter from Presbyterian Church of Okemes, Okemes MI., and Penny M. Halloin by reaffirmation of her faith.

New Business:

- Adult Education Committee requested approval for *Against the Grain: Unconventional Wisdom from Ecclesiastes* by Ray Waddle, for use by the Small Group Study.
The Session approved this request.
- Administration Committee recommended that the Session committees reassess the human resource needs and priorities with an emphasis on required functions that should be performed by employees rather than church members or volunteers. To facilitate planning follow up actions, the committee requested these reports be completed prior to the November 28 Stated meeting.
- Administration Committee requested Session approval for a retroactive pay rate adjustment from \$8.00/hour to \$8.32/hour for child care worker Maria Atansova. The change is necessary due to a lack of documentation of a previously intended rate adjustment.
The Session approved this rate adjustment.
- Administration Committee requested Session approval for extension of "Special Marketing Team" report from the December meeting to the January 2007 meeting.
The Session approved this request.
- Administration Committee was requested to bring a recommend plan to Session for a *Long Range Planning Team* to look at immediate and long range plans for the church.
- Hispanic Worship Task Force reported their findings to the Session. They recommended that WPC enter into a contract for a joint mission with Juaquin and Yamilet Patino to reach unchurched people in the Webster community by providing the ministry *Casa de Oracion Monte Carmelo* with facility space to provide worship, fellowship and Christian education. The contract is recommended for a trial period of six months.
The Session tabled this recommendation to gather further facts.

The Session voted to suspend the order of the day (time for the meeting has expired).

Informational reports from Committees

In addition to the attached reports from the several committees the following reports were submitted.

Building and Grounds:

The seams in the roof over the administration and educational wings have been sealed. Now work on the class rooms in the education building can be started to remediate the mold and insulation. Additional air handlers will be needed to adequately distribute air flow to both floors of the educational wing. Lights in the parking lot have been fixed.

Mission:

The committee reported that \$5,200 was raised by the Music Committee concert to aid in sending Vicky Smith to Jamaica. The Synod of the Sun has pledged \$5,000 to help this missionary next year. The Crop Walk raised \$1,500 and the Peace Making offering was \$2,200. There will be a training session in January 2007.

STAFF REPORTS

Helen DeLeon:

Helen will lead a mission trip to Guatemala in July.

A return visit to Louisiana to help remediate some of the housing there will be in March.

Mark Cooper:

The following message was received by the Session concerning their action at the September 26, 2006 meeting concerning vacating the position of "Minister of Children and Youth".

October 04, 2006

Dear Elders,

As I'm sure you recall, at our last meeting session voted to close the position of Minister of Children and Youth in order to avoid paying vacancy dues to the Board of Pensions. I am now a member of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry, and this was discussed at yesterday's meeting. Basically, the committee tabled the matter, the reason being that it requires a congregational vote rather than a vote of session to close a position. (I know we were working off information we had been given by someone at the Presbytery office.)

I was supportive of session's action because we are not sure what is going to happen with that position and none of us wants to pay dues on a position that may not be filled. I have to say, though, that it would seem to be a matter of greater magnitude to immediately ask the congregation for that vote. I think that runs the risk of sending the message that we don't plan to hire anyone to work with our youth, and I don't think we want to send that message until we have a better idea about what we're going to do.

It seems too early to assume that we are not going to fill that position, or that we can't afford to fill it, or that we are going to hire a Lay Director of Youth rather than an ordained Minister of Youth. Any of those thoughts might be true, and I am not advocating that we go in any particular direction. It is essential, though, that we approach this matter "decently and in order." No one individual, no one group, no one committee, not even, I think, the session itself, is in a position at this moment to make a decision about this position. If we are going to deal with this responsibly we will establish a task force and give it the responsibility of examining the church staffing needs and bringing back to session a recommendation, within a relatively short time frame. There is no need for this to take months and months. Also, we cannot simply assume that we can't afford to fill that position. It is very possible that we can't - I'm certainly worried about it. But, we don't know what the budget is going to look like next year and I'm concerned about the apparent foregone conclusion that it's going to be a disaster. Also, we are going to have a budget of some kind next year. Like all budgets it will require prioritization and it may be that filling that position in some way will be seen as a higher priority than other things.

So, we are all entitled to our ideas and opinions about this, but the reality is that no decisions have been made and we have some work to do before we will be in a position to make a decision.

Mark

ELECTION OF COMMISSIONERS

Elders Jennifer Carr and Phyllis Koenig were elected to represent WPC at the November Presbytery meeting.

There being no further business the Session voted to adjourn. The meeting was closed with Prayer by the Moderator at 9:34 PM. The next scheduled meeting will be held on November 28, 2006.

James E. Paden
Clerk of Session

Attachment to the Session Minutes of October 24, 2006

Committee Reports

ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE

- Team Reports
 - Adult Education –
 - New 6 week session begin October 22:
 - Spirituality – Helen and Steve Spidell
 - One step Closer – Tony and Mary
 - Reading the Bible for the first time
 - ABC – Jesus – Powerful, Courageous, Trusting
 - Advent Series
 - Planning going well and on target.
 - Helen preordered “Thoughtful Christians” who has an Advent Class to review.
 - Small Group Ministry –
 - Liz Loynes present a book for approval by session.
 - Training Session for new leaders for Covenant Groups set for January in the afternoon
 - Lunch Bunch Bible Study beginning new study – “Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World”
 - Women’s Ministry –
 - Women’s Retreat – Mary Marcotte has agreed to speak at the 2006 retreat, October 13-15. Fifty registered participants signed up.
 - Sisters in Faith – October outing went well even with low attendance. November outing to be announced at a later date. Last gathering will be on December 16 at Helen’s House.
- New Business
 - a. Recruitment for new team members and Chairs.
- Old Business
 - “Reading the Bible in 90 days” has been a great success and initial members have completed the entire class.
 - Tony is the liaison on the Advent Committee – Christmas Eve will be on Sunday but classes will run as normal.
 - Christmas Festival is schedule for 12/10/06.
 - Mary will organize the New Year’s Eve Intergenerational class.
 - Committee recommends for December 30th 2007 will be an Intergenerational class organized by the Children’s Committee.

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Personnel Team Report:

- Evaluations have been completed for all staff members.
- Cost of Living (COLA) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that we should project a 4% cost increase this year. The Team recommends a 4% 'across the board' budgeted salary increase for the evaluated staff. The also specifically recommend an additional annual salary increase for Associate Pastor Helen resultant from her consistent performance over the last three years without a performance wage increase.
- The Team discussed anticipated human resource cost increases incurred due to the benefit plan costs for our clerical staff and the required "closeout" costs associated with Ryan Sills' position, as well as the number of unfilled, but deficit funded positions. We feel the Church needs to assess overall organizational needs with a longer range view.

- Action Item: The Team recommends Session committees reassess human resource needs and priorities with an emphasis on required functions that should be performed by employees rather than Church members or volunteers. To facilitate planning follow up actions, we would request these reports be completed prior to the November 28 Session meeting.
- Action Item: The Team requests that Session approve a retroactive pay rate adjustment from \$8.00 p/hr. to \$8.32 p/hr. for child care worker Maria Atansova. The change is necessary due to a lack of documentation of a previous intended rate adjustment.
- The Team discussed anticipated human resource cost increases incurred due to the benefit plan costs for our clerical staff and the required "closeout" costs associated with Ryan Sills' position, as well as the number of unfilled, but deficit funded positions. We feel the Church needs to assess overall organizational needs with a longer range view.

Randy reported that the result of his meeting with the B&G committee is that no additional position is required at the present time.

Communication Team Report

- The October Newsletter has been sent to members.
- Pat Brackett reported on printed media coverage for Vicki Smith's concert. Lack of flyers for the event was noted and the team believes an opportunity to invite the community into the church was missed.
- Prototypes of proposed letterhead have been given to staff for evaluation.
- A workbook concerning WPC signs, prepared by Gene Fisseler in 2003, was displayed. The team concluded that an electric sign similar to that of St. Christopher Episcopal Church should be purchased and that it be the responsibility of the new Marketing Task Force. But first, the team asks that Administration and B&G place letters (identical to those on the Fellowship Hall tower) on the Houston/NASA corner of the building and on the Austin/Moody side. There was question as to whether the concrete cross outside the old narthex, could be utilized on that location.
- The Web Team continues to make great progress on upgrades to the Website.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Buildings & Grounds Committee has not met since the last Session Meeting.

Following is a summary of B&G activity:

- Completed repairs to the Fellowship Hall Foyer HVAC – Ross Looney
- Returned portrait of Mr. Bouton to the entryway of Bouton Hall – Pat Brackett/Gene Fisseler
- Replaced burned out lamps in parking lot lights – Johnny Jones & Crew
- Removed tree from the back of the parking lot/stump removal underway - Geoff Rorer/Jimmy Spivey
- Arranged for dishwasher repairs – Fisseler
- Arranged for additional roof repairs –Looney
- Investigating Education Wing/Kitchen plumbing problems – Fisseler/Looney
- Replace burned out lights throughout the campus – Tom Camp/Ed Tobia
- Repaired exterior office doors and hallway office doors – Fisseler
- Added plantings to beds surrounding the Fellowship Hall –Jones
- Purchased materials/equipment for the Fellowship Hall Food Preparation Area – Jones/Fisseler/Looney
 - triple sink/faucet

- garbage disposer
- utility sink/faucet
- point-of-use water heater
- ice maker
- Added electrical circuit to Fellowship Hall Food Preparation Area, installed water-proof panels behind sink locations, and assembled sinks and disposer – Looney/Fisseler

Ross Looney has committed to completing installation of equipment in Fellowship Hall Food Preparation Area before the October fest Fellowship Event on October 29.

CHILDREN’S MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Sunday School Curriculum:

Current Children’s Sunday School curriculum ends November 19.

Advent:

- Nov. 26: Make advent calendars
- Dec. 3: Theme: Prophecies with emphasis on “good things come to those who wait”; include pre-school children; make advent wreaths, chains, and other crafts
- Dec. 10: Theme: Symbols of the Lord; Star of David, candy canes (*Possibly get candy cane dough recipe from Marjorie Warehime*)
- Dec. 17: Theme: Story of Jesus: children dictate the story as they know it; adults will put it on a scroll and the children will illustrate their story.
- Dec. 24: No Sunday School due to single service that morning
- Dec. 31: Make advent bracelets with representative beads (*Linda will get the beads on her trip to Michigan*)

Winter Semester: January 7 – February 18

- Five people from Spiritual Gifts covenant group will write curriculum.
- Curriculum will parallel adult class and introduce nine spiritual gifts (child appropriate)
- Ends with spiritual gifts inventory

Lent: February 25 – April 8

- Use curriculum that we already have

Late Spring: April 15 – May 27

- 4th and 5th grade children and their parents take class together; Taught by Diane Kane
- Using their spiritual gifts
- Younger children use the same curriculum

Education Wing Repairs:

- B&G has identified a roof leak
- A moisture barrier needs to be installed before the sheetrock is replaced

CMT Sunday School Considerations:

- Possibly conduct Sunday School in old sanctuary
- Propose a task force/planning team to determine what the future of the Education Wing is at WPC
- *Karla: compose a request for the Education Wing future planning task force for presentation to Session*

Strategic Plan for CMT:

The CMT members provide feedback on defining goals for the CMT using the worksheet and questions that Linda developed.

FELLOWSHIP TEAM REPORT

1. The last potluck of the year will be Sunday, October 29 after second service. The menu is pork roast, mild bratwurst. We will ask the congregation to bring Germany-themed sides/desserts. Drinks will include the usual plus a root beer keg (hopefully) from BJ's and hot cider. We will decorate fall/Germany; and ask the congregation to bring in their memorabilia from Germany for a display in the Fellowship Hall narthex. Stacey is going to set up a kid's fun table to decorate desserts.
2. FaLaLa has been postponed to next year. Several crafts will be offered during the Christmas fest on Dec 10.
3. Wednesday Night Dinners are continuing. Volunteers are in short supply but we have back-up plans to purchase food in those cases. Attendance has been steadily increasing-up from 40 the first week to 60 last week.

Visitor Team Report:

1. Connie Carden has asked to be relieved of responsibilities as a member of the Visitor Team. She was paired with Alberta Rohlfing for fifth Sunday visitations. Alberta has advised that Dennis Rohlfing will join her on the fifth Sunday Visitor Team.
2. Peggy and Jack Armstrong, new members, have joined the Visitor Team and are making visits one Sunday each month.
3. The Visitor Teams continue to visit first-time visitors who provide address and/or telephone information when they visit. Those who have visited several times are considered "first-time" visitors for the purposes of receiving a visit on the Sunday that they provide contact information.
4. The Associate Pastor continues to write letters to first-time visitors who provide contact information, as well.

New Member Team Report

- The Open Door Class held September 17 and 24 was successful. Penny and Joe Halloin committed to join WPC, and will be presented for membership to Session on October 24. Hopefully, they will be presented to the congregation on Sunday, October 29.
- Long-time visitors Paul Cianchetti and Rachel Boeckenhauer were approved by Session for membership at its meeting on Tuesday, September 26. They will be introduced to the congregation at the 11:00 a.m., service on Sunday, November 26, when their younger children, Vincent and Maria, are baptized. They have three children, Anthony (already baptized), Vincent, and Maria.
- The New Member Team will host a reception for new members at Helen DeLeon's home on Sunday, October 22, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. All those who have joined WPC this year and have not yet attended a New Member reception will be invited, along with those deacons in whose zones these new members live and several elders, the pastoral staff, and members of the New Member Team. Spouses and significant others are welcome at this reception. Elders who wish to attend this reception should let Julie Mead know that they would like to be included in this quarter's reception

MISSION COMMITTEE

- **Missionary Report** – Vicki Smith reported on her wonderful trip to Jamaica to visit the Iona Preparatory school. She reported that her funding total was at approximately \$21,400. Vicki needs approximately \$5000 more in donations or pledges by 11/1/06 to be able to leave in January. We also discussed the Mission Committee writing a letter to the larger churches in our Presbytery requesting that they consider making a donation to Vicki if they haven't done so already.
- **Mission Month** – A highly successful mission month was completed. People seemed to like the tone

and locations of the booths in the Narthex. Mission month concluded on 10/1, World Communion Sunday. Each week had a unique focus

- **9/10** – Local focus – Minute for mission addressed our ESL partnership with Oasis of Hope.
- **9/17** – National focus – Ann Taylor did a minute for mission on the Crop Walk for both services.
- **9/24** – International focus - Ryan Stoltz talked about his experience on a mission in Africa for both services. Vicki Smith also had a booth.
- **10/1** – World Communion Sunday – Carl and Kimberly talked about Mercy Corp. We received the Peacemaking Offering.
- **Louisiana Revisited** – Another trip has been scheduled to LA to help with Katrina rebuilding. It will occur March 11-17, 2007. This coincides with the Clear Creek ISD Spring Break.
- **Presbyterian Central American Trip 2007** – Helen will be leading the annual Presbytery mission trip to Guatemala in the spring. Additional details are being finalized.
- **ESL** – our ESL partnership with Oasis of Hope is going well. We ordered additional Level 2 books for Dick Brackett’s class.
- **Blood Drive** – We discussed holding the next blood drive on 12/3/06. The blood center suggested 11/12, but this won’t provide enough time for members who donated at the 09/30 blood drive to become eligible again. (The waiting period is 54 days.) An alternate day is 11/26 which is on Thanksgiving weekend. We thought that 12/3 might be a better choice. Because of a donor coach conflict, the drive will be an “in-house” drive. We will need to reserve a large room with at least 4 electrical outlets (like the Meeting Room or the Fellowship Hall).
- **Habitat for Humanity** - Our next workday is 10/28. Phyllis will coordinate food for about 35 volunteer workers. D’Ann will assist.
- **WPC Patriots** – We are thinking about expanding our efforts to include purchasing gift certificates in lieu of care packages. The gift certificates can be exchanged by service men and women for other desirable items where they are stationed.
- **Medical Bridges** – Medical Bridges returned our \$500 donation to fund the shipment of supplies to the Fordjour clinic in Ghana. Medical Bridges does not ship containers with any personal goods. Dr. Fordjour had included some personal items in the container that he will need in Ghana. An alternate shipping company was located to ship the container. We forwarded our check to Hope Lutheran Church in Friendswood. They agreed to forward the funds to the new shipping company along with their check.
- **Newsletter** - Newsletter articles are due by 10/16 (Monday). The editor is leaving space for an article on Vicki’s concert. Additional articles:
 - ICM Christmas Store – Kimberly
 - Blood Drive – Jim and Phyllis
 - Crop Walk educational piece – Ann (did not make last month’s newsletter)
 - WPC Peacemaking Offering and Crop Walk results – Jim
 - Children’s Christmas Project – we have coordinators - Helen
- **Children’s Christmas Project** – We have a wonderful team of volunteers who will coordinate this activity: Judy Ota and Penny Halloin will lead a group of 6 other volunteers.
- **Budget Discussion**
 - **Vicki Smith** – a motion was made and carried to pledge up to \$2000 from our 2007 budget to Vicki Smith if needed to fund her first year as a Presbyterian Missionary.
 - **4th Quarter Allocation** – We agreed to allocate the following 4th quarter funds. Additional fund distribution will be addressed at our next meeting.
 - Community Assistance - \$500
 - ICM - \$1500
 - Seafarers - \$500

- Presbytery - \$3000
- Total: \$5500

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Team Reports

- Chuck Moede reported that a demonstration of new prospective lights is going to be held next week.
- Glenn Foster:
 - Glenn reported that the men's choir would be singing on Sunday, October 15, and the Youth would be singing on October 22.
 - Glenn also reported that the choir will present "Music for Mission" a concert benefiting the missionary work of Webster Presbyterian Church on October 19 at 7:00 P.M. The offering will provide the needed funds to help defray the cost of our missionary, Vicky Smith.
- Sylvia Scales: reported that the flower calendar was full except for November 26.
- Joyce Sens reported that new paraments were in work.
- Joyce also reported that Ushers were scheduled for the Music for Mission Choir Concert.
- Susan Anderson reported that the Sanctuary Guild was scheduled to meet on November 18.
 - Al Manson reported that the Session approved serving communion at the Blue Christmas Service on December 10.

OLD BUSINESS

- Advent:
 - Decorations: It was reported that, considering recent developments, the Youth would withdraw their offer to lead the Advent decorating activity. It was further decided that the Worship Committee would provide the leadership necessary to organize the decorating.
 - Poinsettias have been ordered. They will be picked-up and placed in the sanctuary and narthex on Friday, December 15.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Exploration of Worship:

Jackie Allen expressed several approaches that the worship exploration committee might consider. She proposed that we develop a strategic plan, gather information from other churches, get input from our congregation and understand all of Mark's research into churches and contemporary services. Jackie also proposed that Mark preach about the traditions of worship and the background and meanings of the Presbyterian order of worship.

Susan suggested that the committee consider data from the congregational survey taken within the last ten years.

Mark proposed that he organize a team to explore different approaches to worship. He encouraged us to let others know so they could consider being on the team.

COMMUNION

- Communion was celebrated on October 1 and is scheduled next on November 5.