

**MINUTES OF THE SESSION MEETING OF THE  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRAND HAVEN, MICHIGAN  
MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015**

1. The session of First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven, Michigan assembled in God's name on Monday, April 13, 2015, at 7:05 pm in the lounge of the church located at 508 Franklin Street in Grand Haven, Michigan. Prior to calling the meeting to order, the session and the Deacons had a joint meeting dinner. After determining a quorum was present, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Cook called the meeting to order.
2. **Attendance:**
  - 2.1. **Elders Present:** Marge Coffey, Andrew LeFurge, Matthew Olds, Dianna Sahr, Bill Scott, Eric Snyder, Craig Seaver, Lee Brink, Tim Stoepker, Brigitte Kemink, Keli Olson, Bill Bussell, Megan Hayes, John Heritage, Nancy Levenburg, John Nametz, Katie Neitring, and Sue VandenBosch.
  - 2.2. **Elders Absent or Excused:** Scott Wagasky, Jack Jansma, and Sandie Enders.
  - 2.3. **Teaching Elders Present:** Rev. Dr. Thomas Cook and Rev. Linda Male.
  - 2.4. **Teaching Elders Absent or Excused:** None.
  - 2.5. **Others Temporarily Present:** Rev. John Best, General Presbyter of Lake Michigan Presbytery, and Rev. Nancy Clodfelder.
3. **Faith Biography/Committee of Focus:** Because of the joint meeting with the Deacons, there was no Faith Biography or Committee of Focus.
4. **Call to Worship:** Rev. Dr. Cook opened the joint dinner meeting of Elders and Deacons with a discussion and reading from Acts 1. This was followed with a prayer.
5. **Introduction of Guests:** Upon motion with support, the session seated as guests Rev. John Best, and Rev. Nancy Clodfelder.
6. **Clerk's Report:**
  - 6.1. Clerk Bill Bussell presented the following for session action:
    - 6.1.1. On motion with support, the session approved the April 13, 2015 meeting docket with two additions to New Business.
    - 6.1.2. On motion with support, the session meeting minutes of March 2, 2015 were approved.
    - 6.1.3. On motion with support, the March 2015 Membership Report was accepted with no action items.
    - 6.1.4. There was no correspondence to share.

<b>First Presbyterian Church Membership Report</b>			
<b>March 2015</b>			
<b>Membership as of February 28, 2015</b>			<b>933</b>
	Deaths:		1
	New Members Received:		6
	Restored to Active Roll:		5
	Removed from Active Roll:		2
	Transferred from Active to Inactive Roll:		0
	Transferred by Letter		5
<b>Membership as of March 31, 2015</b>			<b>936</b>
<b>Additional Registers</b>		<b>Member #</b>	<b>Notes</b>
	<b>Baptisms:</b>	<b>2</b>	
3/22/2015	Cruze Corwin, son of Cort & Jessica (Butcher) Corwin		
3/22/2015	Colton Corwin, son of Cort & Jessica (Butcher) Corwin		
	<b>Deaths:</b>	<b>1</b>	
3/25/2015	Virginia (Ginny) Groat	1915	Rev Dr. Tom Cook, 3/27/2015

	<b>Membership Gains:</b>		<b>11</b>	
3/2/2015	Calvin Clark		5721	First Presbyterian, Farmington Hills MI
3/2/2015	Jacob Cook		5722	Grace Reformed, Wyoming, MI
3/2/2015	Sarah Cook		5723	Woodlawn CRC, Grand Rapids, MI
3/2/2015	Helen Richard		5724	Transferred from Lake City Presbyterian
3/2/2015	Jerry Richard		5725	Transferred from Lake City Presbyterian
3/2/2015	Barbara Swihart		5726	Transferred from First Presbyterian, Fenton MI
3/2/2015	Randy Poel		5168	Moved from Inactive to Active
3/2/2015	Lisa Poel		5169	Moved from Inactive to Active
3/2/2015	Josh Poel		5349	Moved from Inactive to Active
3/2/2015	Adam Poel		5492	Moved from Inactive to Active
3/2/2015	Jacob Poel		5601	Moved from Inactive to Active
	<b>Membership Losses:</b>		<b>7</b>	
3/2/2015	Chris VanWieren		5288	Remove per his written request
3/2/2015	Carolyn VanWieren		5289	Remove per her written request
3/2/2015	Randy Poel		5168	Transferred to Covenant Life
3/2/2015	Lisa Poel		5169	Transferred to Covenant Life
3/2/2015	Josh Poel		5349	Transferred to Covenant Life
3/2/2015	Adam Poel		5492	Transferred to Covenant Life
3/2/2015	Jacob Poel		5601	Transferred to Covenant Life
<b>Communion Served:</b>	8:45 & 11 am Service		3/1/2015	
<b>Home Communion:</b>	3/1/2015			
Chick Borta	Don Edward	Sue McClellan		Gerry VanStratt
Louise Borta	Ruth Edward	Muriel Mersereau		
Charlie Davis	Millie Enders	Sue Roper		
Louise Edwards	Betty Hansen	Steve VanderWall		
Les Ennenga	Helen LaVercombe	LaMar VanHaften		
Jo Ennenga	Fern Mastenbrook	Evelyn Wood		

7. **Joys and Concerns:** Elders shared their joys and concerns.

8. **Moderator's Announcement:** Rev. Dr. Cook read a letter that he will sending to the congregation announcing his retirement from installed ministry. He requested that we accept his retirement letter. Rev. Dr. Cook excused himself from the meeting and Rev. Male assumed the moderator's role. A motion was made to accept his retirement with regret and supported. This was followed by a lengthy discussion. Rev. Best explained that establishing a plan of action on this date is inadvisable. Clerk Bill Bussell was asked to prepare a letter from the session to the congregation that would be mailed shortly after Rev. Dr. Cook's letter. Rev. Dr. Cook rejoined the meeting and responded to several questions.

8.1. Moderator Pro Tem Rev. Male called for the question and the session voted to accept his letter of retirement.

8.2. The session, upon motion with support, approved holding a congregational meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2015, to dissolve the relationship between Rev. Dr. Thomas Cook and First Presbyterian Church of Grand Haven, MI. In addition to this business, the congregation will be asked to approve three non-Elder members to serve on the Nominating Committee as members at large.

8.3. Rev. Best affirmed the Presbytery's assistance in this transition and concluded his remarks with a prayer.

8.4. Rev. Best and Rev. Clodfelder excused themselves from this meeting.

8.5. Rev. Dr. Cook resumed the role of moderator.

9. **Treasurer's Report:** Andrew LeFurge reporting

9.1. All data are through February 2015:

	<u>MTD Actual</u>	<u>MTD Budget</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
General Fund Revenues	\$74,137.33	\$72,192.99	\$134,549.15	\$136,396.69
General Fund Expenses	\$65,536.35	\$72,921.77	\$175,582.87	\$194,317.17

Joyful Noise Revenues	\$61,022.08	\$54,342.00	\$120,804.57	\$121,168.00
Joyful Noise Expenses	\$55,528.09	\$52,331.93	\$125,374.23	\$128,611.76

9.2. On motion and support, the Treasurer's report was accepted.

10. **Omnibus Motion:** On motion and support, the following written committee reports were accepted by omnibus motion:

- 10.1. Adult Education Committee minutes of March 10, 2015.
- 10.2. Children's Ministries Committee minutes of March 10, 2015.
- 10.3. Deacons' minutes of March 23, 2015.
- 10.4. Hospitality Committee minutes of March 16, 2015.
- 10.5. Mission Committee minutes of March 15, 2015.
- 10.6. Nominating Committee minutes of March 16, 2015.

11. **Committee Reports Withheld from the Omnibus Motion:**

11.1. Personnel: Craig Seaver reporting

- 11.1.1. On motion followed by an explanation of changes, the session approved the revised Policy on Sexual Misconduct.
- 11.1.2. Elders are urged to complete and turn in to Kelli Jullie the "Sexual Misconduct Policy Acknowledgement Form" which is an annual requirement.
- 11.1.3. On motion followed by an explanation, the session approved increasing Becky Yonan's weekly hours from 25 to 35 with the Children's Ministries Fund paying for the incremental hours.

11.2. Stewardship: Sue VandenBosch reporting

- 11.2.1. On motion followed by questions and explanations, the session authorized the creation of the William Montague Ferry Legacy Society. This is a way to recognize those who include First Presbyterian Church in their estate planning.

11.3. Trustees: Lee Brink reporting

- 11.3.1. John Lepard has prepared a letter to the manufacturer of the church's boilers, its distributor, and the installer, seeking a remedy for their problematic operation.
- 11.3.2. Repairs to the lounge kitchen sanitizer have been authorized.
- 11.3.3. A contractor will be called in to replace/repair ceiling tiles that are in locations requiring special equipment.
- 11.3.4. A report on the sanctuary lighting was enclosed with the Trustees' report.
- 11.3.5. Volunteers are being sought to conduct the annual financial review.
- 11.3.6. Trustees plan to commence work on updating the church's Operations Manual.
- 11.3.7. Trustees have accumulated a list of smaller projects that volunteers could take on.
- 11.3.8. Spring grounds clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, April 25.
- 11.3.9. Upon motion, Tom Lenz was approved by the session to serve as a non-Elder Trustee.

11.4. Worship: Marge Coffey reporting

- 11.4.1. Marge gave a "heads up" for a potential all church retreat which could be held this fall.
- 11.4.2. Community Artist Series updates:
  - 11.4.2.1. Eric Snyder shared that the CAS is considering hosting/facilitating a panel discussion on GLBT Christianity in the next program year (2015-16). Upon motion with support, the session approved holding such a panel discussion.
  - 11.4.2.2. Session was reminded that Rev. Richard Rhem will be the next CAS speaker on Sunday, April 19, 2015.

11.5. Youth: Keli Olson reporting

- 11.5.1. Session was reminded of the upcoming Youth auction. Committee themed baskets should be turned over to the Youth Committee by May 1.

11.6. Upon motion with support, the session accepted the reports from the following committees: Personnel, Stewardship, Trustees, Worship, and Youth.

12. **Reports from Special Committees**

12.1. Associate Pastor Nominating Committee: Andrew LeFurge reporting

- 12.1.1. The Ministry Information Form has been posted to PCUSA's opportunity search website. The committee has heard from thirteen applicants.
- 12.1.2. The website does not provide for the option of listing a position as one with a designated term.
- 12.1.3. Given Rev. Dr. Cook's resignation announcement, thought will be given as to how best to proceed.

**13. Unfinished Business**

- 13.1. Craig Seaver stated that Personnel is not prepared to discuss the tabled motion at this time.
- 13.2. Rev. Dr. Cook explained that a tabled motion "dies" if not acted upon in the following meeting. Therefore, the tabled motion has "died" but Personnel may bring a new motion at a future meeting.

**14. New Business**

- 14.1. On motion and support, the session approved adding the following individuals as non-Elder committee members:
  - 14.1.1. Adult Education: Warren Trimble, Jeff Terrill, Deb Sorensen, and Betty Jo Enell
  - 14.1.2. Personnel: Neil Blake, Ken Clark, and Cindy Podorsek.
  - 14.1.3. Worship: Rob Andersen, Pamela Blake, Diane Carter, Bari Johnson, Ron Mass, Tim Olson, Carole Soule, and Barb Swihart.
  - 14.1.4. APNC: Issac Thorsen (youth).
  - 14.1.5. Stewardship: Brian Gross, Steve Groters, Ed Hanenburg, and Lisa Luckey.
  - 14.1.6. Youth: Becky Sanchez, Leanna Sanchez, Heather Force, Lisa Hurley, Jay Neitring, and Michelle Smith.
- 14.2. On motion and support, the session accepted Marva Netherland's resignation from Deacons effective April 30, 2015.
- 14.3. On motion and support, the session authorized the purchase of a television to be installed in the lounge at a cost not to exceed \$2,000 which will be paid by the Children's Ministries Fund.

**15. Moderator's Report:** Rev. Dr. Tom Cook reporting

- 15.1. Youth Sunday is May 17.
- 15.2. A financial summary of revenues was included in the April 12 bulletin.
- 15.3. The Stewardship Committee is evaluating asking non-pledge givers to pledge for six months.
- 15.4. At Rev. Dr. Cook's request, the May session meeting will be held on Monday, May 11.

**16. Associate Pastor's Report:** Rev. Linda Male reporting

- 16.1. Rev. Male read the following statement:

*As I enter my fifth month of serving God in this congregation, I give thanks for the warmth and support I have experienced. I still lament my lack of ability to remember names, but it is improving as I work more closely with individuals.*

*I find joy in preaching and worship. My relations with the educational staff are growing as we seek to engage in more forward-looking planning. The members of the office/building staff have been generous and kind in their help with my integration into the life of this congregation. My calls on the sick and shut in have been well received, and my work with deacons leaves me impressed with their degree of commitment to caring and serving. Just lately I have enjoyed some time with the youth and look forward to more interaction with them. I feel very much "at home" here.*

*Tom Cook and I work very well as a team. We are respectful of each other's strengths and weaknesses. We both seek to give the best we can offer to God on behalf of this ministry. Do we always agree? Of course not, but we have a mutual understanding of teamwork. We listen to each other; we are honest in our conversations; we are not afraid to be open with our thoughts and feelings. It is my opinion that we are attempting to model for the greater church how Christians can work together in peace and harmony while sharing deeply held beliefs.*

*I thank God for the call to serve here and look forward to more productive and happy months ahead as the APNC searches for the next Associate Pastor.*

17. **Thank You Notes:** Marge Coffey prepared thank you notes for those members who assist with Supper House and those who work with sound and lighting. These notes were circulated among the Elders for their signatures.

**18. Action Items Recap:**

- 18.1. Approved seating Rev. John Best and Rev. Nancy Clodfelder.
- 18.2. Approved April 13, 2015 meeting docket with two new business additions.
- 18.3. Approved March 2, 2015 meeting minutes.
- 18.4. Accepted the March 2015 Membership Report.
- 18.5. Accepted the retirement of Rev. Dr. Thomas Cook.
- 18.6. Approved holding a special congregational meeting on May 17, 2015.
- 18.7. Accepted the Treasurer's report.
- 18.8. Omnibus motion accepting the committee reports of Adult Education, Children's Ministries, Deacons, Hospitality, Mission, and Nominating.
- 18.9. Approved the revised Policy on Sexual Misconduct.
- 18.10. Approved increasing Becky Yonan's weekly hours from 25 to 35.
- 18.11. Authorized the creation of the William Montague Ferry Legacy Society.
- 18.12. Approved adding Tom Lenz as non-Elder Trustee.
- 18.13. Approved holding a panel discussion on GLBT Christianity.
- 18.14. Accepted the committee reports withheld from the omnibus motion: Personnel, Stewardship, Trustees, Worship, and Youth.
- 18.15. Approved the following individuals to serve as non-Elder committee members:
  - 18.15.1. Adult Education: Warren Trimble, Jeff Terrill, Deb Sorensen, and Betty Jo Enell
  - 18.15.2. Personnel: Neil Blake, Ken Clark, and Cindy Podorsek.
  - 18.15.3. Worship: Rob Andersen, Pamela Blake, Diane Carter, Bari Johnson, Ron Mass, Tim Olson, Carole Soule, and Barb Swihart.
  - 18.15.4. APNC: Issac Thornsen (youth).
  - 18.15.5. Stewardship: Brian Gross, Steve Groters, Ed Hanenburg, and Lisa Luckey.
  - 18.15.6. Youth: Becky Sanchez, Leanna Sanchez, Heather Force, Lisa Hurley, Jay Neitring, and Michelle Smith
- 18.16. Accepted the resignation of Marva Netherland from Deacons.
- 18.17. Authorized the purchase of a television for the lounge.
- 18.18. Adjournment at 9:39 pm.

19. **Adjournment:** On motion and support, the session adjourned at 9:39 pm with a closing prayer by Rev. Male. The next scheduled meeting is May 11, 2015, at 7 pm. The Committee of Focus will be Adult Education.

Respectfully submitted,

William Bussell  
Clerk of Session