

**SESSION MINUTES  
STATED MEETING OCTOBER 22, 2009**

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church, Texarkana, Arkansas, met in a Stated Meeting on Thursday, October 22, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. in the Library/Session Room.

Elders present were Anne Douglas, Melanie Gloster, Kevin Thompson, Charles Jackson, Bob Ransdell, Pat Davitt, Charles Morgan, and Moderator Reverend John Arnold. Martha Nell Richards, Larry Davis, Bob Veon, Alan Solomon, and LaWanda West have an excused absence. Also present were Co-Pastor Reverend Susan Arnold, Youth/Education Director Jane Portis, Administrative Assistant Patricia Thomas, Organist/Music Director Jim Spirup, Treasurer Lary Walker, Diaconate Moderator Doke Douglas, Pat Baker, and Clerk Sheila Moore.

Reverend Susan Arnold called the meeting to order, declared a quorum present, and gave the opening prayer and devotional.

**MINUTES**

The Session reviewed minutes from the Stated Meeting of September 17, 2009, and the Congregational Meeting of October 11, 2009.

**MOTION** - was made by Charles Morgan and seconded by Charles Jackson to approve the minutes. The motion passed.

**NEW MEMBER RECEIVED**

Reverend Susan Arnold introduced Pat Baker who requested membership on reaffirmation of faith. Session members introduced themselves and Ms. Baker gave her statement of faith.

**MOTION** - was made by Charles Morgan and seconded by Charles Jackson to receive Pat Baker on reaffirmation of faith. The motion passed unanimously.

**DIACONATE REPORT** - Doke Douglas

Dr. Douglas reported the following activities:

1. Two members of the diaconate will carry the Advent banner on December 20, 2009.
2. The local portion of the Peacemaking offering and the Pentecost offering will be given to Watersprings Ranch.
3. The Joy Gift Dinner will be held on December 2 at which time the confirmands and new members will be introduced.

4. Work continues on the church directory.
5. A work day will be set to clean out the space in the fence behind the old kitchen so that the new fence can be installed.

**TREASURER’S REPORT - Lary Walker**

Mr. Walker reviewed the financial reports for the month ending September 30, 2009. Balances were shown as follows:

Operating Account	\$7,957.00	Money Market Account	\$154,944.00
Music Account	\$7,792.00	Total of all Accounts	\$170,693.00
		Profit and Loss Statement	\$ -59,453.29

The financial reports were received as information.

**CLERK’S REPORT - Sheila Moore**

1. A request was received from Robin Leigh (West) Casler for removal from the membership roll.
2. A request was received from Shawna Gauntt for the use of the Fellowship Hall for the First Presbyterian Baby Steps and Preschool to have a Thanksgiving Luncheon on Tuesday, November 24, 2009, from 11:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

**MOTION -** was made by Anne Douglas and seconded by Melanie Gloster that the above two requests be approved. The motion passed.

3. A wedding application was received from Megan Moore and Jacob Johnson. The application is incomplete at this time. The rehearsal is July 9, 2010, and the wedding is July 10, 2010. The church’s calendar is clear for those dates.

**MOTION -** was made by Anne Douglas and seconded by Melanie Gloster that the dates be placed on the calendar pending receipt of the completed application. The motion passed.

4. A request was received from Remica Gray to re-activate the Next Step account to assist one of the families in the preschool program. The letter request was previously submitted to Session members for review.

**MOTION -** was made by Charles Morgan and seconded by Melanie Gloster to re-activate the Next Step account to assist one of the families in the preschool program as outlined in the letter attached to these Minutes. The motion passed.

5. A request was received from the lay pastor at the Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Texarkana, Texas, to use our electronic hymnal which we had received from the Ashdown Presbyterian Church. Redeemer Presbyterian Church is already in possession of the electronic hymnal. This request was approved by common consent.

**PASTORS' REPORT** - Co-Pastors Susan and John Arnold

A written report was submitted. Activities included member visitations at the hospitals, nursing homes and in homes, regular church activities and duties, and various community activities. Rev. Susan Arnold also reported that home communions were served on October 7, 2009, to Dorothy and Lonnie Siebel, Nina Madden, Lena Post, Louise Alexander, Sarah Burke, and Carmon McFerran.

**STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE** - Larry Davis

In Dr. Davis' absence, Reverend Susan Arnold reported that the Stewardship committee had met and revised the 2010 budget by removing the organist/choir director's annuity.

**MOTION** - from Stewardship Committee to approve the 2010 Budget as revised. The motion passed.

Reverend Susan Arnold reported that the 2010 budget will be mailed by letter to the congregation on October 23, 2009. A stewardship sermon will be preached on November 1, a second letter will be sent on November 2, the budget will be presented on November 4, and November 8 will be commitment Sunday.

**WORSHIP COMMITTEE** - Charles Jackson

1. Charles Jackson reported that the Committee proposes using six Elders to serve communion. The proposal was approved by common consent.
2. The organ maintenance has been completed.
3. The Advent music programs are scheduled for December 3, 10, and 17, 2009.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE** - Kevin Thompson

No report.

**EVANGELISM COMMITTEE** - Martha Nell Richards

Martha Nell Richards sent a written note stating that the Evangelism committee had not met this month.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE - Anne Douglas**

Mrs. Douglas reported the following:

1. Sunday School Report:

Average Sunday School attendance for September was 49.

2. Baby Steps Program:

a. Fund raisers will be held on October 30 at Big Jake's BBQ and on November 19 at Pizza Inn.

b. A book drive open to the congregation will be held to secure books for the program.

c. The preschool asked to use the Fellowship Hall for recreation on inclement weather days. The request was taken under consideration.

3. The committee would request that they be allowed to hold a silent auction to benefit the preschool.

**MOTION** - from Christian Education Committee to hold a silent auction to benefit the preschool. The motion passed.

**PROPERTY COMMITTEE - Robert Ransdell**

Mr. Ransdell reported the following:

1. Numerous leaks in the roof in the Fellowship Hall and the choir room are being repaired.

2. Hand sanitizers have been installed in the nursery area.

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - Charles Morgan**

Mr. Morgan reported that the committee will meet this month for evaluation of the pastors.

**MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

Charles Morgan reported on the October 17, 2009, Presbytery meeting held in Plain Dealing, Louisiana.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Pat Davitt and Larry Davis will carry the Advent banner representing the Elders on December 20, 2009.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** - by Charles Morgan and seconded by Anne Douglas to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed

Reverend John Arnold closed the meeting with prayer.

Reverend Susan Arnold, Moderator

Sheila Moore, Clerk of Session

October 17, 2009

Mrs. Sheila Moore  
Clerk of Session, First Presbyterian Church

Dear Sheila and Members of the Session,

The Baby Steps and Preschool Board of Directors respectfully requests the opportunity to re-activate the Next Step account to mutually assist one of our preschool families and our program. Our Next Step program was organized to provide care for the real life needs of others and for our church to be personally involved with the people in our community. Our Baby Steps and Preschool program definitely meets those qualifications as we provide, on a daily basis, a place where families can find a safe, loving environment where their children can grow physically, mentally and spiritually. We greatly appreciate the generosity with which our church has supported this mission.

One of our families has had particular difficulty remaining current with regards to the cost of the care we provide. While there is effort on the part of the family to pay what they owe, they seem to be losing ground instead of gaining. Our program depends on the steady flow of income from each of our families to be able to keep our financial commitments to staff, and we now find ourselves in a critical situation with regards to payroll. This family needs the services we provide, and, frankly, we need for them to stay in the program.

As you know, we have had many ups and downs trying to staff our school and find appropriate, reliable and trained leadership. We feel that we now have that staff and leadership in place and anticipate growth in our program. This growth should keep us more financially stable and independent. However, we need the funds available in the Next Step account to respond to immediate needs. We do have fundraisers planned over the next few months which we anticipate will provide additional funds to back up our program in the future.

We are not asking for these funds to merely provide a hand-out to this family, but rather a loan - although there is no guarantee that the funds can be replaced. Our preference is to use the method developed by the Next Step program. The **Approach** would be to attempt to establish a covenant relationship in which both the family and our program have responsibilities. The covenant approach does two things: it allows us opportunity to explain the covenant in terms of God's covenant and the "new covenant" we find in Jesus Christ; it also provides that both parties have responsibilities toward the covenant.

The **Process** would be as follows:

1. **Assessment:** Board representatives, minister and preschool director meet with family/parent to discuss needs of both parties and to understand circumstances.
2. **Development of Plan:** Formulation of payment plan to both remain current and eliminate past debt - fitting needs of family and program. Discuss consequences for both family and program if covenant not kept.
3. **Agreement:** Preschool Board and family commit to plan in writing.
4. **Implementation:** Personal monthly contact between board members(s) and family for support and encouragement. Director reports monthly to board on progress. And, ideally, loan paid back to Next Step account.

Our board and staff remain committed to the mission of this program and trust that the Session will continue to support this outreach to families and children in our community. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

In His service,  
The Board of Directors, First Presbyterian Church Baby Steps and Preschool