

MINUTES OF THE CHURCH CONFERENCE

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

September 27, 2023

**Call to Order**

Dr. Chris Chapman led us in prayer. Moderator Dennis Ellis called the conference to order at 6:23 p.m.

**Business**

Minutes of the August church conference were approved by a unanimous vote.

There were no changes to the church roll. Membership stands at 1,312.

**Standing Committee Reports**

*Properties Committee:*

Dennis reported on emergency repairs to computers and network, totaling \$3,991, and for rewiring of first floor offices, totaling \$2,623. A motion was brought to the conference to replace the fire control panel, estimated at \$25,100.

The steam condensate system and drywall repairs are complete. The chiller is in place, still being connected, and completion is expected within the week. The old system will serve as the backup. The air handler will be replaced when cooler weather arrives.

The final quote on replacing the sanctuary sound system has been received, totaling \$107,000. Dennis will present details later in this conference meeting.

*Finance Committee:*

Sam Ewell reported that August revenues were down, resulting in a shortfall for the month of almost \$22,000. Through August, expenses year to date exceed revenues by nearly \$35,000. Sam noted that for the last 18 months we have been fully staffed and programs have resumed, so expenses have returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Sam also reported that the budget surplus increased by \$140,810 from July to August as a result of corrections to years-old financial entries predating our current financial management system. The corrections stemmed from entries made before 2015, the year that FBC engaged Trinity Concepts to manage the church's finances. The Finance Committee Summary Report, Attachment A, details the corrected entries. They are reflected in the 2018 audit, which was finalized recently following delays caused by Covid and other extenuating circumstances. Sam noted that the church is closing out a \$270,000 investment account with LPL Financial with plans to reinvest those funds. Auditors also determined that \$25,499.48 in the church checking account should be classified as general budget funds, not designated gifts. Those funds had not been included in past reports because of uncertainty about how to designate them. The recent increase in surplus is "not new money, but it's money that has been freed," Sam explained. The Finance Committee will bring a recommendation later on how to proceed with an audit for 2023.

The Finance Committee is working with all committees and councils to prepare a proposed 2024 budget to be presented to the diaconate and to church conference in October.

Finance recommends approving the Properties Committee request for \$25,100 for replacement of the fire control panel. Those funds would come from the Mann bequest, with any shortfall paid from the Capital

Repair and Replacement Fund. The diaconate also endorsed this request. The conference approved this motion.

*Sound System Ad Hoc Committee:*

Dennis detailed the proposed upgrade of the sanctuary sound system. Kirkegaard, an acoustical design and consulting firm, was hired in 2017 to study the sanctuary system and make recommendations. Poor acoustics and failing (or failed) components have hampered the performance of the existing system, and replacement parts are not available due to its age. Architectural concerns about the placement of speakers and a slowdown in the supply chain have caused delays since then.

An initial \$85,000 budget was approved in April 2018, of which \$58,632 has been spent. The new system equipment, installation cost, and contingency total \$101,368, which includes new speakers, microphones, and camera. The Sound System Ad Hoc Committee requests an additional \$75,000 to complete this project. The Properties Committee, Finance Committee, and Deacons have endorsed this request. The funds will be allocated from the Mann bequest. If those available funds are not sufficient, the excess will be paid from the Capital Repair and Replacement Fund. The conference unanimously approved the motion to allocate the additional funds and proceed with the upgrade.

*Nominating Committee:*

Lynn Loomis reported additional Sunday school teacher assignments for the Everette Miller Friendship class and the Japanese Ministry. Also, Jennifer Bisette has agreed to assume Jason Gardner's duties as Sunday school director until he is able to return.

**Announcements**

Dr. Chapman also reported that Robert Ponton has agreed to chair the 2024 Stewardship Committee, along with members Jane Weathers, Robin Willis, David Kelley, and Jess Helms.

Dr. Chapman presented a preliminary report of Day Mission Fund approved grants. In addition, a subgroup of the Church Council revisited the policies that guide use of the Day Missions Fund. Recommended revisions were unanimously approved by the conference.

Dr. Chapman offered a closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Church Clerk

*James E. Vogel, Jr.*