

## The United Presbyterian Church in East Guilford Special Session Meeting

A special meeting of the Session of the United Presbyterian Church in East Guilford was held on October 30, 2023, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order with prayer by the Rev. Dr. Ken Simurro at 6:15 p.m.

**Elders Present:** Don Cole, Al Clune, Gordon Spreutels, Kathy Schmidt, clerk and Rev. Simurro, moderator; with a quorum being present.

**Excused:** none

**Guests:** April Ray

**Clerk of Session Report:** none

Kathy Schmidt acted as meeting facilitator.

No reports were received for this meeting.

### **Old Business:**

- As there is no elder available to attend the November 4<sup>th</sup> Presbytery meeting, the clerk will ask that EG be excused.

### **New Business:**

- Approval was given to Gordon to move forward on contracting with Blue Ox for automatic delivery of fuel oil for the church for approximately \$1000.
- Approval was given to have a Christmas tree placed on the lawn outside the entrance to the sanctuary. Ed Gorton and Don Cole will work to set it up. Electricity will come through the bilco door with a 100 ft cord from Gordon. It will be announced that lights and decorations are needed.
- Erin and Justin Burpoe were given permission to prepare a holiday dinner in the EG kitchen for area folks (delivered) on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Names of individuals and families who would like to participate are requested.
- It was approved to hire Dave Decker to shovel the sidewalks at church for \$25 per time.
- The clerk will ask April, the treasurer, to prepare a draft of the 2024 budget for the December session meeting.
- The session discussed ways our church and congregation might move forward. Nine scenarios were reviewed and included:
  - remain a solo church
  - leave PCUSA denomination
  - work with 2 or 3 other churches with one pastor and keep buildings
  - become a satellite church of a larger church with one service per month in EG
  - share one pastor with 2 or 3 other churches with the primary church paying pastor and EG pays a percentage
  - unite 1 or 2 churches with a new entity, building and one pastor
  - close or dissolve church
  - become a church without facilities
  - solo church with lay pastor
- It was decided that the session would bring three scenarios to the annual meeting for discussion with the congregation. The session was in consensus that the present cooperation with Bainbridge has been a positive experience. The clerk will ask Doug Horne to facilitate the discussion at the annual meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup> with the time to be determined by his schedule. At the beginning of January, the elders will call each member with a personal invitation encouraging them to attend the annual meeting. The clerk will write a letter to the congregation to be mailed as well as emailed. The options to be considered, as our congregation is aging and is getting smaller in number, are: 1) work with another church, one pastor, two sessions and keep both buildings; 2) become one congregation with another church with one building, one pastor, one session and combined finances; 3) close the church.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56PM with prayer offered by Pastor Ken.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Katherine Hager Schmidt, Clerk of Session

