

Called Congregational Meeting Minutes

University Presbyterian Church

September 15, 2024

1. Call to Order

Pastor Jordan Huff convened the September 15, 2024 Called UPC Congregational meeting at 11:41 AM after the Worship service in the UPC Sanctuary. Jordan opened in prayer.

2. Appointment of Moderator

Since the Congregation will be addressing the resignation of TE Jordan Huff as Associate Pastor and will be addressing other matters that affect the Congregation after his leaving, he suggested RE John Anderson be elected moderator for the remainder of this meeting. Motion by Chris Hoxworth, Seconded by RE John Pummell to Elect RE John Anderson as moderator (BCO 25-2). Votes were cast by voice, and no opposing votes were cast. Motion carried.

3. Election of Clerk

3.1. Motion made by RE Cullen Combs and seconded by Ruth Rose to Elect Hayden Randall clerk for this meeting (BCO 25-4). Votes were cast by voice, and no opposing votes were cast. Motion carried.

4. Declaration of Quorum

The moderator declared a quorum. A count was taken which determined 100 communicant members were present, which exceeds the required quorum of 36 based on 1/6 of 212 members (BCO 25-3).

5. Resignation of Pastor Jordan Huff as Associate Pastor

5.1. Jordan read his resignation letter (attached).

5.2. Motion made by Jon Cheney and seconded by Deacon Luke Biel to state, "We, the members of University Presbyterian Church, with loving and grateful hearts for his longstanding service to our church and in Christian love, do recommend the Presbytery of the Rio Grande accept the resignation of Rev. Jordan Huff as Associate Pastor of University Presbyterian Church, effective October 27, 2024."

5.3. Discussion ensued regarding a personal confession of sin against Jordan and looking forward to opportunities coming for both Jordan and UPC.

5.4. Votes were cast by voice, and no opposing votes were cast. Motion carried.

5.5. Moderator RE John Anderson asked for volunteers to pray. Prayers were offered for Jordan, his family, and UPC by RE Cullen Combs, RE John Pummell, and Deacon Luke Biel.

6. Election of Pastor Search Committee (PSC) Members

6.1. Process was described, including the authority of the Congregation to elect the PSC (BCO 20-2)

6.2. Suggestion made by the Moderator to start with addressing the recommended PSC membership provided by the Session. Note: The Congregation has the authority to approve, modify or reject this recommendation.

6.3. A motion was made by Jon Cheney and seconded by Deacon Eric Tessier to approve the Session-recommended PSC slate. This slate included the following: Monica Biel, Robin

- Curry, Brittany Davalos, Tanya Ewing, RE Richard Heerema, Don Lenhart, Matt McCloskey, Hayden Randall, Jennifer Taylor, Deacon Eric Tessier, and Jacob Turnbull.
- 6.4. Discussion ensued confirming that each proposed member is still willing to serve.
 - 6.5. Susan Pickett rises to recognize the effort of the session, and recognized that several groups were not represented in the slate of nominees. She makes a motion to amend the motion to open floor nominations to add to the slate. The motion to amend is seconded by Roger Ruth.
 - 6.6. Discussion ensued regarding additional groups in the church that are and are not represented in the slate of nominees. A request was made that the Revitalization Team members (a committee of the session) not also serve on the PSC. Discussion included viewing the list of 43 willing to stand on the committee, the process to call a senior pastor, the upcoming congregational survey, training for the PSC, the Session's process of selecting these 11 of the 43 members willing to serve, the qualities of candidates to be proposed by MGI to the PSC, and the possibly damaging process of selecting certain members over others in this large forum.
 - 6.7. Moderator John Anderson calls the question on the amendment. Votes were cast by hand, 13 voted in Favor of the Amendment, and 69 members opposed the amendment; Amendment Failed. The hand votes were counted by Deacon Luke Biel and Deacon Chris Kennedy.
 - 6.8. Deacon Chris Kennedy moves to amend the motion to set the affirmative votes required to pass the motion to approve the PSC at 75% of cast votes; seconded by Tristin Jameson.
 - 6.8.1. Discussion included one RE speaking against the motion since the threshold is not set by the BCO or Church Bylaws and Constitution. Clarification is given that the congregation would still vote on the slate as a whole, that the congregation may set the required level of affirmative votes, and that the amendment is proposed to ensure the body largely agrees with the motion.
 - 6.9. Moderator John Anderson calls the question, initially with a voice vote. Brad Bailey calls for the division of the assembly and the moderator accepts to take votes by hand-raising. 49 votes For, 31 votes Against. Amendment passes.
 - 6.10. Moderator John Anderson calls the question to vote on the slate by secret ballot. Clarification is issued that only communing members may vote. 94 votes For, and 9 Against; Motion carries by 91%. The hand votes were counted by Deacon Luke Biel and Deacon Chris Kennedy. The slate is approved.

7. Brief Summary of Updates Since August 11, 2024 Called Congregational Meeting (presentation attached)

- 7.1. Update on Discovery Weekend Assessment from John Anderson
- 7.2. Congregational Survey will launch on Sept 22, 2024.
- 7.3. Session has hired Rick Downs as Interim Pastor
- 7.4. While waiting on counting, David Moon is welcomed to the floor to lead us in singing "Great is Thy Faithfulness."

8. Adjournment

- 8.1. A motion is made by Clerk Hayden Randall and seconded by Deanna Hoxworth to adjourn the meeting. Votes were cast by voice, and no opposing votes were cast. Motion carried. Kari Lines and Sarah Douglass close in prayer.

9. Adjournment

Moderator John Anderson adjourned the meeting at 1:04 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

RE John C. Anderson, Moderator

Hayden Randall, Clerk

Dear Session and Congregation of UPC,

September 15, 2024

I am formally resigning from my position as Associate Pastor at University Presbyterian Church, effective October the 27th, 2024.

This decision was painstakingly difficult to make. My family and I have been deeply blessed and enriched by the fellowship of this body – the opportunities for love and service, for celebration and sadness, and for the mutual bearing of burdens. We are so grateful for the six and a half years we could do life with you, through the hills and the valleys. But as some doors have closed here, other doors have opened elsewhere.

Thank you for your support during my tenure. I believe that Rev. Rick Downs will be a tremendous Interim Pastor over the next year; he and the Session of UPC have my full, unwavering support and endorsement.

May God cause His kingdom to come and His will to be done, here in Las Cruces, and especially at University Presbyterian Church.

Gratefully and sincerely,

Jordan Huff

University Presbyterian
Church
Congregational Meeting

September 15, 2024

Agenda

- Pastor Jordan Huff Resignation
 - Motion to accept resignation
- Pastor Search Committee (PSC) Members
 - Session recommendation
 - Congregation decision to accept, modify or not accept
 - Following actions as needed
- Updates since August 11, 2024 Meeting

Resignation of Rev. Jordan Huff as Associate Pastor

Dear Session and Congregation of UPC,

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Thank you for your support during my tenure. I believe that Rev. Rick Downs will be a tremendous Interim Pastor over the next year; he and the Session of UPC have my full, unwavering support and endorsement.

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Gratefully and sincerely,

Jordan Huff

Election of PSC Members

(from August 11, 2024 Congregational Meeting)

- ✓ Session informs the congregation of PSC process and recommended PSC membership size
- ✓ Congregation sends nominations to Office/Session by August 30, 2024
- ✓ Session collects names, determines if each person is willing to serve
- ✓ Session finalizes slate of recommended candidates to be presented to the congregation
- September 15, 2024 congregational meeting to elect PSC
- MGI training of Pastor Search Committee on September 21, 2024

Nominees Willing to Serve (43)

- Alonso (Edgar) Galvan
- Becca Russell
- Betsy Hoxworth
- Brad Bailey
- Brittany Davalos
- Charissa McCloskey
- Chris Hoxworth
- David Hunter
- David Smith
- Don Lenhart
- Ed Seiler
- Edgar Galvan Sr.
- Eric Tessier
- Hayden Randall
- Jake Turnbull
- James Lines
- Jennifer Taylor
- Jesica Jameson
- Jo Barrett
- John Anderson
- Jon Cheney
- Judi Lopez
- Karen Bailey
- Kirsten Rawson
- Laurel Tessier
- LeeAnn Phillips
- Luke Biel
- Mark Hernandez
- Matt McCloskey
- Mike Kennedy
- Moira Rawson
- Monica Biel
- Patrick Bills
- Richard Heerema
- Robert Ewing
- Robin Curry
- Roger Ruth
- Samantha Lish
- Susan Pickett
- Tanya Ewing
- Tessa Kennedy
- Tiffany Hoxworth
- Tom Zornes

Session Recommended PSC Slate

1. Brittany Davalos
2. Don Lenhart
3. Eric Tessier
(Deacon)
4. Hayden Randal
5. Jacob Turnbull
6. Jennifer Taylor
7. Matt McCloskey
8. Monica Biel
9. Richard
Heerema (Elder)
10. Robin Curry
11. Tanya Ewing

Thoughts on Recommended PSC Membership

- Great nominees
- Slate is an attempt to represent the congregation (age, gender, long-term/newer members/roles)
- Decision of who to elect to the PSC is the Congregations
- Recommend starting with Session slate as motion, discussing, amending as needed, and voting by secret ballot

Discovery Weekend Assessment (DWA)

- September 20 – 21, 2024
- Phone Interviews with Leadership prior to DWA – in progress
- Consultant Bruce O’Neil will work with leadership and congregation
- Discussion with 20 to 30 member focus group
- If Pulpit Search Committee is formed – 90 minute training
- Bruce will preach on Sunday September 22, 2024

Discovery Weekend Focus Group

1. Betsy Hoxworth
2. Brad Bailey
3. Carol Baker
4. Charissa McCloskey
5. Chris Young
6. David Smith
7. Don Lenhart
8. George Garcia
9. Hayden Randall
10. Jessica Jameson
11. Jo Barrett
12. Karen Bailey
13. Kari Lines
14. LeeAnn Phillips
15. Mark Hernandez
16. Melinda Landis
17. Nianque Schonthaler
18. Pat Garcia
19. Pat Hippo
20. Patrick Bills
21. Robert Ewing
22. Robin Curry
23. Samantha Lish
24. Sarah Randall
25. Simon Rawson
26. Susan M Pickett
27. Tom Zornes

Congregational Survey

- MGI is developing, with the input of the Session, a congregational survey for all UPC members – Launches Sunday September 22, 2024
- Members will be invited to participate in survey through a customized MGI survey portal

Interim Pastor

- Session has hired Rev Rick Downs as Senior Interim Pastor starting early October 2024

Rev Richard (Rick) and Wife T. Downs

- PCA pastor ordained in 1984
- M.Div. and counseling education
- Associate and then Senior Pastor at Redeemer Presbyterian, Winston-Salem, NC 1986 – 1999
- Senior Pastor Christ the King Presbyterian, Cambridge, MA 2000 – 2020
- Interim Senior Pastor at Grace Coastal Okatie (Bluffton), SC 2021 – 2022
- Interim Senior Pastor, Carriage Presbyterian, Peachtree City, GA 2023 - present



Adjournment