

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, June 25, 2019

Minutes of the Session Meeting – FINAL

*Be adaptive, engaging, generous, inclusive and relevant. Be faithful. Be Westminster!*

The regular meeting of the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church was called to order by Moderator and Pastor Jon Hauerwas at 7:00 p.m.

Elders (+ present, \* excused, - absent)

| Class of 2019                  | Class of 2020                | Class of 2021 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| * Marcia Holcomb               | + Michael Dunbar             | + Phil Fry    |
| + James Gray                   | * Brad Hall                  | * Nancy Keogh |
| + Ed Labbe                     | + Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer | + Becky Pool  |
| + Alec Works, Clerk of Session | + Todd Willis                | + Don Rearick |

Also present: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator; Greg Grafinger, Assistant Clerk of Session; guests Claudine Schooley, Gregory Works.

**Opening, Declaration of Quorum and Extension of Floor**

Pastor Jon opened the meeting with prayer at 7:00 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared. A motion was made, seconded and approved to extend the privilege of the floor to the guests.

**Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda.

**Presentation on Disability Training Program**

Claudine Schooley, guest

Claudine, who also serves as Westminster’s Office Administrator, first provided some background information. The advance information sent to Session members entitled “All are welcome?” explained how persons with disabilities may not always feel welcome and included. Hospitality extends beyond accessibility and accommodation. She distributed a page outlining a class called “Beyond Suffering” that she is willing to teach as a 12-week class. This is a simplified curriculum from a class Claudine has taken. At the church she attended in California, the class eventually led to a ministry called Buddy Break, through which volunteers offered brief respites to those caring for persons with disabilities. Discussions included when the best time to offer a class might be and potential attendance. Anticipated costs for a class would be minimal. Any decision related to starting a related ministry would be made later.

**Presentation on More Light Presbyterians**

Gregory Works, guest

On behalf of Outreach’s Pride Festival Subcommittee, Gregory provided some background information on becoming a More Light Presbyterian (MLP) congregation. Advance information sent to Session members gave a brief history of MLP and outlined the four simple steps to becoming a MLP congregation. Gregory noted that Fairmount Presbyterian Church in Cleveland is already a MLP congregation. North Springfield Presbyterian Church in Akron is a MLP campus. Discussions noted that Westminster already follows the mission statement. By joining, we would be listed in their national directory and be permitted to use their logo at the upcoming Pride Festival, as well as on our website and on Facebook.

**Report from June 4 Presbytery Meeting**

Pastor Hauerwas

Since she was unable to attend tonight’s meeting, Marcia Holcomb, our elected commissioner, submitted a written report. Since he was unable to attend the Presbytery meeting, Pastor Hauerwas had discussed the report with Marcia.

Marcia had noted that a presentation had been given on the PCUSA benefit plan for 2020. Pastor Hauerwas noted that he has already planned met with Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer. There is also a meeting scheduled on July 2 related to the Healthy Pastors Healthy Congregations program.

A letter from Bill and Ginny Melver, who attended a Presbytery retreat on the Vital Congregations Initiative, was also distributed. Bill and Ginny expressed their willingness to discuss the initiative with Session. Congregations were originally asked to decide whether to participate earlier this year. It was decided to discuss this further as part of Session's ongoing Visioning discussions.

### **Clerk's Report**

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

**2019-107 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of May 28, 2019.

**2019-108 MOTION prevailed** to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's May 28, 2019 meeting:

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: Memorial service on June 8 for Virginia Hardman, with Rev. Faith Proietti officiating; reception for Iris Kuehls on June 22.
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: June 9, 2019, attendance 32 (8:30 am service), 72 (10:30 am service).

**2019-109 MOTION prevailed** to receive the report of the average worship attendance for May: 150.

**2019-110 MOTION prevailed** to approve the membership statistical report for the month of May 2019:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total Membership as of 5/1/19                    | 401 |
| Additions: none                                  | 0   |
| Deletions: none                                  | 0   |
| Deaths: Chrysanthe "Chris" Taylor (died 5/13/19) | 1   |
| Total Membership as of 5/31/19                   | 400 |

No motion is needed to remove anyone from our membership roll.

**2019-111 MOTION prevailed** to elect the following persons to serve on the Music Director / Organist Search Committee: Christopher Blaha, Stacy Franzmann, Laurel Labbe, Jacquie Mabry, and Jim Shriner. [Clerk's note: Pastor Hauerwas has contacted each and each has agreed to serve.]

From Personnel:

**2019-112 MOTION prevailed** that no additional choral scholars are to be hired until the new permanent Music Director/Organist has interviewed and auditioned the candidate.

**2019-113 MOTION prevailed** to approve requests by Alcee Chriss for time away on Sunday, July 14 and Sunday, July 21. Both Sundays will be unpaid with a payroll deduction in the amount of \$225 for each Sunday according to the Terms of Employment approved by Session on March 26, 2019. Alcee is responsible for finding substitute organists for the 10:30 worship service on both Sundays as stated in the approved Terms of Employment. Alcee is also responsible for securing a pianist for the 8:30 worship service on the Sundays he is away.

**2019-114 MOTION prevailed** that the final pay for Alcee Chriss will be \$769.25 for 25 hours worked from August 1 through his final day on August 4, 2019 calculated as follows: \$40,000 per year/1300 hours per year \* 25 hours equals \$769.25. The final pay will be included in the August 15 payroll and direct deposited to a bank of his choice.

The Clerk had no correspondence to report.

### **Committee Reports and Actions**

Personnel Committee (No minutes; see consent agenda for motions) Shelley Koutnik for John Childs  
See motions approved under consent agenda.

Discipleship Committee (June minutes were attached; see motions below) Ed Labbe  
Moderator Ed Labbe reported that a church member has offered to donate t-shirts for church youth. He showed pictures of the available designs.

**2019-115 MOTION prevailed** to approve printing the church website on the back of youth t-shirts.

The motion below was tabled in May based primarily on questions about training costs and pastoral review.

2019-103 MOTION was tabled to approve adding *Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith* (OWL) to the Youth curriculum. It would also be available to families with children in this age group. To present this curriculum, the teachers/facilitators must first be trained.

Pastor Jon said he has reviewed the curriculum and has no objections to our participation in the course. Sheila Svoboda reported that training for teachers/facilitators generally costs \$250-300 per participant for a weekend training session; actual costs are finalized once a training session is scheduled. The other cost is the curriculum for the facilitators. Pastor Jon noted that there is funding available in the Youth Program Grade 6-12 Fund. Our intent would be to train our Youth Coordinator, Mallory Gray, plus two volunteers, during the upcoming church year. The class would then be offered during the 2020-21 church year.

Motion 2019-103 was then replaced by the following motion:

**2019-116 MOTION prevailed** to approve the addition of *Our Whole Lives: Sexuality and Our Faith* (OWL) to the Youth Curriculum. Funds in an amount up to \$2,000 from the Youth Fund for Programs Grade 6-12 (R20-9009) will be expended for training three teachers/facilitators for the program, including curriculum.

Discussion of Claudine Schooley's proposal for a disability class and potential program will be included in the next Visioning discussion.

Finance Committee (May financial reports were attached; no minutes nor motions) Todd Willis  
Through May 31, total income was about \$8,400 above budget and total expenses were about \$27,400 below budget. A quarterly financial report and stewardship planning update will be given next month.

Worship Committee (June minutes were attached; no motions) Pastor Hauerwas  
Pastor Jon reported that Worship authorized Alcee Chriss to contact someone to lead the Jazz Vesper services. That person has expressed an interest in doing so. The committee expects to hear more details soon.

The October 13 Five at Five concert had been planned as a joint choral concert. With Alcee Chriss' resignation, a suggestion was made to schedule a jazz concert instead. Alcee is working on the details. The following motion was made, seconded and approved:

**2019-117 MOTION prevailed** to replace the October 13, 2019 Five at Five Joint Choral concert with a jazz concert, subject to details being finalized.

With the organ tonal regulation project completed, Schantz is scheduled to begin the organ tuning in late July.

Outreach Committee (June committee, Pride subcommittee minutes, and information about More Light Presbyterians were attached; see motions below) Becky Pool

Pastor Jon reported that the committee recommends pursuing "More Light Presbyterian" (MLP) status. The motion below was tabled in May:

2019-104 MOTION was tabled to approve Westminster Presbyterian Church becoming a MORE LIGHT PRESBYTERIAN supporting congregation. The dues payment of \$200 per year would come from the Outreach budget.

Per discussions, "becoming" a MLP church basically entails endorsing the mission statement and having permission to use their logo. The tabled motion was replaced by the following motion:

**2019-118 MOTION prevailed** to state that Westminster Presbyterian Church endorses the mission of More Light Presbyterians, which states "Following the risen Christ, and seeking to make the Church a true community of hospitality, the mission of More Light Presbyterians is to work for the full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people in the life, ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society" and chooses to become a member of More Light Presbyterians with payment of a \$200 membership fee to be paid from the Outreach Committee Pride Festival Budget. Membership enables Westminster to use More Light Presbyterian logos, banners and other materials in communications to welcome LGBTQ individuals to the Westminster church community.

Properties Committee (June minutes were attached; no motions) Phil Fry for Ginny Melver  
Phil Fry noted that work continues on replacing fluorescent light bulbs with LEDs and seeking solutions to repairing the church steeple.

Membership Committee (No minutes nor motions) James Gray  
Moderator James Gray and Michael Dunbar reported that the church now has 23 followers on Instagram. It was noted that the church web page could use some more seasonally appropriate pictures.

Nominating Committee (No minutes; see motions below) Phil Fry  
Moderator Phil Fry reported that the committee is scheduled to meet on August 25.

Safety and Security Task Force (No minutes nor motions) Don Rearick  
Don reported that they are continuing to review exit plans. Three members recently attended "ALICE" training sponsored by the Interfaith Council.

Deacons (No minutes nor motions)

Pastor Hauerwas

Based on "Lemonade on the Lawn" participation on June 9, cake and lemonade will only be served after the 10:30 service on July 7 and August 4. There was too long of a period between the 2 services for interaction, no interest in cake at 9:30.

**Pastor's Report and Remarks**

Pastor Hauerwas

After a brief discussion, the next Visioning discussion was scheduled for Saturday, June 25, from 9 until 11 a.m. at the church.

Pastor Jon noted that some individuals have expressed interest in a new members class. Rev. Stephanie Crossland will be available to provide pastoral care as needed during Pastor Jon's approved study leave, July 7 - 19. Pulpit supply plans were provided last month.

The newly elected Music Director / Organist Search Committee hopes to have their first meeting very soon. To avoid spreading any rumors or false information, any questions should be referred to that committee.

**New / Other Business**

There was no other new business. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved. The meeting was then closed with prayer at 8:55 p.m.

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Alec Works, Clerk of Session

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Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator