

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, August 27, 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 7:03 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	* Rebecca Pool
+ Alec Works, Clerk of Session	+ Todd Willis	+ Don Rearick

Also present: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator; Greg Grafinger, Assistant Clerk of Session.

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

Pastor Jon opened the meeting with prayer at 7:03 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 guest.

**Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda as amended (August 25 communion attendance to be reported next month; motions to be presented regarding Jazz Vesper services, Disability Ministry, and Visioning projects).

**Clerk's Report**

Alec Works

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

**2019-143 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of July 23, 2019.

**2019-144 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Special Session meeting of August 11, 2019.

**2019-145 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Session E-meeting of August 17, 2019.

**2019-146 MOTION prevailed** to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's July 23, 2019 meeting:

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: none
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion July 28, 2019, attendance 26 (8:30 a.m. service); August 11, 2019, attendance 113 (30 at 8:30 am service; 83 at 10:30 a.m. service); August 25, attendance (to be reported in September) (8:30 am service).

**2019-147 MOTION prevailed** to receive the report of the average worship attendance for July: 81 (total for 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services, separate records not kept).

**2019-148 MOTION prevailed** to approve the membership statistical report for the month of July 2019:

Total Membership as of 7/1/19	400
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: none	0
Total Membership as of 7/31/19	400

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

The Clerk reported that he notified Mt. Blanchard United Methodist Church that Brian Rodabaugh was transferring his membership to Westminster.

**2019-149 MOTION prevailed** to elect Donald Rearick as our commissioner to the September 3 Presbytery meeting in Petersburg, OH.

From Properties:

**2019-150 MOTION prevailed** to allow Walgreens to have a flu clinic on October 6 after the worship service in the library.

**2019-151 MOTION prevailed** to approve spending up to \$7000 to repair the asphalt at the east side, back of the church and Ohio Living parking lot, with the funds from the Parking Lot Fund.

### **Committee Reports and Actions**

**Personnel Committee** (See motions below)

Shelly Koutnik

Shelley presented the following motions from the August 25, 2019 Personnel Committee meeting.

**2019-152 MOTION prevailed** to approve 25 hours of additional wages to Alcee Chriss for the period of Monday, August 5 through Saturday, August 10, calculated as follows: 25 hours of pay at \$30.77 per hour (\$40,000 per year/ 1300 hours) for a gross pay of \$769.25. The pay will be included in the August 31 payroll and direct deposited to a bank of his choice. [Clerk's note: Session approved the extra pay in its August 11 Special meeting; hours were not available at that time.]

**2019-153 MOTION prevailed** to approve the Evening Custodian Job Description dated 8/27/19.

**2019-154 MOTION prevailed** to approve the hiring of Shelly White as Evening Custodian at \$13.50 per hour, with a start date of Tuesday, September 3, 2019. [Note: Shelly will shadow Luella Wertz during the 2-week period commencing September 2 and ending September 13, 2019.]

**2019-155 MOTION prevailed** to approve the Choral Scholar Contract dated 8/27/19 to be implemented for the 2019-2020 program year. [Clerk's note: Valerie Thorson, Interim Music Director / Organist wanted to implement the contract as provided.]

**2019-156 MOTION prevailed** to approve the conversion of 1099 vendors Joel Rhoads, Paul Stewart and Valerie Stewart, to employee status as of September 1, 2019.

**2019-157 MOTION prevailed** to revise the start date for Valerie Thorson as Interim Music Director/ Organist from September 1 to August 19. [Clerk's note: Valerie started preparing for the Interim Music Director/organist position beginning August 19 with 20 plus hours on site by August

23. She has written the Section Lead Agreement, assisted with 5@5 concert issues, scheduled a Choir Retreat, and has assisted with numerous tasks to set up the choir room and have things in place for the new program year.]

**2019-158 MOTION prevailed** to approve the Benefit Groups and Offerings for 2020. [Clerk's note: Benefit Groups and Offerings must be approved annually and reported to Presbytery.]

A motion related to benefit plans was amended and approved as follows:

**2019-159 MOTION prevailed** to approve revisions to the "Group Health Insurance Plan" stated in the Personnel Policy as approved 11/27/18 to eliminate the section addressing health insurance benefits. [Clerk's note: The Pastor is still covered under the Board of Pensions plan. Terms of employment for employees would still include a 90 day probationary period.]

**Discipleship Committee** (July minutes were attached; see motion below)

Ed Labbe

Ed explained that the following motion was approved during their meeting, with details finalized afterwards. Discipleship will follow up on suggestions made for advertising.

**2019-160 MOTION prevailed** to permit Weathervane Playhouse to present an Artistic/Educational Program about Teen Suicide on Sunday, November 3 at 12:00 in Wright-Herberich Hall. A member of the congregation has offered to donate the \$200 program fee. A luncheon will be provided after the church service, probably chicken with salads. Local Pentecost funds will be used for lunch, expenses and advertising (current balance is \$386.40). Leftover Pentecost funds would be donated to a directly related charity.

**Finance Committee** (August reports were attached; no motions)

Todd Willis

Total income through July 31 is slightly below budget. Total expenses are around \$47,900 below budget, due largely to savings in Personnel and other costs. Through July 31, revenue exceeds expenses by \$45,683. No Rowley funds have been used for operating expenses year-to-date. Volunteers are need to assist with the Stewardship Campaign.

**Worship Committee** (No minutes; see motions below)

Nancy Keogh

Pastor Jon reported that they are in discussions with Theron Brown to plan the first 2 Jazz Vesper services. The first is planned for Sunday, September 29 at 4 p.m. The second is proposed for 7:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve (Tuesday, December 24). Discussions noted that how to assess the "success" of these events will be difficult regardless of when they are held. There may be more difficulties obtaining volunteers for a Christmas eve service. Setting a date at this time primarily helps ensure a commitment from the musicians.

**2019-161 MOTION prevailed** to approve Jazz Vesper services for Sun day, September 29, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. and for Tuesday, December 24, 2019 (Christmas Eve) at 7:30 p.m.

Shelley Koutnik then presented a revised budget for the Jazz Vesper services. It was noted that payments to performers are comparable to those paid to Paragon Brass. Also, ad rates in the Akron Beacon Journal recently doubled.

**2019-162 MOTION prevailed** to approve the increased budget (\$5,000 to \$10,000) for the 4 proposed Jazz Vesper services for 2019-20.

**Outreach Committee** (July minutes were attached; see motion below)

Pastor Hauerwas for Rebecca Pool

Pastor Hauerwas reported that, due to scheduling oversight, there is a conflict between 2 of the scheduled 5 at 5 concerts and our Third Sunday Dinners. The dates are November 17, 2019 and March 15, 2020. The proposal is to move those 2 dinners each back one week. The November 24 dinner could be promoted as a Thanksgiving meal.

**2019-163 Motion prevailed** to reschedule the November 17, 2019 Third Sunday dinner to November 24, and the March 15, 2020 dinner to March 22.

Phil Fry reported that the Westminster booth at the Pride Festival was a great success. Pastor Jon reported that someone is needed to provide a dinner and transportation for our mission speaker on September 29, 2019.

**Properties Committee** (August minutes were attached, see consent agenda for motions) Brad Hall  
Brad reported that cost savings are expected from the LED light bulbs being installed.

**Membership Committee** (No minutes nor motions) James Gray  
James reported that the committee has started its work on the historical project update. This will pick up from the last update and cover the period from 1997 to current.

**Nominating Committee** (No minutes nor motions) Phil Fry  
Phil reported that they held their first meeting on August 25. They meet again on September 17.

**Safety and Security Task Force** (No minutes nor motions) Don Rearick  
Don reported that work continues on various plans. More ushers and/or greeters will be needed to monitor entrances.

**Deacons** (August minutes were attached; no motions) Pastor Hauerwas  
Pastor Jon noted that the Deacons will be involved in 3 upcoming food events (9/1 reception for Valerie Thorson, 9/8 Rally day lunch, and 9/29 reception for mission speaker).

**Pastor's Report and Remarks** Pastor Hauerwas  
Pastor Jon reported that the Music Director / Organist Search Committee continues to meet and that they are receiving applications.

Regarding Visioning discussions, Shelley Koutnik had motions to present for 2 proposals. While the sound system was not one of the top priorities in the Visioning process, it is recognized that Wright-Herberich Hall has acoustical issues interfering with sound quality and comments to Session from the congregation regarding sound quality in the sanctuary are increasing. Woodsy's Music provided services to First Congregational Church for similar issues; there may be no cost for an initial consultation. After volunteers agreed to serve, the following motions were made and approved:  
**2019-164 Motion prevailed** to engage Woodsy's Music-Audio-Video for an initial consultation on the sound systems in Wright Herberich Hall and the Sanctuary as a preliminary step in assessing the direction to be taken to improve the sound quality in both areas.

**2019-165 Motion prevailed** to appoint Elders James Gray and Shelley Koutnik to work with Pastor Hauerwas, Interim Music Director Valerie Thorson, and Woodsy's in the sound system consultation.

A topic identified as a top priority during the Visioning discussions was the creation of a Kitchen Task Force. A consultation can provide Session with a basic outline so that a plan for improvements may be developed, or at least considered. After volunteers agreed to serve, the following motions were made and approved:

**2019-166 Motion prevailed** to engage Rizzi Distributors for an initial consultation on improvements to update and improve functionality of the kitchen space as a preliminary step in assessing the direction to consider for a potential kitchen renovation.

**2019-167 Motion prevailed** to appoint Elders Brad Hall and Todd Willis to work with Pastor Hauerwas, Custodian Dave Bodnar, and a representative from the Properties Committee in the kitchen space consultation.

Since Pastor Jon will be on study leave on the date of the next regularly scheduled Session meeting (September 24), Session decided to reschedule the regular September Session meeting to Saturday, September 28 at 2:00 p.m., with the Visioning discussion to immediately follow the Session meeting. [Clerk's note: The time was subsequently revised to 1:00 – 4:00 p.m., as had originally been discussed during the meeting.]

Pastor Jon noted that he will be participating in a committal service for Reverend Moss Rutan on Saturday, September 7 in Pennsylvania.

### **Old Business**

During the June meeting, member Claudine Schooley presented a proposal to conduct a series of Disability Ministry training sessions at Westminster. No action was taken at that time.

Session recognizes that those with disabilities have special needs that may be more highly recognized and supported by the community through a Disability Ministry Program. Through the Visioning process, Session has identified projects and activities that may improve hospitality to the disabled population; however extensive research and consideration is still needed. At this time, a Disability Ministry is not part of the existing or planned programming within the short-term future of the church.

The proposed motion allows for church member Claudine Schooley, to have a location, free of charge (based upon existing custodial coverage), where she may pursue her passion of providing an education program for people interested in a serving the disabled community. The motion was made, seconded and approved as follows:

**2019-168 Motion prevailed** to provide Room 106, without charge, one evening a week, preferably Monday, Wednesday or Thursday, not to conflict with regular committee meetings, or other scheduled events, and during hours normally staffed by the evening custodian, every other week or twice per month for a period of time commencing in September 2019 and concluding by March 15, 2020, for Claudine Schooley to teach a Beyond Suffering Program. All advertising, course materials, copies and supplies will be the responsibility of Claudine Schooley. A complete schedule of all classes must be submitted and posted on the church calendar at least two weeks prior to the start of classes. Notice of the program may be announced in two Sunday Bulletins prior to the start date of the class.

### **New / Other Business**

Pastor Jon explained that he received a wedding request from Jillian Roth, a member of Christ Presbyterian Church in Canton, OH. She is planning on getting married on August 1, 2020, and is looking for a place to hold the ceremony. Her home church will be under construction at that time. She lives in Akron and wonders if she could host their ceremony in our church. She would like one of her ministers to marry them still, if possible. Pastor Jon expressed his willingness to accommodate her, subject to confirming the circumstances with Christ PC. The following motion was made, seconded and approved.

**2019-169 Motion prevailed** to approve permitting Jillian Roth and her fiancée to hold their wedding ceremony at Westminster Presbyterian Church on August 1, 2020, with pastoral staff from her home church of Christ Presbyterian Church in Canton presiding. Standard fees would apply.

There was no other new business. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved. The meeting was then closed with the Lord's Prayer at 9:32 p.m.