

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio
Tuesday, March 31, 2020
Minutes of Special Session meeting - FINAL

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

Note: To continue to address any issues or concerns during the current health crisis, Session decided at its regular meeting on March 24, 2020 to meet every Tuesday as needed, either by virtual (Zoom) or e-meeting, as needed for the foreseeable future.

Elders (+ present, * excused, - absent)

Class of 2020	Class of 2021	Class of 2022
+ Michael Dunbar	+ Phil Fry	* Rob Gilbert
+ Brad Hall	- Nancy Keogh	+ James Gray
+ Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer	- Becky Pool	+ Sandy Gruneich
* Todd Willis	- Don Rearick	+ Ginny Melver

Also present by videoconferencing: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator; Alec Works, Acting Clerk of Session.

Opening and Declaration of Quorum

The special meeting of the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church was called to order by the Moderator, the Reverend Jon Hauerwas at 7:01 p.m. on March 31, 2020. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared. Pastor Jon reported that Todd Willis contacted him, saying he was unable to attend but approved all of the proposed motions. Rob Gilbert also reported that he would be unable to attend.

New Business

Since the March 24 regular Session meeting, Governor DeWine ordered all Ohio Public Schools closed through Friday, May 1 and encouraged restrictions on activities at least through that date. The following motion was made, seconded and approved:

2020-090 MOTION prevailed for Westminster to suspend on-site activities, including in-person worship, through May 1, 2020. Our office will publicize this information on the church website, through Constant Contact, Sunday updates, and on the church reader board. The postponement of in-person worship includes Easter Sunday, April 12.

Committee and group leaders are encouraged to contact the main office if they would like to schedule a Zoom meeting or conversation. The following motion was made, seconded and approved:

2020-091 MOTION prevailed for each committee or church-related activity to designate two leaders in each group who can access the password and meeting initiation process for church-related purposes.

[Note: While we are happy to share the password with those who will be facilitating church-related activities, all initiators should know that the church account is not intended for personal meetings or conversations. The reason for having two designated individuals in each group rather than one is so that meetings can move forward if there is a last minute problem with an initiator's technology, a change in health, circumstances, or schedule on behalf of the assigned initiator. Claudine Schooley is working on setting up additional email addresses and passwords for committee and group use. Users will need to coordinate schedules to ensure others are not using the application at the same time.]

Worship Committee

Phil Fry presented 3 motions on behalf of the Worship Committee. The motions as voted on and approved are as follows:

2020-092 MOTION prevailed to host the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship services at 1 p.m. each day, rather than at the usual times of 7 p.m. and noon. Both services will be videotaped and available on Facebook Live as well as the church website to be viewed at any time. [Notes: A daytime service is preferred by staff members who are seeking to balance professional and personal obligations. Staffing has been confirmed to provide the services at these times.]

2020-093 MOTION prevailed to pay each of the contracted Paragon Brass players half of what we would normally pay them for an Easter service now (\$150), reschedule them for the fall, and pay them the other half of their owed fee at that time. [Note: Phil reported that Valerie Thorson has discussed this with the players.]

2020-094 MOTION prevailed to cancel the upcoming 5@5 concert by the Wright Family Singers Gospel Ensemble scheduled for May 5, 2020.

There was a discussion about the past two video worship services. Suggestions for potentially improving audio quality were received. As this is a new experience for all, a learning curve is expected.

Properties Committee

Ginny Melver provided some updates from Properties. As a follow up to **Motion 2020-089** (to delay the steeple renovation project), she reported that Brad Hall had contacted the proposed vendor and received a prompt acknowledgement regarding our decision.

The paper recycling bin in the parking lot adjacent to Ohio Living-Rockynol will be removed within the next 2 weeks, freeing up additional parking.

David Bodnar, Custodian, is keeping busy with painting and other projects. Properties is aware of burned out light bulbs above the sanctuary. They are not easily replaced.

The freezer in the kitchen failed recently. Properties plans to get an estimate on what went wrong, but does not plan on any immediate replacement since the kitchen renovation task force is investigating various options.

Personnel Committee

Shelley Koutnik presented the following motion from Personnel, which was approved:

2020-095 MOTION prevailed to permit Mallory Gray, Val Thorson, Claudine Schooley and Sheila Svoboda to work primarily from home, with each covering office hours for one day each week.

Mallory will continue to be present on Sunday mornings to videotape services for Facebook Live. Val Thorson will continue to practice on site and take part in all worship services, and Sheila Svoboda will continue to be present on Sunday mornings for the purpose of assisting with childcare needs for worship leaders in addition to offering the Time for Young Disciples, as assigned. Our staff would continue to provide office coverage Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. to noon as follows:

Jon Hauerwas - Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon. Frequently available by cell phone or by appointment.

Debby Evrard - Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon

Mallory Gray - Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to noon

Sheila Svoboda - Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon.

Claudine Schooley - Fridays from 9 a.m. to noon

Coverage will then be as follows:

Monday - Jon, Debby, and Dave
Tuesday - Mallory, Debby, and Dave
Wednesday - Jon, Debby, and Dave
Thursday - Sheila, Debby, and Dave
Friday - Jon and Claudine

Outreach Committee

Shelley presented the following motion from Outreach, which was approved:

2020-096 MOTION prevailed to approve placing a notice in the Sunday Update for April 19 and May 3 suggesting that the congregation support Akron Canton Foodbank, Good Neighbors and/or United Way of Summit County with monetary contributions mailed directly to the organization.

[Note: This is in response to the discontinuation of church efforts such as Third Sunday dinners and Food for Life. The organizations will get funding more quickly this way rather than waiting for the church to collect and later distribute funds.]

There being no other old or new business, a motion was received, seconded and approved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was closed by all joining in the Lord's Prayer at 7:43 pm.

The next Zoom meeting is planned for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 7, 2020.

Alec Works, Acting Clerk of Session

Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator