

Westminster Presbyterian Church

Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

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 7:02 p.m.

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

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

Also present: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator; guest Alec Works, Clerk of Session

**Note:** Due to restrictions on gatherings ordered by the Governor of Ohio to slow the spread of the coronavirus, a virtual meeting was held.

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

Pastor Jon called the meeting to order and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:02 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared. A **motion** was made and seconded to extend the floor to our guest.

**Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

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

**Clerk's Report**

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

**2020-101 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of March 24, 2020.

**2020-102 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Special Session meeting of March 31, 2020.

**2020-103 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Session E-meeting of April 8, 2020.

**2020-104 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Special Session meeting of April 21, 2020.

Note: At its March 24 meeting, Session decided to meet virtually or by e-meeting every Tuesday as needed. No meetings were deemed necessary for April 14 and April 28.

**2020-105 MOTION prevailed** to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's March 24, 2020 meeting

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: none
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: none

**2020-106 MOTION prevailed** to receive the report of the average worship attendance for March: 103 (10:30 service, March 1, 8 and 15 only). Note: Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, virtual worship services (live on Facebook; recorded service then posted on the church web page) were held weekly beginning March 22, 2020, as well as for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Statistics will be reported later.

**2020-107 MOTION prevailed** to approve the membership statistical report for the month of March 2020:

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Total Membership as of 3/1/20  | 373 |
| Additions: none                | 0   |
| Deletions: none                | 0   |
| Deaths: none                   | 0   |
| Total Membership as of 3/31/20 | 373 |

No motion is needed to remove anyone from the active membership roll.

From Worship:

**2020-108 MOTION prevailed** to allow Music Director-Organist Valerie Thorson to include a form on the WPC website allowing members of the congregation to share five hymns that are personal favorites.

From Discipleship:

**2020-109 MOTION prevailed** to cancel the Youth Mission Trip scheduled for June 15-19, 2020 at the Sandusky Mission Outreach Center.

**2020-110 MOTION prevailed** to explore other youth service opportunities close to Akron (and that allow adequate social distancing), such as a delayed Earth Day clean-up project, in lieu of the Mission Trip.

**2020-111 MOTION prevailed** to use the 40% of the Pentecost Offering that stays at WPC for programs for at-risk youth to support Rahab's youth house for minors fleeing human trafficking. [Note: this is subject to confirmation with Rahab. Westminster has supported Rahab in the past.]

A commissioner is needed for the June 2 Presbytery meeting. The virtual meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m.

### **Committee Reports and Actions**

**Personnel Committee** (No minutes nor motions)  
Personnel plans to meet later in May.

Shelley Koutnik for John Childs

**Discipleship Committee** (April minutes were attached; see consent agenda and below for motions)

Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas

Sandy reported that Discipleship also met on May 3. Besides the motions under the consent agenda, she reported that Mallory Gray found several old adult costumes in storage. The committee offered a motion to donate the costumes to Weathervane or another theatrical group, or other charity.

**2020-112 MOTION prevailed** to donate several adult costumes to a worthy cause.

Sandy also reported that efforts are underway to have some type of Vacation Bible School program later in the summer. Pastor Jon reported that he has led a virtual Bible study the past 2 Monday evenings. Other classes or activities are also being considered.

[Note: James Gray excused himself for the Discipleship discussion.]

**Finance Committee** (March financial reports and a current update were attached; no minutes)

Todd Willis

Since the April financial reports were not yet available, Shelley Koutnik provided some estimated figures related to the current pandemic. Revenues for April 2020 are nearly \$13,000 lower than April 2019. There has been some reduction in expenses, particularly personnel costs. Still, expenses may exceed revenues for at least the next two months. Committees should operate with the understanding that no income nor expenditures are anticipated for committee activities other than basic business operations and worship services.

**Properties Committee** (No minutes nor motions)

Ginny Melver

Ginny reported that Properties will be meeting to discuss repairs to the boiler. It is leaking; summer is an opportune time to repair it. Per discussions, funds should be available from the Rowley unrestricted fund.

**Membership Committee** (No minutes nor motions)

Michael Dunbar

Michael reported that the committee hopes to meet virtually. Shelley reported that 24 volunteers have been calling on members and others active in the church during this unusual period, mostly to see how they are doing and if they have any special needs. Feedback has been positive. Some directory information (e.g., phone numbers and email addresses) have been corrected.

**Worship Committee** (April minutes were attached; see consent agenda and below for motions)

Nancy Keogh for Phil Fry

Westminster is scheduled to begin its summer worship service schedule (services at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.) on June 7. The current expectation is that we will not be joining together for worship by then. Worship presented a motion to prerecord a service that would be made available by 8:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Such a service would include more "traditional" (e.g. organ) music as well as some lighter music. Several considerations were discussed. Recording a service on a Thursday should be feasible for staff. Currently, sound quality is better for the recorded service since it is recorded on a camcorder, whereas the virtual service is broadcast from a cell phone. Would many people view a service early Sunday morning, or would some view it later in the day (or week)? Is this the time to implement another change in routine? Regarding the sound quality of the virtual service, Pastor Jon reported that staff worked on the sound earlier that day and made some improvements. However, they are working with a lack of internet access in the sanctuary, borrowed equipment (cell phone and camcorder), and a very inexpensive portable microphone. [The relatively empty sanctuary also does not help the acoustics.] Following discussions, the following actions were taken.

For the motion from the Worship Committee,

**2020-113 MOTION was tabled** to approve pre-recording worship services the Thursday prior to the Sunday worship service, for Summer worship services scheduled to start June 7, 2020. This will enable the service to be available to parishioners by 8:00 a.m. Sunday morning.

The following motion was made, seconded and approved:

**2020-114 MOTION prevailed** to approve contacting Christopher Pepe to investigate options to improve the sound quality of the virtual services. [Chris is President of Clear Gold Audio & Lighting.]

**Outreach Committee** (No minutes nor motions) Shelley Koutnik for Becky Pool  
Shelley reported that Haven of Rest is not accepting new volunteers; the request for volunteers in our bulletin was changed accordingly. The committee is scheduled to meet later in May.

**Nominating Committee** (No meetings; nothing to report) James Gray

**Safety and Security Task Force** (No report) Don Rearick

**Deacons** (January minutes were attached; no motions) Pastor Hauerwas  
No meetings in March or May. Deacons will not be having the Memorial Day Luncheon. They may discuss hosting another Sunday luncheon instead to celebrate being able to worship together again.

**Pastor's Report and Remarks** Pastor Hauerwas  
Pastor Jon and James Gray reported that the task force is still working on the sound system project. Brad Hall reported that the kitchen update project is basically on hold until they can meet with "high users".

**Old Business**  
The New Members Class originally scheduled for March 14, 2020 and the unveiling of former pastors' portraits will be rescheduled after more normal activities resume.

**New / Other Business**  
Shelley mentioned that Claudine Schooley suggested sending some type of updates since the Script is not being sent. Consensus was that circumstances and consequently any activities could change rapidly. Staff and other updates could be incorporated into weekly evotionals and/or Sunday morning updates.

The next Tuesday virtual meeting is scheduled for May 12 at 7:00 p.m. Virtual and/or e-meetings will be continued as needed. The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 7 p.m.

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 8:33 p.m.

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Alec Works, Clerk of Session

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Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator