

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, May 26, 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 7:04 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, welcomed the guest, and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:04 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared.

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:

2020-119 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of May 5, 2020 (replaced April 28 meeting).

2020-120 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the Special Session meeting of May 12, 2020.

2020-121 MOTION prevailed to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's May 5, 2020 meeting

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

2020-122 MOTION prevailed to receive the report of the average worship attendance for March 22 and 29: 589 Facebook views (10:30 a.m. service); for April: 486 Facebook views (10:30 a.m., 4 Sundays); high of 727 views Easter Sunday (4/12); average of 400 views for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services (recorded at 1:00 p.m. each day). Average of 33 YouTube views for all 6 April services. For the 6 services in April, averages are as follows: Reach = 667; Engagements = 583; Link clicks = 29. [Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last in person worship service was on March 15, 2020. Westminster began holding virtual (access live service using Facebook Live or recorded using YouTube) as of Sunday, March 22, 2020. While the number of persons participating in a virtual service cannot be accurately measured, the figures above provide some measure of our outreach.]

2020-123 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of April 2020:

Total Membership as of 4/1/20	373
Additions: none	0
Deletions: Deborah Rutan (#7450, transfer approved 1/28/20)	1
Deaths: none	0
Total Membership as of 4/30/20	372

2020-124 MOTION prevailed to remove Cyrus and Barbara Blackfan, Ryan Adams and Kelly Pozza-Adams, and Todd Brown from active membership, per their requests, and to remove Nathaniel Zito (his father Ron reported he is attending another church).

A commissioner is needed for the June 2 Presbytery meeting. The virtual meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m. There were no volunteers.

Alec asked each committee to consider how best to maintain and make available their minutes and other records. If this can be done using the designated GoogleDocs page, paper files at the church, and/or other means, there may not be a need to post committee minutes on the church web page.

Committee Reports and Actions

Personnel Committee (Summary report was attached; see motions below)

Shelley Koutnik for John Childs

Personnel has been monitoring staff responsibilities since some have changed due to the coronavirus pandemic and altered office hours, The social media coordinator position was increased to 10 hours per week effective April 1 for the duration of the “Stay at Home” orders, at a cost of up to \$180 per week. It was originally thought that the duration would be short-term (through May 1) and the cost would be covered through the accumulated surplus. The position is responsible for taping of the worship services and uploading the video to the church website following the Sunday service. This staff person also maintains the Facebook page, website and other social media posts.

2020-125 MOTION prevailed to approve \$3,600 for continued social media coordinator wages from the Rowley New Church Life Fund.

The next two motions relate to the Finance motion described under their report. Personnel’s motions provide support for the project.

2020-126 MOTION prevailed to approve the expenditure of \$2,200 from Rowley New Church Life Funds at the clerical rate of \$18.00 per hour for the database purge/update project (associated with the ACS upgrade). This provides up to 10 hours per week for 12 weeks.

2020-127 MOTION prevailed to approve hiring Mallory Gray for database purge and upgrade work at the rate of \$18.00 per hour.

Finally, Personnel has completed its evaluation of Debbie Evrard, Staff Accountant.

2020-128 MOTION prevailed to approve a \$0.50 per hour increase for Debby Evrard, Staff Accountant, effective with the pay period beginning May 26, 2020.

Discipleship Committee (May minutes to be distributed; motions were approved May 5)

Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas

Sandy reported that planning continues for some type of Vacation Bible School program later in the summer. Pastor Jon and Rae Leonard have been leading virtual Bible studies.

[Note: James Gray excused himself for the Personnel and Discipleship discussions.]

Finance Committee (April financial reports and May minutes were attached; see motions below)

Todd Willis

There are charges associated with online giving. During this time of virtual services, contributions may still be mailed. Finance also desires to facilitate online giving while minimizing associated costs. **2020-129 MOTION prevailed** to approve offering the GivePlus Mobile App to increase accessibility to online giving.

The All Church Software (ACS) used by the church was developed over 35 years ago. Westminster began using ACS in mid-2012 for financial and membership records. There are monthly fees associated with using ACS. Over a year ago, ACS developed a new more technological and mobile based software titled Realm. The new software has lower monthly fees, but there will be conversion costs and manual work to prepare records. Overall, net savings are expected.

2020-130 MOTION prevailed to approve expenditure of up to \$3,500 from Rowley New Church Life Funds for a major upgrade of the Accounting and Membership Software.

Properties Committee (May minutes were attached; see motion below)

Ginny Melver

Ginny reported that she talked to Amanda Howard from WYDACA that afternoon (May 26). They would like to resume offering childcare next Monday, June 1. This would be for preschool and toddler care only, since there would not be a need for after school care. Ginny noted that they have been paying rent, have their own entry, access code and keys. They are aware of all covid-19 rules as they have maintained other centers during this crisis. They are licensed by the State of Ohio and follow those standards. They would group children into several areas to maintain separations, accepting fewer children. This may also include limited school age children in a separate area.

A key issue is providing evening custodial care. Westminster does not currently have an evening custodian. Although Session in February approved procuring the services of 1 of 2 approved vendors for evening custodial services if needed, they typically require a two-week notice. WYDACA may provide their own custodial services for other locations. They may be able to do so at Westminster. If they could do so, a rental fee adjustment would likely be in order. Their service provider would need access to the building in the evening. These appear to be the best options at this time.

Additional work may be required to sanitize surfaces and used areas. WYDACA is responsible for cleaning their own equipment, furnishings and supplies; we assume this would apply to any sanitizing as well. They would have the same limited access as before. Drinking fountains should probably be disengaged. Following discussions, a motion was made, seconded and approved: **2020-131 MOTION prevailed** to approve allowing WYDACA to resume providing childcare services in accordance with state guidelines on June 1, 2020, or the earliest agreeable date, providing Westminster Presbyterian Church and WYDACA are able to negotiate a mutual understanding as to how custodial services will be provided. This also assumes their understanding and accepting their limited access within the building.

Ginny also reported that WYDACA's previous plans to renovate the former Ohio Living Senior Day Care area into a nursery are on hold.

Note: Ginny subsequently reported that WYDACA staff will be doing their own cleaning until they can contract it out. For the next week, Dave Bodnar agreed to work from noon until 8pm to ensure things are going smoothly and building is locked up properly.

Membership Committee (No minutes; see motion below) Michael Dunbar
Michael reported that the committee met virtually on May 14. Earlier this year the treasurer asked committees to consider two \$2,500 wish list items. Given the opportunity, the Membership Committee would like to spend \$2,500 to enhance our "Religious Notes" listing in the Akron Beacon Journal newspaper. Actual expenditures would start upon receiving authorized funding.
2020-132 MOTION prevailed to approve an expenditure of up to \$2,500 to enhance Westminster's "Religious Notes" listing in the Akron Beacon Journal newspaper. Actual expenditures would start upon receiving authorized funding.

Worship Committee (No minutes nor motions) Phil Fry
Session approved continuing 1 virtual service for the summer on May 12.

Outreach Committee (Summary report was attached; no motions) Becky Pool
Becky reported that Outreach met virtually on May 16.

Nominating Committee; Safety and Security Task Force; Deacons (No reports)

Pastor's Report and Remarks Pastor Hauerwas
A new wifi system was installed, providing access to the sanctuary. A cell phone for live broadcasts will still be needed. Regarding the Sound System Task Force, a separate internet account and server are needed to provide hard-wire access to the sanctuary.

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

There was a discussion about the motion passed on May 12 (Motion 2020-118) suspending all in-person on-site activities through August 31, including any group activity involving more than 2 individuals at the same time in a defined space whether indoor or outside. The Celtic Gardeners provide a necessary service to the church, more than two are needed to perform the necessary work, and many are only available Saturday morning. They work outdoors and have space to enable social distancing. An exemption was requested. Concerns raised noted that several gardeners may be on site at a given time, and that the church has had other requests or considerations for outdoor activities. A motion was made, seconded, and voted on as follows:

2020-133 MOTION was defeated to grant the Celtic Gardeners an exemption to the on-site gathering restrictions as it applies to maintaining the garden space.

The next Tuesday virtual meeting is scheduled for June 9 at 7:00 p.m. if needed. The next regular Session meeting (virtual) is scheduled for Tuesday, June 23, 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 8:41 p.m.

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator