

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, October 27, 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, welcomed the guest, and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:02 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 as amended (two motions from Outreach moved to regular agenda).

Clerk's Report

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

2020-203 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of September 22, 2020.

2020-204 MOTION prevailed to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's September 22, 2020 meeting

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: none
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: virtual communion 10/04/20; estimated participation to be reported later.

The average worship attendance for July (4 services), August (5 services) and September (4 services) is expected to be reported in November after the new Communications Coordinator reviews available data.

2020-205 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of September 2020:

Total Membership as of 9/1/20	287
Additions: none	0
Deletions: Lois Pool (#4075); Sandra Edwards (#5467)	2
Deaths: William Eugene Dickerson (#3510); Regina Dickerson (#3511)	2
Total Membership as of 9/30/20	283

No motion is needed for removal from the active roll.

From Outreach:

2020-206 MOTION prevailed to approve the collection of hats, scarves and gloves for the Giving Tree via drop-off on Sundays December 6, 13 and 20 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. Outreach requests that the “Giving Tree” be placed in Wright-Herberich Hall and a photo of the “decorated” tree be included in the Sunday Updates and Bulletins for December 13, 20, and 27.

Note: Motion 2020-046 approved the 2020 Giving Tree in-person collection from November 29 through December 31, 2020 and Moment for Ministry on November 29, 2020

2020-207 MOTION prevailed to approve the following dates for Third Sunday Dinners in 2021 via carryout or seated accommodation, as determined to be appropriate per Session direction: January 17, February 21, March 21, April 18, May 16, June 20, July 18, August 15, September 19, October 17, November 21 and December 19.

2020-208 MOTION prevailed to approve the First Sunday Food Collection and distribution that serves Good Neighbors and the neighborhoods surrounding Westminster Presbyterian Church for 2021. The collection will continue by drop off or during in-person worship service as appropriate during calendar 2021.

From the Computer Technology Task Force:

2020-209 MOTION prevailed to approve up to \$1,000 of the Computer Technology Fund for the purchase of a laptop computer to replace the current Finance Office laptop.

Rationale: The Finance Office laptop was purchased in 2013 and has been used by nearly all committees over the years. It operates on Windows 7 and could not connect to the server and common files due to security issues and incompatible software. Recently the laptop started showing distress with the monitor flashing on and off. It cannot even be used for Zoom meetings. The unit needs to be replaced with a laptop that would be compatible with the server and could be used by staff to connect to the common files. We have received a quote from DataCore for a HP ProBook 455 G7 15.6” Notebook. We will purchase Office Standard 2019 at a discounted rate from TechSoup and DataCore will set up the system so that it can be connected to the server. Monthly virus protection is \$9 (\$108 yr.). The laptop is quoted at \$754.46. Office Standard adds \$50 to the cost. The expected cost is \$805 however I would like up to \$1,000 from the Computer Technology Fund for this purchase in the event that additional accessories or set up services are needed. The old unit will be destroyed.

Alec reported that the church responded to two requests regarding baptism certificates. He is scheduled to meet virtually with the Committee on Ministry on November 14 to review minutes from 2019.

Committee Reports and Actions

Personnel Committee (See motion below)

Shelley Koutnik for John Childs

2020-210 MOTION prevailed to approve the hiring of a Youth Coordinator for up to 12 hours per week. Funding will be provided by the balance of New Church Life Funds designated for this purpose plus the allocation in the 2021 operating budget.

Rationale: When Mallory Gray resigned from the Youth Coordinator position in August, we planned to maintain the program with a staff person working 5-8 hours per week. We had hoped that this staff person with the help of volunteers would keep the youth program in operation during the pandemic. Pastor Jon stepped up to lead the Youth Ministry, with assistance from Mike Grau and Andi Jopperi, until a staff person was hired. At 5-8 hours per week the position is not attractive to qualified candidates nor can the responsibilities be adequately completed within the allotted hours. In addition, there is much administrative work required to structure the curriculum and develop ministry activities for this program year to keep the ministry functioning at a level we desire and our youth deserve. The position remains unfilled as of today. Asking the Pastor to be the staff person responsible for planning, implementing and supervising the Youth Ministry on a long-term basis is not feasible.

WPC Session allocated up to \$25,000 in the fall of 2018 for the purpose of hiring a youth coordinator. A total of \$19,000 was expended through August 2020 leaving a balance of \$6,000. Another \$7,500 is budgeted for 2021. If we hire a Youth Coordinator for 12 hours per week at \$18 per hour the annual cost is \$11,232. For 2022, the entire cost will need to be included in the operating budget if the Youth Ministry is to be continued.

Finance Committee (September financial reports were attached; no minutes nor motions)

Shelley Koutnik for Todd Willis

Through September, contributions are approximately \$16,000 below budget, largely due to lower unpledged contributions and loose offerings. Expenses are approximately \$97,000 below budget, reflecting significantly lower program, properties and personnel expenses. Although the net result is a surplus of \$74,703, concern remains for the rest of the year with contributions expected to continue below budget along with the uncertainty of program and property needs.

The Stewardship campaign began October 18 and ends November 8 with the consecration of pledges. The two primary goals are to have 60% of family units pledge and to exceed our 2020 pledge amount.

The ACS software system has been converted to the new system. Accounting reports will look somewhat different due to various adjustments made.

Properties Committee (October minutes were attached; no motions)

Ginny Melver

Updates were provided on various projects. Positive comments were received regarding new landscaping. The committee is still seeking qualified restoration contractors for work on the steeple.

Outreach Committee (October minutes were attached; see consent agenda and below for motions)

Shelley Koutnik for Becky Pool

A motion for the Christmas Basket Project was discussed, and the number of baskets and gift cards were clarified. The baskets will be prepared by ten Westminster volunteers working in the church driveway and delivered to individual residences by volunteer delivery drivers. All volunteers will

observe social distancing and masks while on the church premises and when delivering to the recipients. Maps may be distributed via email or postal mail or may be available at the church the morning of the Christmas Basket Project. Gift cards will exclude the purchase of alcohol and cigarettes. Motion 2020-045 approved Saturday, December 12 as the project date with a Moment for Ministry on November 22, 2020. The amended motion follows:

2020-211 MOTION prevailed to approve the 2020 Christmas Basket Project with a goal of serving 200 households in the Greater Akron area. An estimated 80 – 100 grocery baskets will be prepared, following social distancing guidelines, and delivered to homes as provided by the Salvation Army. An estimated 100 – 120 gift cards valued at \$40 each will be purchased and delivered to households living in apartments. The breakdown between baskets and cards will depend on information provided by the Salvation Army.

The next motion discussed dealt with Acme Community Cashback receipts. Presbyterian Women (PW) have previously collected these receipts and distributed the revenues. Outreach's understanding was that PW would no longer be doing this. [Note: the last slate of officers for PW were elected for 2019-20. PW officers have not met since this past spring.] The proposed motion was for Outreach to collect the receipts through the end of December and use the revenues to support Outreach's ministries. Per discussions, there appears to be some confusion as to whether PW still wants to manage the project. Shelley Koutnik offered to clarify with the PW officers. If PW wants to continue this work, a clarification will be printed in the church bulletin. The motion as proposed was pulled.

Discipleship Committee (October minutes were attached; no motions)

Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas

The committee is working with the new Media Coordinator on options for a virtual Christmas Pageant.

Nominating Committee (No minutes nor motions)

James Gray

James reported that the committee met last Wednesday and nominees are being contacted. They meet again next Wednesday and hope to have a slate to present at the November Session meeting.

Worship Committee (October minutes and Schantz contract were attached; see motion below)

Phil Fry

Phil explained that the terms of the proposed new contract include an hourly instead of a daily rate, which should result in savings to the church. The Music Director has already noted what work is needed this fall.

2020-212 MOTION prevailed to approve the revised contract with Schantz for organ maintenance. Notes: In February Session approved a contract with Schantz organ to perform all maintenance for the organ. Schantz has rewritten the contract, charging Westminster \$78.00 an hour instead of \$1260.00 per visit. This will benefit us in the long run if there is only a partial tuning needed.

Membership Committee, Deacons Committee, Safety and Security Task Force, Kitchen Task Force

(No reports)

Pastor's Report and Remarks

Pastor Hauerwas

No additional reports.

Old Business - none

New / Other Business

The following motion was presented, seconded and approved:

2020-213 MOTION prevailed to approve a plaque with the wording “The ordination of William A. Markley III was revoked by the Permanent Judicial Commission of Eastminster Presbytery on January 10, 1995.” to be placed below the portrait.

The next virtual meeting of Eastminster Presbytery will be on Tuesday, December 1, starting at 10:00 a.m. Ginny Melver offered to attend if no one else is available.

A congregational meeting will be needed later this year, likely in December, to elect new elders, deacons and endowment trustees for terms beginning in January 2021. An Annual Congregational Meeting will be needed by April 4, 2021. Currently, we are holding most meetings virtually. The Clerk desires a consensus among Session as to how to proceed with these meetings if we are not meeting in person. Concerns include how to confirm the presence of a quorum (10% of membership), how to ensure all that desire to participate can do so, and how to count votes.

Most likely a /zoom meeting format would be used. This format can accommodate 99 parties signed in. Using chat features at the bottom of the screen, it should be feasible to obtain counts. We may also be able to offer training on using Zoom to anyone desiring it. Alec will prepare a proposal for the next Session meeting.

The next topic was a discussion of in person worship and activities. Especially with the current spike in covid-19 cases, it appears that we will not be resuming in person activities under current procedures in the near term. If the criteria set by Session for resuming in person activities are met, would they be as in the past, or would certain modifications be advisable? Do Rearick agreed to contact current members of the Safety and Security Task force to see if they would be willing to serve in this capacity and report back to Session. Phil Fry offered to represent the worship Committee.

With disruptions related to the coronavirus, the schedule for preparing and issuing the Script had changed in 2019. A motion was made, seconded and approved to return to the previous schedule. This would improve announcements related to seasonal activities such as Advent and Lent. **2020-214 MOTION prevailed** to approve returning to the previous Script schedule. After the current November-December issue, the next would be February-March, then April-May, etc.

Session members agreed that it would be helpful to let committees ask for volunteers as needed once a month in the bulletin.

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 7 p.m. [Tuesday before Thanksgiving.]

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 8:21 p.m.

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator