

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, November 24, 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 7:01 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 Kate Clark, Acting 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, Extension of Floor and Approving Acting Clerk**

Pastor Jon called the meeting to order, welcomed the guest, and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:01 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared.

Due to the absence of Clerk Alec Works, the following motion was passed:

**2020-215 MOTION prevailed** to approve Kate Clark to serve as Acting Clerk for this meeting.

**Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

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

**Clerk's Report**

Kate Clark, Acting Clerk of Session

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

**2020-216 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of October 27, 2020.

**2020-217 MOTION prevailed** to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's October 27, 2020 meeting

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: none
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: virtual communion 11/8/20. Estimated participation: 7/12 = 371; 8/9 = 171; 9/13 = 395; 10/4 = 247; 11/8 = 232 [number of Facebook views for those services].

**2020-218 MOTION prevailed** to receive the reports of average worship attendance as follows: July (4 services): 348 views; August (5 services) 212 views; September (4 services): 311 views; October (4 services): 262 views.

[Notes: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the last in person worship service at Westminster 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 the outreach.

Facebook “views”, “Reach” and “Engagements” are measures of how many views, clicks, comments, “likes” and shares have been recorded by the service provider. Some people may sign off and back on, enter several comments, even view or check in later in the day, increasing the number of “engagements”. However, we also do not know how many people are viewing each screen. These figures do provide some measure of the involvement of not only members of the congregation, but also non-members; it also includes some who live out of state.]

**2020-219 MOTION prevailed** to approve the membership statistical report for the month of October 2020:

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Total Membership as of 10/1/20  | 283 |
| Additions: none                 | 0   |
| Deletions: none                 | 0   |
| Deaths: none                    | 0   |
| Total Membership as of 10/31/20 | 283 |

No motion is needed for removal from the active roll.

From Finance:

**2020-220 MOTION prevailed** to authorize the Treasurer to engage Hilary Beatriz, CPA, to conduct the annual Agreed Upon Procedures. [Note: the review should be similar to last year.]

The Clerk met with Cathy Ulrich, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk, Eastminster Presbytery, and other clerks via Zoom on November 14, 2020 to review Official Minutes for 2019. Cathy noted that each church’s Manual of Operations and/or bylaws should have a provision for not-in-person Session and Congregational meetings. Any actions taken should be ratified at the next in-person meeting of Session. Since our Manual of Operations and by-laws do not indicate that these meetings have to take place in person, Cathy concurred that Westminster appears to be in conformity with proper procedures.

Other news is available at [www.eastminsterpresbytery.org](http://www.eastminsterpresbytery.org).

### **Committee Reports and Actions**

**Personnel Committee** (See motion below)

Nancy Keogh for John Childs

The search continues for a Youth Coordinator. Someone will need to fill in for Dave Bodner for when he is on vacation. Becky Harlow could fill in short term (two weeks). Pat Schumacher will not be available until April.

**Finance Committee** (October financial reports and November minutes were attached; see consent agenda for motion.)

Todd Willis

An update on the Stewardship campaign was provided. Pledges are up and ahead of where we were last year at this time, with an increase in giving of 2-3% from the previous year. We are still waiting for year-end pledges to be received to see how we stand with respect to our proposed budget.

Even with some special contributions, revenues are still below budget by \$38,875. Expenses are below budget by \$102,660 due largely to personnel, ministry and program expenses being reduced. We are fortunate to have an excess of expenses of \$63,785 due to the special circumstances cited.

**Properties Committee** (November minutes were attached; see motion below) Ginny Melver  
Among various projects, the WYDADA door is not working; it will take about \$1000 to fix. The windows at the back of church are broken and will need about \$800 to fix. There is a leaking pipe between the elevator shaft and a cement wall in basement, possibly due to or also radiator-condensation. Temperature Control will check and repair.

As part of the steeple renovation research, Properties determined that the roof hatch needs attention. When it is repaired, the belfry should also be cleaned. Seese-Sveda made a bid of \$3,100. A second opinion was reviewed last Thursday. Properties presented the following motion:  
**2020-221 MOTION prevailed** to approve up to \$3,100 to install a new safety hatch in the opening of the belfry of steeple with the money coming from the Barnett Fund.

**Outreach Committee** (November minutes were attached; no motions) Becky Pool  
Minutes included updates on Christmas baskets and other food distribution programs. Outreach is planning a survey to see what the congregation knows about our programs.

A Certificate of Liability for use of a truck for the Christmas Basket program was provided to Stutler Leasing.

**Discipleship Committee** (No minutes nor motions) Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas  
The committee is working with the new Media Coordinator on the virtual Christmas Pageant. The following motion was presented:  
**2020-222 MOTION prevailed** to offer online fellowship opportunities to the congregation.

Adam Kalcic will host the first fellowship the Sunday following Thanksgiving, with future online fellowships hosted by congregation members.

**Nominating Committee** (No minutes nor motions) James Gray  
James reported that the committee continues to meet, focusing on remaining openings.

**Worship Committee** (November minutes were attached; no motions) Phil Fry  
Phil reported that the outside of the church has been decorated, as well as the sanctuary for broadcast services.

**Membership Committee** (November minutes were attached; no motions) Michael Dunbar  
Adam Kalcic also participated in the recent meeting. Additional advertising is prohibitively expensive, but Adam will explore other options. Shelley indicated there is a line-item in the budget with some funds.

**Task Force for Resuming Activities** Don Rearick  
All members of the task force have continued to consider how to go forward. Don noted that we need to keep in mind for 2021 that not much of the population will be vaccinated until at least the summer, with hopes it may be sooner.

**Pastor's Report and Remarks**

Pastor Hauerwas

Pastor Jon reported that he has been leading conversations with pastors from the west side of our Presbytery about ways to collaborate. The east side of Presbytery has four congregations closing, with a search for one full-time clergy to serve multiple churches. In next ten to fifteen years we expect the merging of some congregations merging. They also discussed creative ideas for how to staff churches as membership dwindles and deal with anxious congregations.

Pastor Jon expressed his gratitude to the elders who are completing their service on Session.

He also reported that he has completed the literature review for his doctoral project, and it has been accepted. He is now moving into the interview stage.

**Old Business**

The Clerk's Report notes that electronic meetings are acceptable, including congregational meetings. The following potential procedures for the Congregational Meeting to elect new officers were discussed:

- Hold the meeting via Zoom, approximately 15 minutes after the morning worship service.
- A Zoom link would be made available to members.
- The meeting would be announced 2 weeks in advance.
- Zoom can accommodate up to 99 participants. Based on recent participation, that should not be a concern (typically around 40-50 connections). 29 members are needed for a quorum.
- Training or assistance / answering questions may be handled by church staff.
- Unless there are nominations from the floor, the vote should be unanimous.
- The Clerk would like assistance to confirm the number of participants listed at the bottom of Zoom screen, including how many members per screen.
- For actions to be taken, use the voting feature in Zoom to vote yes or no. The Clerk would like assistance to confirm the number of votes.

The following motion was then made, seconded and approved:

**2020-223 MOTION prevailed** to approve the suggested procedures as discussed for a Congregational Meeting to elect new officers.

**New / Other Business**

At a meeting on November 16, 2020, the Presbyterian Women's group at Westminster formally decided to dissolve. Session acknowledges this decision. Ginny Melver reported that monies remaining will be split between WYDACA and Rockynol Memory Care.

The next virtual meeting of Eastminster Presbytery will be on Tuesday, December 1, starting at 10:00 a.m. No Session members expressed an availability to participate.

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26, 2021 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 8:12 p.m.

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Kate Clark, Acting Clerk of Session

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Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator