

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, January 26, 2021

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 7:03 p.m.

Elders (+ present, * excused, - absent)

Class of 2020	Class of 2021	Class of 2022
+ Brad Hall	+ Nancy Keogh	+ Rob Gilbert
+ Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer	+ Phil Fry	+ James Gray
(vacant)	+ Rebecca Pool	+ Sandy Gruneich
(vacant)	+ Don Rearick	+ Ginny Melver

Also present: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator; guests Alec Works, Clerk of Session, John Childs, Moderator, Personnel Committee.

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 guests, and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:03 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to extend the floor to John Childs.

Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and the Consent Agenda as amended (motion from Worship Committee was moved to regular agenda, the date for Pentecost Sunday in the Outreach motion was corrected to May 23, and the Personnel Committee report was moved up).

Pastor Hauerwas then excused himself from the meeting.

Personnel Committee (Terms of Call were provided; see motions below)

John Childs

John reported that the committee met on Sunday to discuss Pastor Hauerwas' performance during the past year. John will meet with him later to review feedback they received, noting it had been a particularly challenging year. The following motion from the committee was then approved: **2021-003 MOTION prevailed** to approve the Terms of Call for Pastor Hauerwas for 2021 as presented. These terms will be presented to the congregation for their approval at the annual congregational meeting.

Pastor Hauerwas was then invited back and returned to the meeting.

The following motion from the Personnel Committee was then approved:

2021-004 MOTION prevailed to approve the following vacation and study leave for Pastor Jon Hauerwas:

Monday, February 1 through Sunday, February 7 (5 days) Sandy Selby preaching

Thursday, February 25 through Tuesday, March 1 (5 days) Ben George (pending confirmation)

Monday, April 5 through Sunday, April 11 (5 days) Sandy Selby preaching

Monday, April 12 through Sunday, April 18 (5 days) Sandy Selby preaching

Thursday, May 27 through Thursday, June 3 (5 days) George Murphy preaching.

Pastor Hauerwas said that if Ben George is not available to preach on February 28, he will reschedule that time off.

Also, Adam Kalcic, Communications Coordinator, has resigned as of January 29 to accept a full-time position. He has agreed to continue recording on Sunday mornings until a suitable replacement is secured. Three candidates are already being considered.

Election of Officers for 2021

Pastor Hauerwas

The following motions were made, seconded, and approved:

2021-005 MOTION prevailed to elect the following individuals as officers for 2021: Alec Works as Clerk of Session; Shelley Koutnik as Treasurer; and Marcia Holcomb as Assistant Treasurer.

2021-006 MOTION prevailed to elect John Childs as Moderator, Personnel Committee, and Todd Willis as Moderator, Finance Committee, for 2021.

Clerk's Report

Alec Works, Clerk

Alec reported that the Annual Necrology Report (elders who died in 2020) and church directory updates were provided to Presbytery on 01/20/21. Regarding the Annual Statistical Report, the adjustment to membership approved in September is reflected as adjusted beginning membership, per discussion with Rev. Cathy Ulrich, Stated Clerk and General Presbyter. Average Weekly Worship Attendance: No specific instructions were provided with respect to attendance for virtual services. The number of views reported in our minutes are useful as far as showing variances of involvement, but would be misleading compared to counts of physical attendance. Some churches have used a multiplier (e.g., 1.5 - 2) applied to the number of Facebook Live sessions noted. Our count of these services has generally ranged from 45 - 53, with a high of 80 for Christmas Eve. In some cases, we have had more than 2 viewing one sign-on session. We have had non-members and out-of-town members participate. We also have had viewers after the live service. Our actual attendance early in 2020 averaged 117. I determined 100 to be a reasonable estimate. Other data is based on church records and discussions with church staff.

A report from the December 1, 2020 meeting of Eastminster Presbytery was provided to Session members with the draft agenda. Presbytery news is available at www.eastminsterpresbytery.org.

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

2021-007 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of November 24, 2020.

2021-008 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the Session E-meeting of December 21, 2020.

2021-009 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the Session E-meeting of January 20, 2021.

2021-010 MOTION prevailed to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's November 24, 2020 meeting

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: Frank L. Field, Jr., 12/26/20; John Zimmerman, 01/03/21 (former member).
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: virtual communion 12/13/20, estimated participation = 307; 01/10/21, estimated participation = 371. [number of Facebook views for those services].

2021-011 MOTION prevailed to receive the reports of average worship attendance as follows: November (5 services) 301 views; December (4 regular services) 308 views, Christmas Eve 602 views, average for 5 December services 366 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.]

2021-012 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of November 2020:

Total Membership as of 11/1/20	283
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: none	0
Total Membership as of 11/30/20	283

2021-013 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of December 2020:

Total Membership as of 12/1/20	283
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: none	0
Total Membership as of 12/31/20	283

2021-014 MOTION prevailed to delete the following from active membership: Emily Arlene Pierson (#5744), died December 2, 2020; Frank L. Field, Jr. (#3897), died December 20, 2020. [Clerk’s note: A celebration of life for Robert and Arlene Pierson is planned for a later date.]

2021-015 MOTION prevailed to approve the WPC 2020 Annual Statistical Report to Presbytery. [Clerk's note: data was provided as an attachment. The actual report will be submitted electronically to Presbytery.]

From Outreach:

2021-016 MOTION prevailed to approve the following denominational collections and Moments for Ministry for 2021: Moment for Ministry on March 21 for the One Great Hour of Sharing with a collection on Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021; Moment for Ministry on May 16 for the Pentecost offering to be collected on Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2021; and Moment for Ministry on September 26 for the collection on World Communion Sunday, October 3, 2021.

Committee Reports and Actions

Finance Committee (December financial reports, January minutes and proposed budget were attached; see motions below.) Shelley Koutnik for Todd Willis Shelley reported that the financial books for 2020 have not yet been closed, since related mail has still been arriving. Due primarily to reduced expenses, there will be a surplus of approximately \$87,000 moved to the Reserve Fund. Some of this money, along with \$11,000 from the Rowley Fund, will be used to offset the deficit in the proposed budget. 92 pledges have been received. The goal was not met, but pledges were still better than the expected decline. The following motions were approved:

2021-017 MOTION prevailed to approve the 2021 budget as presented this evening. [Note: This replaces Motion 2020-202 and reflects updated pledges.]

2021-018 MOTION prevailed to schedule the Annual Congregational Meeting for after the morning worship service on March 21, 2021, with the meeting to be held virtually. [Note: The review of the church's financial statements is expected to be completed by then. The 2021 Pastor's Terms of Call will also be presented. This is the Sunday before Palm Sunday.]

Properties Committee (December and January minutes were attached; see motions below)

Ginny Melver

Ginny reported that WYDACA just informed her that they are ready to proceed with renovations to convert the former Ohio Living Eldercare area into a nursery.

After contacting potential contractors, Properties recommends that Frost Architectural Preservation perform the steeple repair and renovation work. She said the work is expected to take about 4 months, but she does not know when they will be able to start. A copy of the proposal had been provided to Session members. The following motion was presented by Properties:

Motion: To repair, renovate and paint the steeple for \$410,000. The selected contractor is Frost Architectural Preservation. Funding will come from Rowley Fund. [Clerk's note: Motion 2020-089 delayed the work as originally planned.]

Per discussions, the motion was amended to include more specific funding sources. The following motion was then approved:

2021-019 MOTION prevailed to approve contracting with Frost Architectural Preservation to repair and renovate the steeple at a cost not to exceed \$410,000. The work will be funded with \$5,000 from the Steeple Restricted Fund, \$197,456 from Unrestricted Rowley Funds designated for Capital Improvements, and the balance of \$207,544 from the Rowley Unrestricted Fund.

[Rationale: In January 2020, Session approved the expenditure of all of the Unrestricted Rowley Fund designated for Capital Improvements (\$197,456) be used for repair of the steeple. Restricted monies in the amount of \$5,000 were given by a neighbor for the same purpose of improvements to the steeple. The total of these two funds is \$202,456 leaving a balance of \$207,544 to be funded.]

The Rowley Unrestricted Fund has a balance of \$588,926 at December 31, 2020 which is not designated. After expenditure for the steeple the Rowley Unrestricted Fund will have a remaining balance in the amount of \$381,382 of undesignated funds.

The Rowley Unrestricted Fund also holds \$221,865 designated for New Church Life projects for total Rowley Unrestricted Fund balance in the amount of \$603,247 after expenditures for the steeple project.]

Properties had also presented a motion to inform the congregation of the project. Per discussions, it was decided that the amended motion above provides adequate funding. Also, since the church has been trying to limit mailings to save on spending, any announcement could be included in the Script or bulletin. The following action was then taken:

2021-020 MOTION tabled to send a letter to the congregation describing the steeple project and to request voluntary donations to help offset the expenses.

Outreach Committee (January minutes were attached; see consent agenda for motion) Becky Pool
A survey related to food programs is included in the next Script. Outreach will review results and report to Session at a future meeting.

Discipleship Committee (December and January minutes were attached; see motion below)

Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas

A virtual Confirmation Class started in early January. Students from the United Presbyterian Church of Cuyahoga Falls joined the class this past Sunday. [See E-meeting of January 20, 2021.]

A brochure describing a proposed class for older adults was distributed with the agenda. The following motion from the committee was presented and approved:

2021-021 MOTION prevailed to approve the new adult class to be taught by Karen Elvin and Claudine Schooley.

Nominating Committee (No minutes nor motions)

James Gray

James reported that they have one remaining position to fill.

Worship Committee (November and January minutes were attached; see motion below) Phil Fry
Phil presented a motion from the committee with proposed dates for celebrating communion in 2021. The motion was amended to add a communion service the second Sunday in February. Following a second to the amended motion, the following motion was approved.

2021-022 MOTION prevailed to approve the following dates for celebrating communion in 2021: January 10, February 14, February 17 (Ash Wednesday), March 14, April 1 (Maundy Thursday), April 4 (Easter Sunday), May 9 (Mother's Day), June 13, July 11, August 8, September 12, October 3 (World Communion), November 14, December 12.

There will be 4 morning worship services focused on healing planned for this year. The first is planned for February 7, 2021.

Task Force for Resuming Activities

Don Rearick

Don reported that the committee has met twice. If vaccinations go as hoped and adequate precautions and measures can be put in place, there may be an opportunity to resume in person services on a reduced scale this summer. There may be an opportunity to expand services and activities in the fall.

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

(No reports)

Pastor's Report and Remarks

Pastor Hauerwas

Pastor Jon reported that the deacons will meet on February 3 to finalize plans for delivering flowers to Rockynol residents for Valentine's Day. He will be serving as vice moderator of Eastminster Presbytery's Committee on Ministry. With church attendance down and some churches closing, more partnerships are emerging and more work may be done collaboratively.

Old Business

Alec reported that there is a feature in Zoom whereby participants can join by signing in. This would help in identifying participants and confirming a quorum.

New / Other Business

A commissioner is needed for the next virtual meeting of Eastminster Presbytery will be on Tuesday, March 1, starting at 10:00 a.m.

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23, 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 8:26 p.m.

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator