

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, February 23, 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, Ellen Daugherty.

**Notes:** Due to restrictions on gatherings ordered by the Governor of Ohio to slow the spread of the coronavirus, a virtual meeting was held. A congregational meeting to elect officers for the class of 2023 is scheduled for March 21, 2021.

**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 7:08 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to extend the floor to Ellen Daugherty. Ellen has agreed to serve as an elder, term beginning 2021, pending election at the annual congregational meeting.

**Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda**

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and the Consent Agenda as amended (3 motions from the Discipleship Committee were added to the Consent Agenda).

**Clerk's Report**

Alec Works, Clerk

Alec reported that the Annual Statistical Report was submitted to Eastminster Presbytery on January 27, 2021. He is working with church staff to obtain Facebook data to report as attendance. He noted that Facebook Live services have been viewed not only by people across the United States, but also several foreign countries. A letter was sent confirming the membership status of Ann Pialet.

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

**2021-026 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of January 26, 2021.

**2021-027 MOTION prevailed** to approve the minutes of the Session E-meeting of February 11, 2021.

**2021-028 MOTION prevailed** to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's January 26, 2021 meeting

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: Loye Pierce, 2/4/21 (husband of member Ann Wiggins); Mary Swartzlander (#2361), 2/9/21 (committal service)
3. Baptisms: none

4. Communion: virtual communion 2/14/21, also on Ash Wednesday, 2/17/21; estimated participation to be reported later. [number of Facebook views for those services].

**2021-029 MOTION prevailed** to receive the reports of average worship attendance as follows: January (5 services) 277 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.]

**2021-030 MOTION prevailed** to approve the membership statistical report for the month of January 2021:

Total Membership as of 1/1/21	283
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: Emily Arlene Pierson (#5744), Frank L. Field, Jr. (#3897)	2
Total Membership as of 1/31/21	281

**2021-031 MOTION prevailed** to delete the following from active membership: Mary Elizabeth Swartzlander (#2361), died January 31, 2021; Diane Hall Allison (#7502), died February 4, 2021.

**2021-032 MOTION prevailed** to amend Motion 2021-004 to note that Rev. Eric Dillenbeck will be the guest preacher on February 28, not Rev. Ben George. [Clerk’s note: Rev. George was listed pending confirmation.]

From Finance:

**2021-033 MOTION prevailed** to approve amending the 2021 operating budget as approved by Session at the January 26, 2021 meeting to include a \$2,600 increase in Personnel costs and a \$3,400 increase in Contributions Pledged.

From Outreach:

**2021-034 MOTION prevailed** to approve December 11, 2021 as the date of the annual Christmas Basket Delivery, with a Moment for Mission on November 21 to request funds and volunteers. Pew envelopes will be available from November 21 through December 12, 2021.

**2021-035 MOTION prevailed** to approve disbursing a \$5,000 gift as follows: \$2,500 for 2021 Christmas Baskets, \$1,250 for Food for Life and \$1,250 for Third Sunday Dinners.

**2021-036 MOTION prevailed** to approve the Giving Tree collection of gloves, scarves and hats for a period of November 28, 2021 to December 31, 2021, with Moment for Mission on November 28, 2021. Items will be taken to ACCESS shelter for homeless women and children.

From Personnel:

**2021-037 MOTION prevailed** to approve the following addition to the Vacation Policy: a maximum of two (2) consecutive weeks absence will be granted for vacation and/or unpaid leave.

**2021-038 MOTION prevailed** to approve the following addition to the Vacation Policy: Requests to carry one (1) additional week into the next year must be submitted in writing to the Personnel Committee six (6) weeks before year end. If granted, this week must be used within a period of six (6) months.

From Discipleship:

**2021-039 MOTION prevailed** to elect Kara Hauerwas as Moderator of the Discipleship Committee for 2021.

**2021-040 MOTION prevailed** to approve inquiring as to Will Willimon's availability for a 2021 Ebert's Lecture on Rally Day 2021. If he is available, we will request that he reserve that time for the Ebert's Lecture, pending any related COVID protocols in Fall.

**2021-041 MOTION prevailed** to designate the local portion of the 2021 Pentecost Offering to go to Fostering Independence, which supports teens aging out of Foster Care services in Summit County. [See [www.FosteringIndependence.net](http://www.FosteringIndependence.net) for more information.]

### **Committee Reports and Actions**

**Personnel Committee** (Report was attached; see consent agenda and below for motion)

Shelley Koutnik for John Childs

In addition to the motions below, Shelley reported that Personnel also continues its search for a Youth Coordinator. For the future, Personnel is researching the possibility of combining the Director of Family and Children's Ministry with the Youth Coordinator position. Parents and others will be contacted for input regarding such a change.

**2021-042 MOTION prevailed** to approve an increase in hourly compensation for Adam Kalcic to \$20.00 per hour, effective with the pay period beginning February 25, 2021.

Rationale: The committee continues to search for a Communications Coordinator to replace Adam, who has agreed to continue the Sunday morning livestream and video for the near future. In appreciation for Adam's continued commitment to assisting Westminster with Sunday morning worship service needs the committee wishes to increase his compensation. To ensure that communications, publicity and other social media activities are covered, Claudine will be asked to work up to an additional five hours per week on a temporary basis until a new Communications Coordinator is hired.

**2021-043 MOTION prevailed** to approve hiring an individual to plan, organize and oversee Vacation Bible School for summer of 2021 at an hourly rate of \$20 per hour.

Rationale: Personnel approved Sheila Svoboda's request to reduce her weekly work hours to 9 hours per week, effective March 1. Personnel is looking to hire someone to assume the duties related to Vacation Bible School for this coming summer. Savings from Sheila's reduced hours will cover the cost.

**Finance Committee** (January reports were attached; see consent agenda for motion)

Shelley Koutnik for Todd Willis

Shelley reported that January revenues include some prepaid pledges for the year. Current operations continue to result in reduced expenses.

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

Ginny Melver

Ginny reported that a new director started with WYDACA last week. She has not yet received a start date for the steeple work.

**Outreach Committee** (February minutes were attached; see consent agenda for motions)

Shelley Koutnik for Becky Pool

The minutes include several project updates. Regarding the 2020 Christmas Food Basket program, 87 food baskets were delivered, plus gift cards to apartments. There were 18 driver volunteers. Associated revenues were \$15,349 and expenses were \$8,249 leaving a net of \$7,100. The net includes a \$5,000 gift. The donor of the gift said that the money could be used for other food programs. See the consent agenda for the motion on using the gift. This will leave \$4,600 in the Christmas basket account for 2021.

**Discipleship Committee** (February minutes were sent; see consent agenda for motions)

Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas

See consent agenda for motions.

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

Pastor Hauerwas

Pastor Jon reported that the Worship Committee is meeting March 7. Work continues to select some new committee moderators and Session representatives.

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

James Gray

James reminded Session that the congregational meeting to elect the new officers is scheduled for March 21 after the morning worship service.

**Deacons** (No minutes nor motions)

Pastor Hauerwas

Pastor Jon reported that the Valentine's Day deliveries to Rockynol residents went well. Walter Hayes will serve as the new moderator.

**Safety / Security Task Force**

Don Rearick

Don reported that the committee meets tomorrow evening to discuss current trends related to the coronavirus. Covid positivity rates and hospitalizations are down. Hopefully the rate of vaccinations will pick up.

**Other Task Forces**

For the Sound System Task Force, Shelley reported that she, Val Thorson and James Gray will meet with a contractor later this week regarding improvements for livestreaming and recording worship services. Pastor Jon reported that the Kitchen Task Force has not met.

**Pastor's Report and Remarks**

Pastor Hauerwas

Pastor Jon reported that the West Area Collaboration (churches in the western area of Eastminster Presbytery) is meeting twice a month. (Tuesday mornings at 9 a.m.). Session members are welcome. He is also serving as Vice Moderator of the Committee on Ministry.

The confirmation class, including youth from Westminster and Cuyahoga Falls churches, has been going well. This arrangement may serve as a model for others.

He also reported that work is proceeding well on his doctoral project.

**Old Business**

The next virtual meeting of Eastminster Presbytery will be on Tuesday, March 2, starting at 2:00 p.m. Westminster and other larger churches have been invited to send two commissioners. After Shelley offered to attend, the following motion was made, seconded and approved:

**2021-044 MOTION prevailed** to elect Shelley Koutnik as commissioner to the March 2 meeting of Eastminster Presbytery.

**New / Other Business**

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 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 7:50 p.m.

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Alec Works, Clerk of Session

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Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator