

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, May 25, 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 7:02 p.m.

Elders (+ present, * excused, - absent)

Class of 2021	Class of 2022	Class of 2023
+ Nancy Keogh	+ Rob Gilbert	+ Ellen Daugherty
+ Phil Fry	+ James Gray	+ Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer
- Rebecca Pool	+ Sandy Gruneich	+ Brian Rodabaugh
+ Don Rearick	+ Ginny Melder	+ Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Also present: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator; Todd Willis, guest.

Notes: Due to restrictions on gatherings ordered by the Governor of Ohio to slow the spread of the coronavirus, a virtual meeting was held.

Opening and Declaration of Quorum

Pastor Jon called the meeting to order and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:02 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared.

Welcome and Extension of Floor to Guest

Pastor Jon welcomed our guest, Todd Willis, resting elder. By motion, the privilege of the floor was extended to Todd.

Todd was present to share some information related to the steeple renovation project. [Clerk's note: On January 28, 2020, Session "accept[ed] the bid from Steeplejack of America for repair of the steeple . . . pending a satisfactory review of the vendor's warranty and references." On March 24, 2020, Session voted to "delay the steeple renovation project until next year and revisit the entire process, including soliciting bids, at that time." The vendor was contacted the next morning and we received a written acknowledgement in return. On January 27, 2021, Session approved contracting with Frost Architectural Preservation to repair and renovate the steeple.] Todd reported that earlier this year (March) Steeplejack contacted a prior Session member about the project. Todd said he did not return a call to the prior vendor's attorney. Per discussion, it was agreed that Frost Architectural Preservation would be asked to notify the church if they have any contact with Steeplejack.

Todd was then excused from the meeting.

Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and the Consent Agenda as amended (Clerk's correspondence and the second motion from Outreach were pulled for discussion).

Clerk's Report

Alec Works, Clerk

Two ruling elders from Westminster may participate in the next meeting of Eastminster Presbytery, scheduled for Tuesday, June 1, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Alec and Shelley (pending availability) offered to attend.

2021-084 MOTION prevailed to elect Shelley Koutnik and Alec Works as commissioners to the June 1, 2021 meeting of Eastminster Presbytery.

With Session’s approval, cards thanking Sheila Svoboda and Valerie Thorson for their service, upon their retirements, will be made available at the church through June 6 for Session members to sign, if they so choose. [Note: A card was also added to thank Adam Kalcic.]

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

2021-085 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of April 27, 2021.

2021-086 MOTION prevailed to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session’s April 27, 2021 meeting

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: none
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: Easter Sunday 4/4/21; 5/9/21 - estimated participation to be reported later. [number of Facebook views for those services].

Average worship attendance for April to be reported later. Facebook Live logins generally range from 35 – 50+.

[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.]

2021-087 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of April 2021:

Total Membership as of 4/1/21	278
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: none	0
Total Membership as of 4/30/21	278

No motion is needed for deletions from membership.

From Outreach:

2021-088 MOTION prevailed to cease food distribution from the back door effective July 1. Food collection will continue in Wright Herberich Hall on the first Sunday of the month prior to the service with all of the food collected going to Goodyear Heights Good Neighbors unit. Food collection from the back door will cease effective July 1, but persons can place donations in the wooden box in the coat room during church business hours.

[Note: In April, Motion 2021-077 prevailed to continue with the First Sunday Food Collection upon returning to in-person worship by placing food and cash donation containers at appropriate labeled entry areas rather than having them collected during the service. Also in April, Motion 2021-083 prevailed to continue the Third Sunday grocery distribution from the back door between 1-2:30 after in person worship resumed.]

From Worship:

2021-089 MOTION prevailed to use funds from Account 309037 (designated to repair/replace music equipment) to purchase a Yamaha P45 88 key Digital Piano with a 60-month repair plan from Valerie Thorson for \$400, to be a replacement for the piano in Wright-Herberich Hall. The original purchase price was \$499.99 plus \$149.99 (60-month repair plan), for a total of \$649.98. The repair plan will transfer to the church with 48 months remaining on the contract. The keyboard is complete with a stand and pedal, is easy to move and will stay in tune. The current piano has a harsh sound and is impossible to keep in tune.

Background: Valerie purchased the keyboard for use at the church, most recently on Christmas Eve. With Valerie leaving she offered us the opportunity to purchase the keyboard. The keyboard is very portable, it has a full weighted keyboard and has a lovely sound. The committee felt that it would be perfect for when we resume services on the patio or in Wright-Herberich Hall. It could also be used for other events at the church.

Committee Reports and Actions

Personnel Committee (report attached; no motions)

Shelley Koutnik for John Childs

Searches continue for a Communications Coordinator or an individual to work audiovisual on Sunday mornings, Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries, and Music Director / Organist.

Finance Committee (April reports and May minutes attached; no motions)

Shelley Koutnik for Todd Willis

Actual revenues through 4/30 were \$251,155; budget was \$180,766. Actual expenses were \$152,191; budget was \$195,275. Net above budget of \$99,664 reflects prepayment of some pledges, nonpledged contributions, and lower expenses due to restricted activities.

Shelley reported that the budgeting process will begin earlier this year, in June. Attempts will be made to remove unneeded line items and to reflect a return to more normal operations.

Properties Committee (No minutes; see motion below)

Ginny Melver

Ginny reported that she is to meet with Frost Architectural Preservation to review blueprints for the steeple. The committee is also working to resolve the issues from the flooding in the WYDACA area approximately one month ago. Over \$10,000 has been spent so far for drying and clean-up. Work is still needed to repair damage to the wall. [The cause may be roots in the drain pipes.] The following motion was presented by the committee and approved:

2021-090 MOTION prevailed to proceed in a timely manner to have repair work done in the WYDACA space, costs not to exceed \$5,000. Damage was caused by recent flooding of the basement. Money is to come from the Capital Improvement Fund. [Note: Properties has three bids which vary in scope. Properties will meet on May 26th at the church to view damaged area, go over

bids and select a vendor. Children will be relocated temporarily in the CE rooms while work is being done.]

Outreach Committee (May minutes were provided after the meeting; see consent agenda and below for motions) Ellen Daugherty

A motion originally included in the consent agenda to allow a Girl Scout Troop to use the church for their meetings has been pulled for now.

The clerk had shared a letter from Christ Woodland Methodist Church thanking Westminster for its support of their food bank program. Ellen noted that our distributions have been cut back for now, not knowing what to anticipate from collections and participation. The letter will be shared with Outreach.

Discipleship Committee (May minutes were attached; see motions below) Sandy Gruneich for Kara Hauerwas
Sandy reported that they had 2 motions to present from their May meeting.

The first is to offer a fellowship and childcare option after the Message for Young Disciples. Discipleship would coordinate overseeing the nursery and recruiting volunteers. If there are not enough parents volunteering, no program would be provided.

2021-091 MOTION prevailed to offer a fellowship and childcare option for children birth through fifth grade after the Message for Young Disciples. It will take place on the playground in good weather, and in the nursery plus adjacent room in case of inclement weather. Staff will include two paid childcare workers and one parent volunteer.

A motion to contact the Properties Committee about possibly removing the large desk in the library to create a more flexible space / opportunities for use of the library was pulled. The two committees will further discuss this idea. A computer that was in the library had been moved to the communication office. There may be a need for another computer at some time for temporary staff.

Worship Committee (No minutes; see consent agenda for motion) Nancy Keogh for Stacy Franzmann

A letter from a member of the congregation asked Session for a response as to why an 8:30 a.m. service was not being offered this summer. Session agreed with the response Pastor Hauerwas had provided, that given various circumstances involved, such an offering is not appropriate at this time. The clerk agreed to respond on behalf of Session.

Safety / Security Task Force Don Rearick
Don had contacted members of the task force regarding new guidelines issued by government agencies. All agreed that we should stay with the plan for resuming activities as originally approved, at least for the first month. Being sensitive to the comfort level of those in attendance is important.

Membership Committee (May minutes attached; no motions) James Gray
James reported that they have resumed work on the church history project (1997 to date). The new pastoral portraits will be hung soon.

Sound System Task Force Shelly Koutnik and James Gray
The new sound / video system was used last Sunday. Some adjustments need to be made, but the sound and visuals were remarkably improved.

Nominating Committee, Deacons, Kitchen Task Force (No reports)

Pastor's Report and Remarks

Pastor Hauerwas

Pastor Jon reported that Sunday, August 8, 2021 has been set aside as Confirmation Sunday, based on the availability of participants. As a follow up to the May 1 visioning discussion, Pastor Jon noted that Polly Davis has agreed to serve on the Membership Committee. Hopes are that the children and youth programs can be further strengthened with the hiring of a new director.

New / Other Business

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 7 p.m. To best accommodate the availability of Session members, it was decided to meet via Zoom.

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 8:52 p.m.

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator