

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, March 22, 2022

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 Rev. David Aber at 7:01 p.m.

Elders (+ present, * excused, - absent)

Class of 2021	Class of 2022	Class of 2023
+ Nancy Keogh	+ Rob Gilbert	+ Ellen Daugherty
+ Rebecca Pool	+ Sandy Gruneich	* Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer
+ Don Rearick	* Ginny Melver	+ Brian Rodabaugh
(vacant)	(vacant)	+ Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Also present: Rev. David Aber, Moderator; guests Dottie Erb, Dan Gorrington, Dave Stobbs and Rosemary Wright (new elders elected March 20, to be formally installed April 3).

[Note: Prior to formally opening the meeting, there was a brief discussion related Shelley Koutnik's resignation as treasurer and acting accountant on March 21, 2022, as included in the consent agenda.]

Opening, Declaration of Quorum, Welcomes and Goodbyes

Pastor David called the meeting to order and opened the Session meeting with prayer at 7:01 pm. The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared. Outgoing elder Nancy Keogh was thanked for her service. Also thanked, Rebecca Pool is returning for a second term and Don Rearick returning to fill an unexpired term. Newly elected elders Dan Gorrington, Dave Stobbs and Rosemary Wright (Class of 2024) and Dottie Erb (filling unexpired term) were welcomed.

Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and the Consent Agenda as amended. The resignations of Shelley Koutnik as Treasurer and elder, and of Tom and her resignations as members were accepted with regret.

Clerk's Report

Alec Works, Clerk

Alec reported that he discussed the transition status with Rev. Richard Lapehn, Eastminster Presbytery's Committee on Ministry (COM) liaison, on March 14, prior to COM's meeting later that week. Pastor David noted that he also spoke with Rev. Lapehn, adding that elders are invited to share their thoughts with Alec or him.

Alec also reported that Abby Haake, who will start as Music Director / Organist in June, had some questions regarding her desire to start a KinderMusik program. These would be best addressed initially by Properties and Personnel.

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

2022-048 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of February 22, 2022.

2022-049 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the Session e-meeting of February 27, 2022.

2022-050 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the special Congregational meeting of March 20, 2022 (to elect new officers).

2022-051 MOTION prevailed to acknowledge approval of virtual Session and congregational meetings held March 24, 2020 through June 22, 2021. [Clerk's note: Although minutes were approved during regular session meetings, virtual meetings should still be approved at an in person meeting.]

2022-052 MOTION prevailed to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's February 22, 2022 meeting:

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: Frank Joseph Holub, Jr. (#7338), February 26 at the Billow Funeral Home; Bruce K. Bain, March 21 at Westminster, service led by Rev. David Aber.
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: 3/13/22 = 69; there were also 46 viewings of the service on YouTube.

Reports of average worship attendance for February (4 in person worship services) = 82. Average viewings on YouTube for February = 88. [Note: In person worship resumed on June 6, 2021. Live broadcast and recorded services are being made available through YouTube.]

2022-053 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of February 2022:

Total Membership as of 2/1/22	281
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: Roger Hilding Nelson (#3148); Frank Joseph Holub, Jr. (#7338)	2
Total Membership as of 2/28/22	279

2022-054 MOTION prevailed to remove Bruce Kahrs Bain (# 3283) from active membership. Bruce died on March 15, 2022.

2022-055 MOTION prevailed to accept with regret the resignation of Shelley Koutnik as elder, Class of 2022, effective March 7, 2022. Also, to accept her resignation as Treasurer, effective March 21, 2022.

2022-056 MOTION prevailed to remove, with regret, Thomas Alan Koutnik (#7407) and Shelley Bricker Koutnik (#7408) from active membership, per their request.

From Properties:

2022-057 MOTION prevailed to allow Tuesday Musical to have a concert at the church on April 19th at 7 pm. They have agreed to pay \$250 for use of the sanctuary and W-H Hall.

[Note: They expect fewer than 100 attendees. It is a free concert and will feature organ and vocal. They will be serving individually wrapped cookies and coffee (bringing their own coffee pots). Our custodian has agreed to adjust his hours to accommodate this event.]

From Worship:

2022-058 MOTION prevailed to approve having Westminster join New Covenant Community Church for a Good Friday service at their church.

Pastor's Discussion

Pastor David, Moderator

Pastor David distributed a 3-page handout. The first page summarized responses from February's meeting when he asked each elder to list 3 challenges facing Westminster on note cards. The second page listed several steps involved in the pastoral transition process, with those for which he would be more involved highlighted. The third page listed the constitutional questions from the Book of Order to be asked of newly elected officers and the congregation at the ordination and installation service on April 3. Copies of the most recent Book of Order were distributed.

Following discussion, which clarified that the "Holy Cow" congregational assessment tool seeks to provide an understanding of the congregation and community to the congregation, Eastminster Presbytery, and the Pastoral Nominating Committee, the following motion was made, seconded and approved:

2022-059 MOTION prevailed to authorize engaging Holy Cow! Consulting to lead us in conducting the congregation assessment.

Alec agreed to contact presbytery and the consultant on starting the process.

Regarding other items on the agenda, Pastor David said he was willing to lead an early worship service in the summer. Since this was not considered in his original contract, he will discuss it with Personnel. He also provided an update on the search for a staff accountant.

Report from Eastminster Presbytery Meeting

Alec Works, Pastor David

Pastor David, Alec Works, and Ginny Melder participated together via Zoom in the March 1, 2022 meeting of Eastminster Presbytery. A summary report was distributed. Pastor David was welcomed into membership. Highlights included moving Sarah Bhatia of the First Presbyterian Church in Hudson from Inquirer to Candidate, per recommendation from the Committee on Ministry. Saints who joined the church triumphant in 2021 were honored; elder Eleanor Humphries from Westminster was recognized.

Committee Reports and Actions

Discipleship Committee (March minutes attached; see motion below)

Sandy Gruneich for Cathy Melder

Discipleship and Outreach together have discussed participating in the Akron Area Interfaith Council of Churches Hunger Walk scheduled for May 1, 2022. The following motion prevailed:

2022-060 MOTION prevailed to approve participating in the Akron Area Interfaith Council of Churches Hunger Walk scheduled for May 1, 2022. Those interested in walking can participate on a voluntary basis. The walk begins at the Universalist Unitarian Church across from Summit Mall and consists of a choice of a one mile or a two-mile walk. Registration begins at 2 PM and the walk begins at 3 PM. Our youth are participating. Pledges collected will be donated to the Akron Canton Food Bank.

Note: An announcement will be made at a morning worship service. Discipleship is also planning an event for after the worship service on May 1. Details, including meal plans, are still being worked out.

Outreach Committee (March minutes were attached; see motion below) Ellen Daugherty
A motion regarding contributing collections received on May 1 to the Akron Canton Foodbank via the Akron Area Interfaith Council of Churches was tabled until Outreach determines how to receive the collections at its April meeting.

Finance Committee (February reports and March minutes were attached; no motions) Alec Works for Todd Willis

Please see the Finance Committee Minutes and Reports for details.

February 2022 Year-to-date Actual Revenues and Expenses (unaudited):

	Actual	Budget	Difference
Revenues	\$ 105,367.98	\$ 82,359.66	\$ 23,008.32
Expenses	<u>\$ 51,300.69</u>	<u>\$ 89,156.54</u>	<u>\$ 37,855.85</u>
Surplus	\$ 54,067.29	\$ (6,796.88)	<u>\$ 60,864.17</u>

Both pledged and unpledged contributions remain slightly above budget; revenues in January included end of year Endowment Fund distributions. Expenses are under budget largely due to Personnel costs.

Safety / Security Task Force (Report attached; see request for motion below) Don Rearick
Don reported that the task force recommends that Westminster should remove the mask mandate, encouraging worshipers to decide if their health concerns prompt them to continue to mask. In this regard, Westminster should consider a trigger point in case conditions turn back to a serious contagion of the virus. The report also includes recommendations regarding communion, refreshments and meals, and use of church facilities by outside groups. Per discussions, the following motion was made, seconded and approved:

2022-061 MOTION prevailed to suspend the mandatory mask requirement for all functions of Westminster Presbyterian Church. Wearing of masks is optional. If the CDC recognizes a high risk for Summit County, the Safety / Security Task Force, on behalf of Session, may reinstate requiring masks and/or other precautions through an email announcement to the congregation. For coffee hour and other social functions, any food items offered should be served rather than offered as self-service (i.e., buffet style). Outside groups may set their own mask requirements, but facilities should be thoroughly cleaned prior to occupancy or use by Westminster.

Worship Committee (February minutes attached; see motion below) Nancy Keogh for Stacy Franzmann

Several motions from the committee were discussed. Regarding serving communion, Worship will finalize procedures which may include some modifications from how communion was served pre-pandemic. Attendance at the early summer worship service will be monitored to help decide whether it is continued. Pastor David is planning some time off in August. The budget includes funding for the Jazz Vesper service. The following motions were approved:

2022-062 MOTION prevailed to return to the pre-pandemic method of administering Communion with the elements served on trays, at the front of the sanctuary.

2022-063 MOTION prevailed to resume the 8:30 Early Summer Worship service for the months of June and July.

2022-064 MOTION prevailed to approve that that if a family requests that a funeral or memorial service be streamed, a fee of \$100 be paid directly to our AV employee by the family. This is in keeping with how other fees are handled.

2022-065 MOTION prevailed to approve having a Jazz Vespers Service on May 15 at 4:00 p.m. with Theron Brown and his ensemble leading.

Properties Committee (March minutes were attached; see consent agenda for motion)

Ellen Daugherty for Ginny Melder

Ellen noted that the Tuesday Musical event on April 19 includes the use of Wright-Herberich Hall for refreshments.

Personnel, Nominating, Membership, Deacons (No reports)

Following committee reports, the following motion was made, seconded and approved:

2022-066 MOTION prevailed to receive all of the above reports as presented.

Old / New / Other Business

New moderators for Worship, Nominating and Membership need to be determined. Preferably, an active elder can serve as moderator. Pastor David reported that officer training will be included as part of future Session meetings. Elders were reminded that the next virtual meeting of Eastminster Presbytery is at 3:00 p.m. on June 7, 2022. Two commissioners are needed.

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at 7 p.m. Rob Gilbert agreed to serve as Acting Clerk for that meeting since Alec asked to be excused.

There was no other new business. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved. The meeting was then closed in prayer at 8:22 p.m.

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Rev. David Aber, Moderator