

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Akron, Ohio

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

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 2018	Class of 2019	Class of 2020
+ Ellen Daugherty	* Harriet Chapman	+ Michael Dunbar
+ Nancy Keogh	+ James Gray	+ Brad Hall
+ Gert Wilms	+ Ed Labbe	+ Shelley Koutnik, Treasurer
(vacant)	+ Alec Works, Clerk of Session	+ Todd Willis

Also present: Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator, and Alcee Chriss III, guest.

Opening

Pastor Jon opened the meeting with prayer at 7:02 pm.

Quorum and Welcome to Guest

The presence of a quorum was confirmed and declared. Alcee Chriss III, our new Music Director / Organist, was welcomed. A **motion** was made, seconded and approved to extend the floor to Alcee.

Adoption of Agenda and Consent Agenda

A **motion prevailed** to adopt and approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda as amended (a motion to approve the 2019 Communion schedule was removed from the Consent Agenda since the schedule has not been finalized.)

Clerk's Report

Alec did not have any correspondence to report. Work is progressing on the Clerk's Annual Questionnaire (due 11/15) and identifying and contacting members who have not been active in recent years. Session may submit names of active or inactive Ruling Elders to the Committee on Nominations and Representation of Eastminster Presbytery for consideration in serving.

The Consent Agenda as approved included the following motions:

2018-181 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the regular Session meeting of September 25, 2018.

2018-182 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes of the E-meeting of September 28, 2018 ((to approve temporary hires).

2018-183 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes for the E-meeting of October 2, 2018 (to schedule a new members class).

2018-184 MOTION prevailed to approve the minutes for the Special Session Meeting of October 21, 2018 (to receive new members).

2018-185 MOTION prevailed to receive the following report of all weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Communion that have taken place since Session's September 25, 2018 meeting:

1. Weddings: none
2. Funerals: none
3. Baptisms: none
4. Communion: October 7, 2018 (10:30 a.m.)

2018-186 MOTION prevailed to receive the report of the average worship attendance for September: 145 (10:30 a.m. service).

2018-187 MOTION prevailed to approve the membership statistical report for the month of September 2018:

Total Membership as of 9/1/18	409
Additions: none	0
Deletions: none	0
Deaths: none	0
Total Membership as of 9/30/18	409

No motion is needed to remove anyone from active membership.

2018-188 MOTION prevailed to elect Todd Willis as commissioner to the next meeting of Eastminster Presbytery, at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 4 at the Vine Fellowship in Copley.

From Properties:

2018-189 MOTION prevailed to approve a building use request from member Chris Blaha on behalf of the University of Akron Faculty Brass Quintet and Faculty Woodwind Quintet to use the sanctuary for a joint concert on November 19, 2018. Time, details and final cost will be based on the Building Use form once it is submitted. [Clerk's note: Chris said in his request that facilities were unavailable at the University of Akron. Services of a crossing guard are anticipated. Since Chris is a member of Westminster, the building use fee would be \$50. They would also be responsible for costs for the crossing guard for a minimum of 3 hours at \$30.50 per hour.]

2018-190 MOTION prevailed to approve using up to \$1,600 from the Barnett Fund to repaint the exterior door area on the CE building by Ohio Living.

2018-191 MOTION prevailed to approve spending up to \$4,000 to repair the end the driveway off West Exchange.

2018-192 MOTION prevailed to approve use of the kitchen and Wright Herberich Hall for the Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast on May 11, 2019, as well the Celtic Garden's plant sale that day.

Committee Reports and Actions

[Clerk's note: James Gray was excused from the portions of the meeting addressing Personnel and Discipleship, since he is Youth Coordinator Mallory Gray's husband.]

Worship Committee (No minutes; see motions below)

Alcee Chriss, Nancy Keogh

Alcee Chriss first led a discussion of the Choral Scholar program. The choir currently consists of 20 women and 6 men. Three section leaders and some other regular choir members have not returned from last year. Dawna Rae Warren and Elizabeth Crabtree currently serve as scholars. Zack Troyer is considered a ½ Choral Scholar as he leaves the service midway to lead the children's choir. We pay \$40/Sunday for undergraduates and \$60/Sunday for graduates. Alcee is particularly concerned about the strength of the choral program going into the Christmas holiday season. The Worship Committee offers the following motion for Session consideration: To approve the hiring of 6 ½ Choral Scholars, in total, the majority of whom should be male. Alcee will audition for all new positions. Preference would be given to students in an effort to assist with the budget.

Shelley Koutnik noted that the 2018 annual budget for Choral Scholars is \$7,525, of which \$5,360 has already been spent (through 10/31). \$2,165 is left for November and December. Alcee was not aware that the Choral Scholars were previously only paid, generally, to perform 3 Sundays a month, not every Sunday. [Soloists for the other Sundays are paid from endowment funds.]

Alcee then led a discussion of the Five at Five concert program. Postcards were recently mailed to previous donors updating them on the program. Alcee recently met with Shelley to review the status of the program, since it is funded independently. Alcee has various ideas about the future direction of the program. These could include changes in the funding. One idea would be to provide more recognition to donors. Another is to better encourage contributions at the concerts. For Westminster to maintain its nonprofit status, the recommendation was made that a nonprofit tax specialist be consulted for any proposed funding changes. The recommendation was made to establish a task force, starting in January 2019, to review future program options. They would report their findings and recommendations to the Worship Committee. Alcee noted that the Five at Five name "is catchy", but he may want more flexibility in programming.

Alcee was then thanked as he left at 7:41 p.m.

Session then further discussed the proposals. For the Choral Scholars, there was agreement about expeditiously addressing Alcee's concerns. However, there were questions about the proper protocol, specifically regarding the motion having come from Worship and not Personnel. After discussion, the following motion was made, seconded, and approved by a majority of the elders present:

2018-193 MOTION prevailed to table the motion presented by Worship to approve the hiring of a total of 6 ½ Choral Scholars. [Clerk's note: There may have been some misunderstanding as to whether the original motion should have been tabled or postponed. In either case, the intent was resolved with the following motion.]

The following motion was then made, seconded and approved:

2018-194 MOTION prevailed to forward Worship's request to approve the hiring of a total of 6 ½ Choral Scholars to Personnel for their consideration, taking into account their budget. They are asked to then present their recommendation to Session.

Pastor Jon will ask Personnel to hold an emergency meeting this week to review this matter. Pastor Jon will then call either an E-meeting or Special meeting of Session to review Personnel's recommendation.

Regarding the Five at Five program, a motion was made and seconded to create an advisory committee to research options and provide a vision for the program. This committee of 5 to 7 persons would start in January 2019 and would report to Session. Alcee Chriss will serve as staff liaison. No budget is anticipated at this time. [If a tax advisor cannot be obtained on a voluntary basis, the committee may need to request funding from Session.]

2018-195 MOTION prevailed to create an advisory committee to research options and provide a vision for the Five at Five program. This committee of 5 to 7 persons would start in January 2019 and would report to Session. Alcee Chriss will serve as staff liaison.

Finally, under Worship, Alcee is scheduled to perform on December 9 as part of the Five at Five concert series. The 2019 communion schedule will be presented for approval at Session's November meeting.

Personnel Committee (No minutes; see motion below)

Pastor Hauerwas

After reviewing over 150 applications received from Indeed.com, the Personnel Committee moves to hire David Bodnar to serve as our full-time custodian at a rate of pay of \$18/hour. He will be eligible for an increase after a positive 90 day review. David receives medical benefits from the Veteran's Administration and is not in need of the medical benefits that Westminster would typically provide with this position. However, he is interested in dental coverage. The Personnel Committee suggests that we offer \$1,000 annually for a medical/dental allowance. This allowance would be taxable and could be paid quarterly or once per year. There is also a 5% contribution to a retirement savings plan benefit for this position. David would be expected to work on Sundays and to provide coverage for weddings, funerals/memorials, and other special events at the church. David's references have been checked. His background check is in order, and his drug test results were as we would hope and expect.

2018-196 MOTION prevailed to hire David Bodnar to serve as our full-time custodian at a rate of pay of \$18/hour. He will be eligible for an increase after a positive 90 day review. In lieu of standard medical benefits, after his first 90 days he may be offered a \$1,000 taxable annual allowance which he may use towards dental benefits, with the benefit paid to him quarterly. Benefits will also include a 5% contribution to a retirement savings plan, again starting after his first 90 days.

Discipleship Committee (October minutes were attached; no motions)

Ed Labbe

Moderator Ed Labbe reported on the successful Youth outing to Ramseyer Farms on Sunday.

[James Gray then rejoined the meeting.]

Finance Committee (September financial reports were attached; no motions)

Todd Willis, Shelley Koutnik

Moderator Todd Willis explained that year-to-date contributions are down approximately \$18,000; receipts were somewhat better in September. Expenses are also under budget. No withdrawals have been made from Rowley Fund principal to date. Pledge cards are to be mailed at the end of this week. [Note: Cards requesting donations for the Five at Five program have normally been mailed in late spring or summer; they were mailed in the fall this year.]

Properties Committee (October minutes were attached; see consent agenda for motions)

Ellen Daugherty for Ginny Melver

Ellen Daugherty reported they are still working to replace the dishwasher. Physical space is one issue. Dave Stobbs recently resigned due to other commitments; his services will be missed.

Membership Committee (No minutes nor motions)

James Gray

Moderator James Gray reported that a new site map has been approved for the new church web site. They need to provide the web-hosting fee to Shelley. They are still targeting staff training for early December.

Outreach Committee (No minutes nor motions)

Pastor Jon for Gert Wilms

Moderator Gert Wilms reported that, since her term as elder ends this December, Becky Pool has agreed to serve as Moderator starting in January. The following motion was made, seconded and approved:

2018-197 MOTION prevailed to appoint Becky Pool as Moderator of the Outreach Committee, beginning in January 2019.

Nominating Committee (No minutes nor motions)

Pastor Jon

Pastor Jon reported that he received an email from Harriet Chapman stating that she regretfully was resigning from Session due to other commitments. She stated that she would continue to serve Westminster as her schedule permits.

Phil Fry had reported to Pastor Jon and Alec that some members have accepted invitations to serve and that the committee has plenty of names to contact for remaining positions.

Board of Deacons (No minutes nor motions)

Safe Church Task Force

Pastor Jon reported that Presbytery has published a report. He agreed to follow up with the committee on submitting a local policy.

Pastor's Report and Remarks

Pastor Jon had no other items to bring forward at this time.

New / Other Business

There was no report on the Disciplefest held at Northminster Presbyterian Church since no elders attended.

A suggestion was made that some refreshments be provided after Alcee's recital on December 9, possibly coffee, punch, and/or cookies. That would help facilitate Alcee's being able to meet and mingle with attendees. Pastor Jon will follow up with the Deacons.

The next regular Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 27, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

With no other business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved. The meeting was then adjourned with prayer at 8:43 p.m.

Alec Works, Clerk of Session

Pastor Jon Hauerwas, Moderator