

MONDAY, MAY 15, 2023
REGULAR MEETING OF SESSION

On Monday, May 15, 2023, the 646th regular meeting of Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church was held in Galbreath Chapel at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Dr. Forrest was the Moderator and opened the meeting with prayer at 7:05 p.m.

Attending were Dr. Forrest and Elders Baculik, Berrott, Eccher, Exley, Galbreath, Heilman, Locke, Ludwig, Malarkey, Marsh, McGee, Rost, Waller, Widmar, and Williams, constituting a quorum.

REPORT OF THE CLERK

A motion to approve the minutes of the 645th (April 17, 2023) regular meeting of Session was made, seconded, and approved. A motion to approve the membership action reported below also was made, seconded, and approved.

BAPTISMS

April 16, 2023

Eleanor Dee Wilkinson Parents: Stefani and Micah Wilkinson
Amelia Joye Wilkinson

DEATHS

Caroline ‘Carol’ Farmer, April 22, 2023
Joan Oliver, May 1, 2023

MEMBERSHIP

Inactive, Letter of Transfer

William and Carol Capps, First Presbyterian Church of Greensburg, PA
Richard and Phyllis Kiser, Trinity United Methodist Church, McMurray, PA

SERVICE OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

During worship services on Sunday June 4, 2023, the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was administered to communicants.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Report of the Endowment Commission on Grants

Prior to the meeting, Rob Wagner, Chair of the Endowment & Special Gifts Fund, submitted a written report of grants recommended by the Endowment Committee for 2023.

The total to be disbursed this year will be \$144,000. The Fund requested Session approval for the following grants:

Mission/Outreach

- \$19,000 to City Mission as part of the fundraising for the planning and construction of a 50-bed women's shelter in Washington, PA. The \$5.5 million project will address a critical area of need in the housing of homeless women.
- \$12,500 to Bible Center Church Oasis Project in Homewood for classroom furnishings/equipment for the "Own Our Own" program, a 13-week business training course for minority entrepreneurs. This academy has graduated 80 students and is part of the ministry of Bible Center Church/John and Cynthia Wallace.

Bridge Service

- \$2,000 for periodic enhancements to the music program
- \$10,500 for new microphones to enhance the sound for in-person and online worship
- \$10,500 to purchase and install a new lighting package to considerably brighten the service

Youth

- \$64,500 to include the second year of temporary funding for the Assistant Youth Director position and upgrades to the JAM room (5th and 6th grades) for new flooring and furnishings

Communications

- \$3,000 for electric paper cutter to improve the card stock product and significantly reduce staff time

Property

- \$20,000 transfer to the Special Property Needs fund to bolster this balance for future capital projects

Chancel Guild

- \$2,000 to supplement donations for various floral enhancements for Christmas and Easter services, other special worship services, church luncheons, and seasonal displays

Following a brief discussion, a motion was made to approve the disbursements that the Endowment Committee recommended. The motion was seconded and was passed unanimously.

Officer Nomination and Recruiting

Dr. Forrest advised Session that the Nominating Committee for Elders and Deacons will meet September 7, 2023. She urged members of Session to consider potential candidates and suggestions on how Westminster can cultivate leaders for the future. Some members expressed concern about transitioning when the term of an Elder who is a commission chair expires. Elder Eccher suggested that Session should increase efforts to explain to members what the commissions do and should make a special effort to involve new members.

Commission Reports and Actions

The following Commissions submitted written reports prior to the meeting:

Adult Spiritual Development
Children's and Family Ministries/WECEP
Community Engagement
Endowment and Special Gifts
Finance
Outreach
Personnel
Stewardship
Worship
Youth Ministry

In addition to the written reports, Elder Galbreath reported on behalf of the Property Commission that some unexpected maintenance issues have arisen that might require significant expenditures. He reported a new leak in the roof of the sanctuary as well as deficiencies with power supply and alarm systems. He stated that the Commission expects to have an engineer's report on those issues soon and will provide recommendations and cost estimates. He also advised the balance of the Forward in Faith campaign is approximately \$38,000.

Elder Heilman, Chair of the Stewardship Commission, advised that the Commission is exploring ways to increase giving throughout the year and expanding the participation of members in supporting the Church financially. He noted that only one-half of the families of Westminster currently make financial contributions.

Elders Kristy Berrott and Karen Williams showed a brief video of the WECEP Arts Festival that was held on May 13, 2023. Every child did an art project that was displayed at the Festival.

Elder Marsh described the process and status of the search for a transitional associate pastor. He reported that six candidates have completed the interview process, but none were considered to be the right fit for the position. One candidate has completed the initial interviews and has been referred for an interview with Dr. Forrest. Elder Marsh stated that two or three additional candidates have expressed interest in the position.

SENIOR PASTOR'S REPORT

Dr. Forrest reported that Chris Hestwood has been offered the additional role of Interim Director of Communications. She will be responsible for managing all communications with members and with the community at large and for supervising the current staff members who are involved in church publications, large-distribution emails, and written messaging to members, and for disseminating information about events at Westminster. Chris recently retired from a distinguished career of music education in the Upper St. Clair School System. She is looking forward to taking on these communication responsibilities in addition to continuing her outstanding work leading Westminster's music programs.

Dr. Forrest informed Session that she recently attended a Presbyterian Foundation meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina that brought together 30 other pastors of "big steeple" churches similar to Westminster. She stated that the meeting was energizing and the Spirit was felt by the attending pastors as they shared ideas and experiences about the ways that churches can be engaged in their communities and grow where they are planted.

Dr. Forrest also discussed the scheduling of Session meetings during the summer. She noted that a meeting usually is not held in July and asked if sufficient members will be available on June 19 to make a quorum. Most of the members present indicated that they will be able to attend, so the meeting for June 19, 2023 was confirmed.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Meeting participants shared individual joys and concerns for the Church, its members and their families, and for the community.

ADJOURNMENT WITH PRAYER

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m. with prayer led by Dr. Forrest. The next meeting of Session will be held on June 19, 2023 in Galbreath Chapel.

Respectfully submitted,

William C. Ludwig
Clerk of Session

Approved:

