



Connecting Hearts, Renewing Lives

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
140 Gathering Place Lane | Iowa City, IA 52246
www.saintandrew-ic.org

Session Meeting Minutes September 16, 2021 at 7 pm

Moderator: Rev. W. Robert Martin III

Attending Members: Elders: Tim Benson, L'Engle Charis-Carlson (via zoom), Graham Dameron, Susie Engelhardt (via zoom), Melissa Fath, (via zoom), Eric Goers (via zoom), Thomas Hartley (via zoom), Virginia Ibrahim-Olin, Sara Penn, Beth Ann Pigge, Rebecca Schuchert, Gregs Thomopulos, Toni Van Voorhis, and Bruce Walker (via zoom); Pastors: Rob Martin and Kyle Otterbein (via zoom)..

Excused Members: Becka Simpson, Doug Wildes

Scheduled Guests: John Benson, Finance Director, Mary Jane Claassen, interim Director of Music Ministry, special guest, 3-Week-Old newborn Josie Ibrahim-Olin

Devotions & Opening Prayer: Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm by Pastor Rob Martin. Mary Jane Claassen introduced herself as the new interim director of music ministry. She will be married November 6th, grew up as a Presbyterian Minister's daughter and has been involved in church music all her life. Pastor Rob's devotion tonight is based on Carol McCloud's book, Have You Filled a Bucket Today, a guide to daily happiness. (You need other people to fill your bucket; and you can fill your own and those of others, too. A loving caring person is a bucket-filler. You can dip into a bucket to obtain good feelings or empty it of such). The book reading was followed by prayer.

Amend/Approve Agenda

Motion to approve agenda as written.

MSC

Approval of Session Minutes:

- Minutes from August 2021

Motion to approve minutes as written.

MSC

Consent Agenda

- **Team Reports:**

- Deacons
- Worship

Motion to approve the consent agenda.

MSC

Leadership Team Reports

- **Lead Pastor: Rob Martin.** Certain months the session meeting comes too close to monthly team meetings which results in the agenda being formulated later or reports being added late. Pastor Rob will meet with session clerk to evaluate calendar to see if this can be improved upon. Presbytery Meeting is this Saturday and St Andrew can have up to 3 commissioners attend from 10-12:30 pm. Beth Anne Pigge volunteered to serve as a commissioner; and Jeff Charis-Carlson can also serve as he will be attending to discuss the upcoming October Presbytery retreat at St Andrew. Rob will meet individually with staff to assess the past year and look at goals and objectives for next year. Once these individual meetings are completed, the staff will be matched with their personnel team liaison. Keystone Place has asked Rob to offer weekly worship services to that facility; he hopes to bring Mary Jane to offer music as part of this from time to time. There is a memory care facility located there so music is very beneficial.

Sat Oct 23 there will be a special dinner, spouses included, with retreat presenter Dee Decker, providing the ability to enter into additional conversation with her following her presentation on Where the Digital Meets the Divide, expanding our digital bandwidth.

- **Associate Pastor: Kyle Otterbein.** He reminded session that we return to 2 services with Christian Ed between services this coming Sunday. There will be a 7-8th grade and high school class as well as classes for younger children. One of the adult ed offerings will be led by our Act Justly group who is leading discussion on the All Presbytery Reads book selection, Caste. The Ludvicks, mission partners, will be here the last Sunday of September, Dee Decker who is leading the Oct workshop will answer questions the Sunday she is in attendance, and Stephen Ministry will also offer a 3-week session in Nov. A question about on-line

engagement was asked and this is being considered but nothing formal has yet been set. Prompted Conversations could be reinstated and conducted on zoom at a different time so as not to detract from the Christian Education hour.

Transfer of membership-Ann Weber, John Weiler, MaryJane Claassen and sons as baptized members

Reaffirmation of faith Matt Blake Ally McGraham,

Motion to approve these new members.

MSC

• Ministry Directors:

- Youth Ministry
- Children's and Family Ministry

Clerk's Report: Presbytery will be reviewing the session minutes in October. We have 2 year's-worth of minutes to review due to the medical leave of clerk last fall, need to fill the office administrator position, and the pandemic.

Motion to appoint Patti Benson as clerk for the next year.

MSC

Action & Discussion Items From Teams:

MOS

-September Report

-Funding Requests:

Recommended funding through LDB (Locally Determined Benevolence):

Andy and Nichole Stewart (through Christar) for mission work in Chicago preparing to go to SE Asia \$3000 (third year of support)

**Disaster relief (Through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance):
Haiti \$1000, Hurricane Ida \$1000**

**Supplies for Knitting project to benefit Shelter House through MHI (Mental Health Initiatives) \$300
Supplies for Prayer Shawl Ministry \$300**

Motion to approve funding requests listed above.

MSC

MOS would like to strongly request from Session that 10% (tithe) of leftover stimulus funds be given to Mission to support projects.

Finance

- September Report & Background for Motions (John Benson, Finance Director)
 - Monthly Financials (Pages 1-18)
 - Endowment Declaration (Pages 19-20):

Motion: For Session to approve the updated Endowment policy. *(The changes basically align policy with existing practices — the old policy listed one or more committees that don't really exist)*

MSC

- Pension and Cafeteria Plan (Pages 21-22):

Motion: For Session to approve the proposed Pension and Cafeteria Plan, which already has been approved by the Personnel Team. (The proposed policy basically puts into writing what we already are doing in practice; it does not signify a change in how we handle retirement plans.)

MSC

- Excess Cash Discussion (page 23): Finance Team reported that there was \$112,000 of excess cash as calculated at the start of 2021 (resulting mainly from the PPP loan of some \$93,000 that was borrowed and legally forgiven in 2020, and that \$56,000 (half) of the \$112,000 had already been allocated for various purposes in the first half of 2021. Session discussed allocating the other \$56,000. It was recommended that Session members go back to their teams to obtain suggestions for the next Session meeting as to how to spend this \$28,000 (half the remaining \$56,000 is \$28,000), subject to finance team recommendation that \$9,000 of this \$28,000 go toward loan principal reduction. Any decisions on

spending the final \$28,000 would then be deferred until the end of the year. *(The analysis provided on page 23 provide more information.)*

Motion: to allocate \$9000 of excess funds toward payment of building debt.

MSC

Net income through August was \$13,225, on total income that is roughly \$20,000 higher than the prior year-to-date. Giving last month was lowest total seen for the year, but still within expectations.

Musical last weekend brought in free will donations for the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County in the amounts of \$1690 from the two performances plus additional donations; grand total not yet computed.
bet

Pastor Rob noted that there are three balances in designated funds that could be distributed. One is local – for derecho relief. He shared he would talk to local church contacts in Cedar Rapids to determine the need. The other two are for disaster relief and Haiti. He suggested donating these funds – using the Presbyterian USA Disaster Relief. No objection was raised in proceeding as suggested.

Capital Campaign Discussion (Elder Gregs Thomopoulos) ■ Proposal by Horizons Stewardship to serve as consultant for the next capital campaign. Tom Norwood was the advisor for the past campaign and would serve again if approved. Pros and cons were discussed by finance team and they decided services of an outside consultant may be beneficial, depending partly on the cost. Gregs met with Tom regarding fees for services.

- Discussion centered on whether we should engage an outside consultant or do this on our own. Tom Norwood said congregations raise twice the amount when using their services. A consultant has been used in all previous campaigns, with Tom Norwood as the advisor on the most recent campaign. It is hard for volunteers to put in the effort and time needed to insure a successful campaign. Finance team will plan to propose a motion at the October meeting after further discussion with Tom and his company as to the cost for a campaign. The next capital campaign – with formal pledges

made – would need to be in place prior to the September 30, 2022 completion of the present capital campaign. It was decided that Session would resume discussion next meeting after Gregs obtains a final cost figure from Tom for his company's consultant services.

- **Social Justice Statement**

- St. Andrew's Act Justly group has proposed a **Statement on Racial Equality and Reconciliation** for the Session to consider. They are asking for a reading of their final draft with plans to incorporate Session comments and bring a final version for a vote during the October meeting. Send comments to clerk and copy Pastor Rob.

- **Personnel** (Elder Graham Dameron)

- Personnel Team is asking for a reading of the updated Staff Personnel Policy Manual, with plans to incorporate Session comments and bring a final version for a vote during the October meeting. October 5th is the next personnel team meeting. Please submit written comments to the team prior to that meeting.

Old Business

Mask use policy. The policy should be listed on the website and reminders presented to the congregation.

New Business

Installation and ordination of remaining elders will take place on October 10th at 11 am. Pastor Rob will try to schedule baptisms and special installations, etc at 11 am so as not to have the first service run over in length. The online service livestream will be done for both the 8:30 and 11 am services.

Rocket Docket: Invitation to join Kyle and LeAnn Otterbein at the Shelter House fundraiser for BBQ Bash on Sept 24th.

Elder Gregs Thomopulos closed the meeting in prayer at 8:35 pm

.Next Meeting: 7 p.m. October 21, 2021

Patricia Benson

Rev W. Robert Martin, III

Clerk of session

Moderator