

Presbytery Meeting Overview, November 19, 2020

The 253rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley began with worship, featuring a sermon delivered by the Rev. Rebecca Tollefson as a fitting send off to her year as Moderator, as well as communion, during which a scrolling necrology list of all the saints who had entered the Church Triumphant in 2018 was displayed.

After welcoming first-time commissioners and seating Rev. Dr. Doug Portz, Board of Pensions, the business of the meeting began in earnest. Rev. Dr. Jeannie Harsh, Executive Presbyter, thanked out-going Treasurer, Rev. Roger Au, for his two years of service to the presbytery during her staff report. She also reminded the assembled body of the value of their per capita and mission-giving dollars to the fruitfulness of the presbytery's mission and ministry. She then invited Portz to address the body, during which time he reviewed the many offerings available – many of them relatively new – and especially commended the Board of Pensions document, "Living By the Gospel" (PLN-619), as an invaluable resource for pastors and churches alike.

The first agenda item was the final report from the Administrative Commission overseeing the dissolution of the Pisgah-Mt. Pleasant Federated Church. This AC's two motions – (1) "The Administrative Commission for Pisgah-Mt. Pleasant Federated Church requests that the Presbytery of Scioto Valley dissolve the congregation and transfer the property to the new corporation of Pisgah-Mt. Pleasant Church with a three (3) year stipulation that if the church closes, the property will revert back to Presbytery of Scioto Valley ownership. That three years will begin with the date of the execution of this agreement" and (2) The Administrative Commission be dissolved" – were both met with an affirmative vote.

Rev. Don Hilkerbaumer presented Jim Wagner for election as the Presbytery's next Treasurer, effective January 1, 2020 and the body voted to confirm this appointment to this volunteer position. Hilkerbaumer also presented the slate of candidates for General Assembly in 2020. A slate of five ruling elders – Kathi Bubb, Christine Burns, L. Kae Merold, Connie Price, Evelyn Walker – and three teaching elders – Jeri-Lynne Bouterse, Sarah Juist, Desiree Youngblood – were presented, as was Milo Browne as a Young Adult Advisory Delegate. (One of the Teaching Elder positions automatically goes to Moderator-elect, Mark Gauen). Aided by five Associate Clerks and the chair of the Nominating Committee, the election ran smoothly.

While the votes were being tallied, Rev. Mary Gause, chair of the Commission for Nurture and Outreach (CNO), presented her Commission's work since our last gathering as a body, primarily focusing on important announcements regarding January 2020's Partners in Education (P.I.E.) event at Worthington Presbyterian Church, as well as reporting on a grant given to Rev. Mary Gene Boteler and Rev. Dr. Rick Nutt to support their participation in the PC (U.S.A.)'s "Mosaic of Peace Conference" in March 2020.

At the conclusion of the CNO report, a break was called during which time refreshments were enjoyed almost as much as the fellowship.

Upon returning to business, the GA Commissioner results were revealed:
Ruling Elder Commissioners

- Kathi Bubb
- Christine Burns
- Kae Merold
- First Alternative: Evelyn Walker
- Second Alternative: Connie Price

Teaching Elder Commissioners

- Sarah Juist
- Jeri-Lynne Bouterse
- First Alternative: Desiree Youngblood

Milo Browne was also confirmed as the Young Adult Advisory Delegate.

Next in the docket was a report from Dr. Bob Gustafson, chair of the Commission for Presbytery Operations. Gustafson led the body in electing the Corporate Board of the Presbytery.

- President – Elder Jim Hines, CPO chair-elect
- Vice President – Rev. Roger Au
- Secretary – Rev. Jeff Schooley, Stated Clerk
- Treasurer – Elder Jim Wagner, Presbytery Treasurer

After this time, a conversation regarding the proposed 2020 Budget – now in its second reading – and corresponding proposed per capita increase was had. At the beginning of the discussion a motion was made to refer the budget back to the Commission for Presbytery Operations (CPO) with the mandate to return a budget that reflected a no-more-than \$2 per capita increase at the 254th Stated Meeting of the Presbytery on February 18, 2020. After rigorous debate, the question was called, and a hand-raise vote was taken. With a clear majority visibly raising their hands, the Moderator declared the motion (that is, the proposed budget) officially referred back to the Commission. Upon the end of the vote, Gustafson concluded his report, noting that it was his last after six years of chairmanship of the Commission for Presbytery Operations. As he exited the chancel, he was met by robust applause as a sign of gratitude for his service.

Rev. Charlotte O'Neil delivered a very brief report from the Commission for Congregational Life (CCL), mostly highlighting the report on Session Review Records.

Rev. Ann Melick, chair of the Commission for Church Professionals (CCP), bestowed gift bags to new pastors/CREs – Rev. Frank LeBlanc, Rev. Maureen Clark, and CRE Tom Billman – welcoming them to the presbytery in the only way we know how: with a blue baseball hat with the presbytery logo on it! She then invited Kae Merold to give a report on the work that Commissioned Ruling Elders do in and throughout our presbytery, encouraging pastors and ruling elders to keep an eye out for anyone who might have both the giftings and the calling to pursue this

invaluable and increasingly needed service to the church. Rev. Sarah Juist presented a first reading on a revised Sabbatical Leave Policy, which was met with a couple of clarifying questions, and then encouraged everyone to familiarize themselves with the policy and send any questions/reflections/recommendations to herself or Melick for CCP's review. Rev. Todd Tracy followed by presenting a motion for an alternative exam exception for Edward Lewis. Lewis, who has taken the Worship and Sacraments ordination exam on six separate occasions and has received inconsistent feedback from the various readers, had asked CCP to consider this *Book of Order*-provided alternative and CCP had agreed. The parameters of this testing, which will include both written and oral examination, were discussed. Approval of an alternative exam requires a three-fourths majority vote by the presbytery, which this motion clearly received. Melick ended CCP's report by highlighting upcoming "Fireside Chats" opportunities, as well as revealing the Presbytery Professionals retreat day for 2020 (November 1-3, 2020).

There was no Coordinating Team report or New Business, so the meeting concluded with the installation of Rev. Mark Gauen as the next Moderator and Commissioned Ruling Elder Kae Merold as the next Vice Moderator. Rev. Rebecca Tollefson led the assembled in the installation liturgy and was thanked by Rev. Dr. Jeannie Harsh for her year of service.

So concluded the 253rd Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of Scioto Valley. Official meeting minutes will be made available on the presbytery's website shortly before the next Stated Meeting.

Humbly Submitted,

Rev. Jeffrey A. Schooley, Stated Clerk