

PRESBYTERY DIGEST

A summary of actions & information from the meeting of Pittsburgh Presbytery
February 21, 2019
Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

The meeting was called to order by the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. Trent Hancock, at 1:00 PM and opened with prayer. The Rev. Dr. Diane Givens Moffett, Executive Director of the Presbyterian Mission Agency, preached and the Rev. Nikki Porter, Minister of Music at Eastminster Presbyterian Church, led music as part of the special celebration of the contributions of African American congregations. During worship, an offering of \$1,845.16 was received for equal distribution to the [Lazarus Fund](#) and the [Hunger Fund](#). This amount will be matched by the [Pittsburgh Presbyterian Foundation](#).

From the Executive Committee:

Recommended the following for presbytery action; **approved**:

- waiver of six-year limitation on terms for one elder of the Beechview United Presbyterian Church beginning in 2019
- waiver of six-year limitation on terms for two elders of the Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church beginning in 2019
- waiver of six-year limitation on terms for one elder of Lincoln Place Presbyterian Church beginning in 2019
- waiver of six-year limitation on terms for one elder and two deacons of the Swissvale Presbyterian Church beginning in 2019
- permission for sale of manse by The Presbyterian Church of Plum Creek
- permission for the South Side Presbyterian Church to encumber its property by seeking City of Pittsburgh Historical Landmark Status for the building
- receive and file for audit the Presbytery Financial Statements for the months of October and November 2018

Announced the following:

- the Ecclesiastical Committee is seeking recommendations for persons to serve on the Committee on Representation of Pittsburgh Presbytery
- there are vacancies on the Ecclesiastical and Nominating Committees; interested individuals should contact the office of the Stated Clerk

Elected the following:

- Elder Chris Martin (East Liberty Presbyterian Church) as Treasurer of Pittsburgh Presbytery for a one year term
- Elder Christine Blackwood and the Rev. Jodi Flack as co-chairs of the Ecclesiastical Committee; Elder Dan Beckstrom as Chair of the Finance Committee; and Elder Fred Shields as Chair of the Property Committee
- Elder William Crawford as representative on the Board of Directors of Crestfield Camp & Conference Center

Approved the following:

- the presbytery Minutes Reading Committee for the calendar year 2019: Pastors Eric Dennis, Charissa Howe, Sheldon Sorge and Steven Werth; Elders Carla Campbell and Cathy Nelson
- the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at meetings and events of all ministry teams, commissions, committees, and task forces of Pittsburgh Presbytery and related organizations, camps, and conference centers affiliated with Pittsburgh Presbytery for 2019
- the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary within the bounds of Pittsburgh Presbytery for 2019

From the Stated Clerk:

Announced the following:

- deadline for docket time and waiver requests for the May Presbytery meeting is no later than noon on Wednesday, April 17
- session minutes, rolls, and register review dates and locations:

Saturday, March 16, 9-11:30 AM at [Elfinwild Presbyterian Church](#)

Saturday, March 30, 9-11:30 AM at [Bethel Presbyterian Church](#) (Bethel Park)

Saturday, April 13, 9-11:30 AM at [United Presbyterian Church of Universal](#)

Saturday, April 27, 9-11:30 AM at [Unity Presbyterian Church](#) (Greentree)

Saturday, May 18, 9-11:30 AM at [Pittsburgh Presbytery Center](#)

- invitations to host a Presbytery meeting in 2020 are being accepted via the office of the Stated Clerk on behalf of the Ecclesiastical Committee
- the Rev. Eric Dennis has been appointed Associate Stated Clerk and Adrien Domske and Dorothy Winter have been appointed as Assistant Stated Clerks
- the Rev. Eric Dennis (Linway United Presbyterian Church) and Elder Becky McHolme (Bethesda United Presbyterian Church, Elizabeth) have been appointed as additional members of the Administrative Commission for the First United Presbyterian Church of Boston
- Permanent Judicial Commission members whose terms have expired: Rev. Dr. Don Ewing, Rev. Dr. John Welch, Rev. Ann Morris, Elder Ann Baker, Esq., and Elder William Cadwell

Reported the following:

- 16 congregations failed to enter their statistical information by the deadline for self-reporting; representatives from those congregations need to contact the office of the Stated Clerk within the next week
- the office of the Stated Clerk has received a written accusation against a minister member of Pittsburgh Presbytery and the Moderator has appointed an investigating committee
- the office of the Stated Clerk is in the process of appointing another investigating committee in response to a complaint against another minister member

Recommended the following for presbytery action; **approved**:

- the dismissal of the Administrative Commission for The Presbyterian Church of Plum Creek
- the plan for Elder parity for 2019
- the commission to install the Rev. Rebecca DePoe

Moved the following Proposed Constitutional Amendments:

- Amendment 18-D Laboring outside bounds; **approved**
- Amendment 18-E Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor to Its Pastors and Congregations; **approved**
- Amendment 18-G Disciplinary Offense; **approved**
- Amendment 18-H.1 & H.2 Time Limit; **approved**

From Commission on Preparation for Ministry:

Reported the following:

- session visit conducted with Bower Hill Community Church
- Pre-Care Consultations conducted with Sharron Boddy, (Bidwell Street United Presbyterian Church), Kristen Emrick (Unity Presbyterian Church), and Frank Hancock (Oakmont Presbyterian Church, Commissioned Pastor Program)
- Sharron Boddy, Kristen Emrick, and Frank Hancock were Enrolled as Inquirers
- hearing sermon from Rebecca Reeder
- Annual Consultation conducted with Carol Sharp
- Marlaena Cochran was given permission to take the four Senior Ordination Examinations
- Rebecca Reeder was Certified Ready to Receive a Call and given permission to circulate her PIF
- appointment of the Administrative Commission to ordain Benjamin Rumbaugh to serve as Chaplain Resident of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Recommended the following; **approved**:

- the Oral Parts of Trial be sustained for Benjamin Rumbaugh (Muskingum Valley Presbytery)

From the Administrative Commission on Transformation:

Announced the following:

- Instead of one deadline for Enhancement Grants, there are now four opportunities throughout the year: February 8, May 10, August 9, and November 8

From the General Minister:

- spoke about the state of the presbytery and lifted up three events of impact:

1. action to alert political leaders of the Presbytery's stand against gun violence and law enforcement negligence in response to the police shooting death of Antwon Rose
 2. local flooding and landslide disasters to which congregations and the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance responded generously
 3. the shooting at the Tree of Life congregation and the immediate response of a local congregation in hosting a public rally
- spoke about the changing nature of congregations in the presbytery with sharing of clergy leadership as they struggle to maintain the capacity to support full-time clergy
 - spoke about the search for a new Director of Justice Ministries
 - spoke about the changing financial impact of Per Capita on the presbytery
 - celebrated the presentation by Self Development of People of a \$8,000 grant to a local women's business incubator, *Growing Prosperous*, and urged congregations to give generously to *One Great Hour of Sharing* to fund other such grants

From the Commission on Ministry:

Reported the completion of following contracts between:

- the Rev. Joshua Fisher and the Homestead United Presbyterian Church effective December 31, 2018
- the Rev. Sharon Stewart and the Homestead United Presbyterian Church effective December 31, 2018

Reported the renewal of the following contracts for New Worshiping Communities:

- the Rev. Mike Holohan and The Commonwealth of Oakland for one year effective the 1, 2019
- the Rev. Aaron Teter and All Saints Community of Faith Works for one year effective January 1, 2019
- the Rev. Laura Bentley and Sanctuary Faith Community for one year effective January 1, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the following requests for Honorable Retirement; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Frank DeLuce effective February 1, 2019
- the Rev. Dr. Jim Gilchrist effective March 1, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the following appointments; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. John Yohe as Moderator of the Gladden United Presbyterian Church effective December 20, 2018
- the Rev. Deb Warren as Moderator of the Waverly United Presbyterian Church effective January 16, 2019
- the Rev. Steve Bomely as Moderator of the Concord Presbyterian Church effective January 1, 2019
- the Rev. Bob Koschik as Moderator of the Amity Presbyterian Church effective January 1, 2019

- the Rev. Dr. Judi Slater as Moderator of the Homestead United Presbyterian Church effective January 29, 2019
- the Rev. Jane Duffield as Moderator of the Waverly United Presbyterian Church effective February 15, 2019
- the Rev. Dr. Bruce Lancaster as Moderator of the Westminster Presbyterian Church effective April 1, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the letters of reception; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Jane Duffield from National Capital Presbytery effective February 15, 2019
- the Rev. Tara Woodard-Lehman from New Brunswick Presbytery effective April 20, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the following calls; **approved** by consent:

- Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church for the services of the Rev. Tara Woodard-Lehman as Associate Pastor effective April 20, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the following temporary pastoral contracts; **approved** by consent:

- Waverly United Presbyterian Church for the services of Rev. Jane Duffield as Interim Pastor for one year effective February 15, 2019
- the Westminster Presbyterian Church for the services of Rev. Dr. Bruce Lancaster as Interim Pastor for one year effective April 1, 2019
- John McMillan Presbyterian Church to renew the services of Rev. Matthew Fricker as Temporary Associate Pastor for one year effective January 1, 2019

Moved presbytery validate the following ministry positions; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Ayana Teter as Director of Vocation & Placement at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- Benjamin Rumbaugh as Chaplain Residency of the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System

Moved presbytery grant letters of dismissal to the following; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Julia Fenn to The Presbytery of Denver effective November 5, 2018

Moved presbytery grant letters of dissolution to the following; **approved** by consent:

- Sewickley Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Sarah Bird effective February 3, 2019
- Westminster Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Jim Gilchrist effective March 1, 2019
- Unity United Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Frank DeLuce effective January 31, 2019

Moved presbytery grant member-at-large status to the following; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Sharon Stewart effective January 1, 2019
- the Rev. Sarah Bird effective February 3, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the following commission renewal; **approved** by consent:

- Elder Donald Barnes (The Open Door Presbyterian Church) to serve communion at the Pittsburgh Vietnamese Presbyterian Fellowship for one year effective January 1, 2019

Moved presbytery approve the following administrative commissions to install; **approved** by consent:

- the Rev. Dr. Henry M. Knapp as Co-Pastor of the Hebron United Presbyterian Church on March 10, 2019. approved
- the Rev. Elizabeth Michael Ross as Pastor of the Community of Reconciliation on March 17, 2019. **approved**

From the Committee on Nominations:

Presented the following nominees for service as committee/commission members; **elected:**

Commission on Ministry

- the Rev. Anthony Rivera, Forest Hills (East Branch/2021A)

Commission on Preparation for Ministry

- the Rev. Alina Kanaski, Chartiers Valley (West Branch/2021A)