

Stated Meeting

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

First Presbyterian Church of Cambridge, Ohio and via Zoom 6:00 P.M. to 8:15 P.M.

Rev. Matt Skolnik, General Presbyter, opened the meeting with prayer at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. He explained the docket was online, and it will be on the screens and attendees can use their phones, tablets.

TIME OF WORSHIP:

Worship was prepared and led by Rev. Eniko Ferenczy. Rev. Li Dong did the Call to Worship. The hymn "God Is Here" was sung. Terri Bate, Director of Mission Advancement, offered the Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness. Eniko gave the Scripture Reading from Ephesians 4:1-7, 12-13. The body then broke up into small groups and reflected on the scripture passage that had been read. The Litany for Remembering Our Baptism was led by Rev. Jeff Bergeson. Eniko led in prayer. Closing Hymn, "Live into Hope" was sung.

Rev. Jeff Bergeson, host pastor, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

BUSINESS MEETING:

MVP Moderator Elder Jim Arganbright welcomed everyone and opened the stated business meeting with prayer.

Elder Alison Blondheim, Stated Clerk, declared a quorum was present and online.

MOTION Approval of the docket as online. **APPROVED**

Rev. Matt Skolnik, General Presbyter, welcomed Rev. Kathryn Ophardt to talk about the MVP Prayer Labs. It was a highlight of the 3-church cohort's first year together. She encouraged other churches to try it. Jackie Kariuki, one of the pastors, has a video online. It was not shown at the meeting but is available on the MVP website. Tim Pollock, CRE at Bloomfield offered that you should take two or three people from your congregation to attend one of the Prayer Labs. His church plans to host one soon.

Matt talked about the Open Letter to Elders that he wrote about why pastors don't lead. It is now in the "Presbyterian Outlook" magazine and is on the MVP website.

Moderator Elder Jim Arganbright, asked for a **motion** to approve the Presbytery stated meeting minutes from March 4, 2023.

MOTION Approval of the meeting minutes from March 4, 2023. **APPROVED**

Elder Alison Blondheim, Stated Clerk led the next portion of the business meeting.

MOTION Approval of the motion coming from the congregations of both First Presbyterian Church of Cambridge and Unity Presbyterian Church of Cambridge for Muskingum Valley Presbytery to approve the coming together or merger of the two congregations in to one congregation which shall be known as Cambridge Presbyterian Church. **APPROVED**

MOTION Approval to dissolve the pastorate of Rev. Jeff Bergeson as Pastor of Unity Presbyterian Church of Cambridge. **APPROVED**

MOTION Approval of the motion coming from the newly created Cambridge Presbyterian Church to have Rev. Jeff Bergeson, current Pastor of Unity Presbyterian Church, to become the new pastor of Cambridge Presbyterian Church. **APPROVED**

MOTION Approval to have the following Ruling Elders coming from both the former First Presbyterian Church of Cambridge and Unity Presbyterian Church of Cambridge who have been trained and authorized to be allowed to serve the Lord's Table at Cambridge Presbyterian Church.

That list would include the following Ruling Elders:

Bob Baird, Shane Cunningham, Sheila Ellenberger and Bob Wilhelm from Unity Presbyterian Church and Mike Mitchell and Annette Holdren from First Presbyterian Church of Cambridge. **APPROVED**

There was a time of laying on of hands and prayer for Rev. Jeff Bergeson and all members of Cambridge Presbyterian Church who were present.

MOTION Approval of motion coming from the First Presbyterian Church of Wooster to have Muskingum Valley Presbytery approve the sale of their former manse located at 637 College Ave., Wooster as they no longer need the house and have found no useful purposed to keep it. (Letter of intent and accompanying documents were attached) **APPROVED.**

It was noted that Rev. Barbara Johnson was transferred from Muskingum Valley Presbytery to New Castle Presbytery at their request on March 16, 2023.

Alison Blondheim also brought up that there will be a need for Session Minutes Record Reviews to be held in 2023. This had been waived during the pandemic. Sites are being looked at to host them. The 2022 Session meeting minutes would be the minutes to be reviewed. Tim Pollock had offered Bloomfield as a possible site at the meeting.

It was also noted that the new P.C. (USA) Book of Order is available for order at a cost of \$10.00 plus shipping. There are some new requirements for all councils including Presbyteries and churches. All councils are to adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy. Also, related boundaries training for all Pastors of Word and Sacrament, CRE's in a specific ministry and Certified Christian Education Leaders.

Paid Family Leave

When the amendments proposed by the 225th General Assembly (2022) and ratified by the presbyteries go into effect on July 9, G-2.0804 will read as follows: The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister's terms of call and shall

propose for congregational action (G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery's minimum requirements. The call shall include *provision for a minimum of twelve weeks paid family medical leave and participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.*

As presbyteries are developing minimum terms of call, be aware that [the action of the GA](#) defined "family leave" as including but not limited to the following:

- Leave to accommodate the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child.
- Leave to provide care to an ill or disabled family member.
- Leave to heal following a loss or tragic event.

Joan Brode, Chair of Nominating, recommended Rev. Mark Unrue to serve as Chair of COM and Rev. Juliann Joy and Elder Donna Robertson to serve as member-at-large on COM.

MOTION approval of Rev. Mark Unrue to serve as Chair of COM and Rev. Juliann Joy and Elder Donna Robertson to serve as member-at-large on COM.

APPROVED

Joan Brode also recommended Rev. Mark Armstrong for CPM

MOTION Approval of Rev. Mark Armstrong for CPM **APPROVED**

Rev. Wendy Bausman-Gray, member of CPM also made a plea for more members to CPM.

Treasurer, Mike Mast, presented the budget for the July 2023 – June 2024 fiscal year. He explained the per capita increase from \$18 to \$25 per member. There hasn't been an increase in about 10 years and this puts MVP in the middle of the Presbyteries in the Synod of the Covenant.

MOTION Elder Sheila Ellenberger, Chair of Administration, made the motion to approve proposed budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. **APPROVED**

Discussion was held on the proposed Terms of Call for Rev. Matthew Skolnik, General Presbyter. Rev. Alex Barnes of Milton Rittman questioned Rev. Skolnik's travel budget amount. He also asked about what time in the mission field meant. He was concerned with how much Rev. Skolnik was being paid. Joan Brode, Personnel Representative, spoke about the Terms of Call and why the increase as did Sheila Ellenberger. They both stressed that he is overseeing 70 churches and not just one as most pastors are.

MOTION Shelia Ellenberger made the motion to approve the 2023-2024 Terms of Call for Rev. Matthew Skolnik, General Presbyter. **APPROVED**

Mike Mast, Treasurer, presented the financial report as of May 31, 2023, and it was received by the Presbytery.

The Synod of the Covenant Executive Rev. Dr. Chip Hardwick presented a Synod report on Higher Education Scholarship for Christian Leaders, many

applicants, so they have extended the deadline and will decide the recipients by the end of July/early August. On the first Wednesday of each month, Preaching Workshops are offered. August 2, 2023, is the next one. He also talked about the Leader's Table Workshop that will be offered in the fall of 2023 for pastors. Both Matt Skolnik and Alison Blondheim had participated in the session set up for GP's and Stated Clerks.

MVP Pastors, CRE's and Elders needing Boundaries Training in 2023 can participate in one of the remaining two free sessions offered by the Synod of the Covenant on Boundaries Training (LeaderWise) offered by Zoom 10/2 & 10/3/2023 from 6:00 – 8:30 pm and 11/7&11/8/2023, from 1:00 – 3:30 pm. There will be training for Anti-Racism and Childhood Policies to be held in the fall.

The Stated Meeting was adjourned with closing prayer by Moderator Elder Jim Arganbright at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Alison Blondheim MVP Stated Clerk