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Stated Meeting

Saturday, September 23, 2023

Wayne Presbyterian Church, Wooster, Ohio and via Zoom

1:00 P.M. to 2:45 P.M.

Rev. Matthew Skolnik, General Presbyter, welcomed everyone to the meeting at 1:00 P.M. He explained that the entire meeting would be held in the sanctuary and the docket was online. Worship materials will be on the screens and attendees can use their phones, tablets, etc.

**TIME OF WORSHIP:**

Rev. Tadd Sponseller opened worship with prayer. Rev. Li “Dolly” Dong led us with the call to worship. “We Praise You, O God” was sung. Tabitha Williams, CRE led the Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon. Rev. Matt Skolnik led the scripture from Genesis 32 on Jacob. Rev. Skolnik gave the sermon on Jacob with a take on Michael Buffer, sports announcer for boxing and fighting events. All those present did an exercise on how we would introduce ourselves and stood up and said it aloud all at once. The attendees then broke up into small groups to discuss what each of us is wrestling with in ministry for about 10 minutes. We all stood up in a circle while Rev. Skolnik offered prayer, and we each said our new name and closed by singing a hymn and Rev. Skolnik offered the Benediction.

**BUSINESS MEETING:**

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

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

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

**MOVING THE CHURCH FORWARD**

Rev. Matthew Skolnik, GP

* Invitations to Thriving: [Incomplete Draft](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Invitations-to-Thriving.Congregation-Ministry-Frameworks-September-2023.pdf) (Appendix 9.23.2023.1)
  + Framework using scripture from Matthew 25 & 28 text, Luke 10 and Mark 1
* Equipped 4 Life in partnership with John Knox Presbyterian Church – Rev. Dr. Michael Smith spoke on seeking revival through two directions with gifts in Ephesians 4 and spiritual gifts referenced in 1 Corinthians 12. Rev. Matt Skolnik led the Prayer Lab at JKPC a couple of weeks ago. Rev. Smith used the analogy of golf and clubs in the golf bag. There are three (3) points – Prayer (have a Prayer Lab), Power of the Gifts (Miracle Healing Services) and Purpose (Mission Lab) Hearing God’s Word in Christ, Pathway to Healing.
* Commissioned Ruling Elders (What does Presbyterian mean?) Ruling Elder Edith Ophardt shared on CRE Training. The curriculum has been revamped. It will be overseen through the Presbytery again and only 2-3 classes at Dubuque Seminary online. The brochure is online, and the goal is to begin a new cohort for CRE in January 2024.
* Scholarship Fund through Christ Presbyterian Church to assist with students for training costs.

Moderator Elder Jim Arganbright, asked for a **motion** to approve the Muskingum Valley Presbytery stated meeting minutes from June 20, 2023.

**MOTION** Approval of the meeting minutes from June 20, 2023. **APPROVED**

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

Motion coming from the congregation of First Presbyterian Church of New Philadelphia to sell a portion of their property located at 211 E. High Ave., New Philadelphia, OH for One Dollar ($1.00) to the non-profit agency, Friends of the Homeless of Tuscarawas County. The church has leased the building that has been used for the past 18 years and plans call to build a new building on the location. (Appendix 9.23.2023.2). Rev. Joe Svancara added some additional information on the motion before proceeding to a vote.

**MOTION** Approval to allow the sale of a building owned by First Presbyterian Church of New Philadelphia to non-profit agency, Friends of the Homeless of Tuscarawas County in the amount of $1.00. **APPROVED**

Rev. Derek Wadlington, the new chaplain at Muskingum University was introduced. He spoke a little about himself. There was a time of prayer and laying on hands for him.

**MOTION** Approval to receive Rev. Derek Wadlington into Muskingum Valley Presbytery from Carlisle Presbytery of Pennsylvania. **APPROVED**

**MOTION**from Nominating to elect Dr. Cathy Bigler, Elder of The Church of the Covenant to MVP’s Committee on Preparation for Ministry. **APPROVED**

**Stated Clerk’s Report**

* **General Assembly 2024 – Salt Lake City, UT – June 29 – July 4, 2024.**Applications are online and are to be sent to the attention of Joan Brode via email at na@mvpresby.org or they can be mailed to Muskingum Valley Presbytery, P.O. Box 1479, Ashland, OH 44805: [Commissioner Application](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/GA-commissioner-application-for-2024.pdf)  (Appendix 9.23.2023.3) [Youth Advisory Delegate Application](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Youth-Advisory-Delegate-for-GA-application-for-2024.pdf) (Appendix 9.23.2023.4)  (1 Teaching Elder, and 1 Ruling Elder need, as well as alternates for each. 1 Youth Advisory Delegate needed.)
* We have held two Session Minutes Review sessions as of September 16, 2023. If your church’s Clerk of Session or representative was unable to attend either of the sessions, please let Stated Clerk Alison Blondheim know so that other arrangements can be made to get your church’s 2022 Session minutes approved before the end of 2023.
* 2024 Terms of Call — [Called and Installed MWS](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2024-MVP-TOC-for-Called-Installed-Pastor-Word-DOC.docx) (Appendix 9.23.2023.5)
* 2024 Terms of Call– [Non-Called and Installed MWS](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2024-MVP-Terms-of-Call-for-Non-Installed-Ministers-of-Word-Sacrament.docx) (Appendix 9.23.2023.6)
* 2024 Terms of Call– [CREs and other pastors](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2024-MVP-TOC-for-CRE-Other-.docx) (Appendix 9.23.2023.7)
* The**Committee on Preparation on Ministry** (CPM) has evaluated and has redesigned its training program for **Commissioned Ruling Elders**. There is an increased emphasis on the daily practices of ministry.
* The **Committee on Ministry** (COM) has reviewed and [regrouped our local parishes](https://mvpresby.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/MVP-Parish-Groupings.pdf). (Appendix 9.23.2023.8)
* **Boundaries Training:**Reminder to all Pastors (both ordained Teaching Elders and Commissioned Ruling Elders who have an ongoing relationship with a church, you will need to complete Boundaries Training at either the remaining October 2 and 3 Session or the November 7 and 8 Session. Some of you did complete the training in April for which I received confirmation.
* **Paid Family Leave:**This has been added to the Terms of Call form for Ministers of Word and Sacrament. 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](https://pcusa.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1721a6b9451a1567ee53b00fc&id=ab659fef74&e=1aed45a355) 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.

The rationale for the [recommendation from the Family Leave Policy Task Force](https://pcusa.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1721a6b9451a1567ee53b00fc&id=e2abbe038f&e=1aed45a355) includes a sample policy. Several presbytery policies developed prior to the new constitutional provision are posted in the Equip.pcusa.org course “Welcome to Mid Council Ministry” (Resource Archives > Call Process and Personnel). The Advocacy Committee for Women and Gender Justice has [suggestions for how sessions might provide for worship during the 12 weeks](https://pcusa.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=1721a6b9451a1567ee53b00fc&id=304b95bd8b&e=1aed45a355). It includes encouraging presbyteries and synods to step up with resources for any congregations that find the 12-week requirement to be a hardship.

The Financial Report was presented by Mike Mast, Treasurer. It was received as presented with no additional questions. (Appendix 9.23.2023.9)

The Synod of the Covenant Executive Rev. Dr. Chip Hardwick presented his Synod of the Covenant Report. (Appendix 9.23.2023.10) He noted that CRE Tim Pollock had received a scholarship. Matthew 25 Scholarship applications are due by September 30, 2023.

The Stated Meeting was adjourned with closing prayer by Moderator Elder Jim Arganbright at 2:45 p.m.

**Upcoming MVP 2022 Stated Meetings – SAVE THE DATE**

Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. – John Knox Presbyterian Church

Respectfully submitted by Stated Clerk, Alison Blondheim