

Informal Summary of Major Actions
Stated Meeting of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley
Tuesday, September 10, 2019, 3:00 pm starting time
at First Presbyterian Church, Eaton, Ohio

Documents for this meeting are at http://www.miamipresbytery.org/pmv_presby_docs.htm. Page numbers below from pp. 1 to 70 are in the September advance packet; pp. 71 and higher are in the supplemental packet.

Our Moderator, Ruling Elder Bruce Saunders, presided at this September 2019 meeting. Bruce spoke in his report about attending the August Synod of the Covenant Assembly, where each of the 11 presbytery moderators in the Synod reported on their presbytery activities.

Our Executive Presbyter, Minister of the Word and Sacrament Terry Kukuk, reminded us that since our last stated meeting in May our area has experienced 15 tornadoes, a mass shooting, and much more. The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance came alongside our presbytery with response and assessment teams for both disasters and with financial help; two PDA team volunteers, Joan Otto and Bill Patterson, brought greetings at this presbytery meeting. Many of our presbytery's churches and church members have provided generous resources of time, funding and energy. Church World Service promptly sent clean up buckets, blankets and hygiene kits that were distributed to affected churches. We also received warm messages from Cincinnati and Santa Barbara presbyteries, and prayer flags from New Hempstead Presbyterian Church in New City, NY for those affected by gun violence (p. 76). The presbytery continues to connect to local efforts as the tornado clean-up goes on and as the longer-term psychological and resource challenges of these events continue. Thank you so much to all who have helped, and please contact the presbytery office for ways to support ongoing efforts.

Consent Agenda—The presbytery approved a Consent Agenda (pp. 10-11):

1. From the Stated Clerk: Approved three sets of presbytery meeting minutes: from meetings on May 14, June 25, and August 27, 2019 (pp. 11-27; 71-75).
2. From the Leadership Council: Approved the Independent Accountant's Review Report regarding the 2018 presbytery financial review. The accountant concluded he was "not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." (pp. 28-37).

From the Nominations Committee—

1. Presbytery elected as **commissioners to the 224th General Assembly (2020) in Baltimore: Ruling Elder Bruce Saunders (Wilmington) and Minister of the Word and Sacrament Michael Isaacs; and as Young Adult Advisory Delegate (YAAD): Anne Paquette (Dayton: Westminster)**. Due to membership reductions the presbytery can now elect only two rather than four commissioners. As alternate commissioners, presbytery elected Minister of the Word and Sacrament Sarah Sparks-Franklin and Ruling Elder Bridget Hawkins (Bellefontaine: First). As alternate YAADs the presbytery elected Caroline Eader (Bellefontaine: First) and Abigail Schultz (Dayton: Sugar Creek). We also elected members and chairs of presbytery committees and commissions (pp. 44-49).

From Leadership Council—

1. **We welcomed Rev. Dr. Doug Portz from the Board of Pensions** for a Healthy Pastors, Healthy Congregations presentation on Sept. 9; for an hour-long pre-presbytery meeting discussion today; and

for an important update on BoP programs during the stated meeting (pp. 53-54). **Rev. Urla Eversley**, a new BoP staff member, joined Doug as part of her training.

2. Presbytery voted, after discussion, to become a **Matthew 25 Presbytery** and to encourage our churches to join the movement, as a way to claim our common identity to do mission and exemplify God's love, justice and mercy. The Matthew 25 initiative focuses on building church vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty (p. 52). More details and resources are available at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>.
3. Responding to a request from the **Sexual Misconduct Response Taskforce**, presbytery voted to enthusiastically endorse the Moderator's formation of a Training Taskforce to prepare appropriate individuals to serve on Investigating Committees for potential future sexual misconduct disciplinary cases, to ensure fair and speedy investigations (p. 51).
4. We received an energetic report on the **Third Thirty Network** from Ruling Elder Janet Miller (Dayton: Bath). The network focuses on educating, inspiring and empowering people who are age 60 and above and those who care for and love them.
5. Council provided an extended time during this meeting for **officer training**—today called “Not Your Ordinary Schleps” and focused on the meaning of Ordered Ministry—as a response to requests for more training at presbytery meetings and access to more resources to prepare church officers. Led by Minister of the Word and Sacrament Kelley Shin, today's training used a video and written material from Theocademy, a ministry of the Synod of Mid-America (pp. 38-43).
6. Presbytery Trustees' chair Minister of the Word and Sacrament Andy Gerhart provided **budget guidance to churches** in preparing their 2020 budgets. Based on the current draft presbytery budget, Trustees anticipate that Presbytery Connectional Support payments expected from churches for 2020 will be \$40 per active church member, based on 2018 year-end memberships that churches reported. The final presbytery budget will be approved at the November stated meeting. Council chair Don Niece reminded presbyters of the many ways presbytery supports churches' missions. General Assembly per capita for 2020 is \$8.95 per active member; Synod per capita for 2020 is \$3.25 per active member (pp. 55-57).
7. Presbytery recognized that three churches (Dayton: Trinity, Wilmington, and Springfield: Northminster) have been granted an additional Ruling Elder commissioner slot to **redress the imbalance of minister/Ruling Elder voting members** through May 2020 (p. 50).
8. We noted that the newly-reconfigured **Committee on Representation and Diversity** has been oriented and is beginning work, and members of the **Administrative Committee to assist the Xenia churches** have also been chosen and will be oriented Sept. 11 (pp. 50-51, 73-74).
9. Council reported authorizing a subcommittee to work with **General Assembly Co-Moderator Cindy Kohlmann** to plan for her time among us in February 2020, which includes Cindy preaching at the Feb. 8, 2020 stated presbytery meeting at Springfield: Covenant (p. 51).
10. Council noted plans to provide documents to the General Assembly Administrative Commission inquiring into difficulties at the Synod of the Covenant (p. 51).
11. We heard from Minister of the Word and Sacrament Ted Dennis of host Eaton Church's designation of today's **Hunger Offering** for the Bistro at Eagles Point, a pay-it-forward restaurant that provides free meals to those who can't afford it. The Eaton session also chose as the **“Mission At Every Meeting”** recipient the Common Good of Preble County Food Pantry. Presbyters brought canned vegetables for the pantry's mission to help supply essential needs for the Eaton school district region and Preble county area (p. 3).

From the Committee on Ministry—

1. **We welcomed new pastors Amy Duiker and Laura Nile, and remembered Minister of the Word and Sacrament Terry Phleger, HR**—Marge Morgan introduced and led prayers for the new pastors, and offered a memorial remembrance prepared by Rev. David Fleming, HR, recalling with gratitude Terry Phleger’s service in our midst, and noting both with sadness and trust in the resurrection her death on August 10 (pp. 6-7).
2. Presbytery approved the **2020 Pastors’ Compensation Recommendation**, reflecting a 1.5% increase in minimum Effective Salary for pastors and in Continuing Education reimbursements (pp. 60, 67-70)
3. **Information**--COM presented numerous information items (pp. 60-66).

From the Committee on Preparation for Ministry—

1. We noted the committee’s continuing **oversight of inquirers and candidates** for ministry, Commissioned Ruling Elder and Certified Christian Educator programs; the conclusion of the process of transferring Rev. Herbie Miller to the PCUSA; the committee’s work on a CPM Manual; and election of an alternate ordination exam reader (p. 66).

From the Stated Clerk—

1. We welcomed the availability of **new presbytery directories** thanks to the work of presbytery office manager Tom Oxley (p. 8) and took note of **upcoming important dates**:
 - a. Friday, December 6, 2019: Churches have access to online system to begin entering 2019 statistics.
 - b. Thursday, February 20, 2020: Last day churches can enter 2019 statistics online.
 - c. Saturday, March 7, 2020: Annual session records review and training session with clerks of session.

Other matters—The presbytery...

- Welcomed **first-time Ruling Elders**, passed the peace, and spoke a portion of **the Presbytery Covenant**.
- Welcomed and seated **Ministers of the Word and Sacrament Doug Portz (Pittsburgh) and Urla Eversley (Charlotte) of the Board of Pensions staff, and Candidate Laura Nile (Seattle)** as corresponding members, and approved excuses for six ministers of the Word and Sacrament for today’s meeting.
- Thanked presbytery bookkeeper **Joyce Routzohn** for her two decades of service as she leaves staff, and announced a card shower in her honor to the presbytery office by Oct. 4 (p. 76).
- Experienced the Word proclaimed by **Minister of the Word and Sacrament Karen Cassidy**, preaching on Jeremiah 8:18--9:1 and Lamentations 3:21-24, and on the theme *“Steadfast Love?”*.
- Shared the Lord’s Table, led by **Ministers of the Word and Sacrament Lawrence Bartel and Marcel van Bulck**.
- Heard the **Word expressed through beautiful music** from organist Linda Daily.
- Enjoyed fellowship at a very tasty dinner provided by the welcoming and friendly people at the **First Presbyterian Church of Eaton**. Thank you, Eaton, for caring for us so well throughout this day!

UPCOMING STATED PRESBYTERY MEETINGS—

Saturday, November 9, 2019, at 9:00 a.m., at Piqua: Westminster
 Saturday, February 8, 2020, at 9:00 a.m., at Springfield: Covenant
 Tuesday, May 12, 2020, 3:00 p.m., at Dayton: Trinity
 Tuesday, September 8, 2020, 3:00 p.m., at Hamilton: TPC
 Saturday, November 14, 2020, 9:00 a.m., at Huber Heights: Faith

Prepared by Stated Clerk Larry Hollar, September 20, 2019

(Formal and official minutes of this September meeting will be reviewed and approved at the November 2019 stated presbytery meeting.)