

Presbytery of the Miami Valley
Called Special Meeting Minutes (to be approved in Sept)
June 10, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.
ON ZOOM

NOTE: MWS = Minister of Word and Sacrament
CRE = Commissioned Ruling Elder
RE = Ruling Elder

OPENING - RE Michael Seewer, Moderator, opened the meeting with prayer at 9:00 a.m. and reviewed zoom protocols for the commissioners. A quorum was declared. The moderator reminded the presbytery that this is a special, called meeting and nothing else can be added to this meeting.

+ **Attestation to call of the meeting.** In accordance with Section 4.02 of the Bylaws of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley, a special meeting of the Presbytery of the Miami Valley has been called for the purpose of examining Inquirer Josh Sweeney to move to candidacy as requested by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry, examining Candidate Bruce Miller for ordination to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament for a call at Urbana Presbyterian Church requested by the Committee on Ministry, and to elect the slate presented as requested by the Committee on Nominations.

MWS Lynn Bova, Stated Clerk reported that 13 MWS had asked to be excused and that 6 RE and 1 HR had also asked to be excused. **(Appendix A)**

A MOTION to approve 13 Excused Minister Members and seat corresponding member Candidate Bruce Miller from Presbytery of the Scioto Valley **prevailed.**

A MOTION to give voice to Inquirer Josh Sweeney and Candidate Bruce Miller **prevailed.**

Committee on Preparation for Ministry chair MWS Kelley Shin introduced Inquirer Josh Sweeney and reminded the body that only questions about his call could be asked. Following the examination, a **MOTION** to approve moving Inquirer Josh Sweeney to candidacy **prevailed.** Moderator Seewer asked the required questions of the candidate and MWS Shin prayed.

(Appendix B)

Committee on Ministry chair, RE Jim Griffin, introduced Candidate Bruce Miller for ordination.

A MOTION to examine Candidate Bruce Miller for ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pursuant to 2.07 of the Book of Order **prevailed.** Following the close of examination, a question about the terms of call prompted the stated clerk to explain that COM had met with the candidate and PNC and the terms of call had been approved although a start date is still being negotiated. The terms will be included in the COMs actions taken on behalf of presbytery in the September consent agenda. A **MOTION** to approve the ordination of Candidate Bruce Miller as a minister of the Word and Sacrament under G-2.0502 and G-3.0301c (a majority vote of presbytery is required) and authorize his enrollment as a member of this presbytery **prevailed.** **(Appendix C & D)**

Committee on Nominations chair, RE Marge Morgan presented the slate for election.

A MOTION to approve the following with no nominations from the floor **prevailed.**

Committee on Representation and Diversity

2023 – 2024 Co-Chairs

MWS Ed McNulty, HR

RE Diane Welborn, Dayton: Westminster

Trustees

Class of 2026

RE Sheila Reynolds, Dayton: Central

Moderator Seewer announced the next meeting will be on September 12, 2023 at 3 pm at Xenia United Presbyterian Church and adjourned the meeting with prayer at 10:40 a.m.

Our next stated presbytery meeting

Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 3:00 pm

At Xenia United Presbyterian Church

343 W Ankeney Mill Rd.

Xenia, OH 45385

Recorded by:

Rev. Lynette H Bova, Stated Clerk

Appendices

A – Attendance

B – Sweeney Statement of Call

C – Miller Statement of Faith

D – Miller Biography

APPENDIX A

June 10, 2023 Called Meeting Attendance

LEGEND:
 P – Present E – Excused Blank – Absent *Italics* – attendance recorded in more than one category
 MWS – Minister of Word and Sacrament RE – Ruling Elder

OFFICERS OF THE PRESBYTERY OF THE MIAMI VALLEY

RE Michael Seewer, Moderator
RE Janet Miller, Vice Moderator
MWS John Lewis, Leadership Council Chair
MWS Lynette Bova, Stated Clerk
RE Kathleen Seewer, Recording Clerk

MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT ON ACTIVE ROLL

Adams, Garth		Hinds, Kathryn Blocher	E	Noble, Jody	E
Bain, Marciana		Hodgkins, Nancy	E	Pelaez-Díaz, Francisco	E
Baker, Richard	P	Holder-Rich, Cynthia	P	Pierson, Carol	E
Bartel, Lawrence	P	Ingram, Steven	E	Ramsey, Thomas	
Beres, Benjamin		Isaacs, Lucinda	P	Rodriguez, Joshua	
Birdsong, Nancy	P	Kukuk, Terry	P	Rupnik, Frank	
Bova, Lynette	P	Lawler, Kevin		Schumm, Steven	P
Brasier, Susan		Lee, Joungnam		Shin, Kelley Wehmeyer	P
Burslem, Kathleen	P	Lewis, John	P	Soards, Marion	
Dennis, Ted		Maguire, Brian	E	Sparks-Franklin, Sarah	
Deyerle, Caitlin		Martin, Christopher		van Bulck, Marcel	E
Duiker, Amy	E	McCormick, Dwight		Wakeland, Michael	P
Garrigan, Carmen		Melick, Ann		Weaver, Denise	
Haddox, Clifford		Merrin, Steven		Wiley, Shelley	
Haddox, Emily		Murphy, Kevin		Worthen, Merritt	
Hardwick, Charles	P	Neely, John	P	Ziegler, Diane	E
Helling, Michael	P				
Hess, Lisa	E				

TEMPORARY MINISTER MEMBERS FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS

Copeland, Steve
 Schaffnit, Daria P
 Williamson, Julia P
 Whitt, Joe

HONORABLY RETIRED MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT (Excused unless attendance indicated)

Amidon, C. Forrest	Hamilton, Susan	Philips, William	
Barr, Judith Dunlap	Hernandez, David	Schenck, Angela	P
Brakemeyer, Randall	Hinds, Joe. M III	Sheldon, Jocelyn J.	E
Brown, Edward	Horrigan, Kevin	Sherman, Donald	
Cassedy, Karen	Howard, Kenneth	Smith, Robert B., Jr.	
Conn, Arbuth	Kester, Gordon L.	Stewart, Donald M.	
Davis-Dudding, Kay	Kim, Soo Kwang	Swaim, Gerald G.	
Dozeman, Thomas	Linville, Deborah	Thornton, Jesse	
Evans, Michael	McConnel, George H.	Wade, Robert	P
Foubert, David	McNulty, Edward	Wall, Evan	
Fulton, Robert	Meyers, JoAnne	Walthour, William	
Godfrey, Norman	Niece, Linda	Warren, Patrick	
Graham, James	Nowak, Jacqueline	Young, Darryll	
		Zuercher, John	

ROLL OF CHURCHES (RULING ELDERS PRESENT)

BELLBROOK		DAYTON: TRINITY		PIQUA: GOOD SHEPHERD	
1 – Seiler, Michael	P	1 – Blackmon, Mary Jean	P	1 – Kerns, Sandra	P
BELLE CENTER		DAYTON: WESTMINSTER		PIQUA: WESTMINSTER	
1 – Claassen, Deb		1 – Saunders, Eugene	P	1 –	
BELLEFONTAINE		2 – Berg, Kay		REILY	
1 –		3 –		1 –	
BLUE BALL		EATON: FIRST		RUSHSVLVANIA	
1 –		1 – Courtney, Thomas		1 –	
BRADFORD		FAIRBORN: FIRST		SEVEN MILE	
1 – Buker, Mike (CRE)		1 – Jenkins, Dixie	P	1 – Collins, C. (CRE)	P
2 –		FARMERSVILLE: SLIFERS		2 – Sumpter, Jennifer	
COVINGTON		1 – Gray, Jennifer	P	SIDNEY: FIRST	
1 –		HAMILTON: THE P. C.		1 – Poling, Ken	P
DAYTON: BATH		1 – Eyler, Greg	P	SPRINGBORO: COVENANT	
1 –		2 –		1 – Gardner, Michael	P
DAYTON: CENTRAL		HUBER HEIGHTS: FAITH		SPRINGFIELD: COVENANT	
1 –		1 – Williams, Keith	P	1 – Calland, Phil	P
DAYTON: COLLEGE HILL		HUNTSVILLE		SPRINGFIELD: NORTHMINSTER	
1 – Gray, Marva		1 –		1 – Shoyer, Lois	
DAYTON: CORINTH		JAMESTOWN		TROY: FIRST	
1 – Baust, Hank	P	1 –		1 – Mauntler, Marge	P
DAYTON: FAIRMONT		MIDDLETOWN: FIRST		URBANA: FIRST	
1 – Akers, Terry		1 –		1 – Major, Jane	
DAYTON: IMMANUEL KOREAN		MIDDLETOWN: ST. LUKE		WEST LIBERTY	
1 –		1 –		1 –	
DAYTON: SOUTHMINSTER		MONROE		WILMINGTON	
1 – Amos, Gay	P	1 –		1 – Gillette, Jim	E
2 – Gaffney, Jean	P	NEW CARLISLE: HONEY CREEK		XENIA: UNITED	
DAYTON: SUGAR CREEK		1 – Cook, Cindi	P	1 – Rickels, Joyce	P
1 – Neyhouse, Barb	E	OXFORD		YELLOW SPRINGS: FIRST	
		1 – Moeckel, Nancy	P	1 – Blocker-Smith, Hilary	

RULING ELDER MEMBERS OF PRESBYTERY

Wantz, David (NS&G)		Hawkins, Bridget (COM)	P
McCollum, Alice (LC)		Griffin, Jim (COM)	P
Morgan, Marge (NOM)	P	Peters, Brenda (COM)	E
Seewer, Michael (Mod, LC)	P	Risner, Scott (COM)	p
Miller, Janet (V-Mod, LC)	E	Sue Seiler (COM)	
DeWine, Robin (LC)		Storm, Rob (COM)	E
Shoemaker, Matt (LC)		Jenkins, Jessica (CPM)	
Welborn, Diane (CoRD)	E	Brienza, Anne (CPM)	
Woessner, Georgie (Trustees)	E	Creager, Kevin (CPM)	
Michele Slone (COM)	P	Wakeland, Cindy (CCE/RE)	

Corresponding Members:

Seewer, Kathleen - Rec Sec P

Guests:

Sweeney, Josh – Inquirer
 Miller, Bruce – Candidate
 Borland, Bill – Urbana guest
 Haines, Janet – Urbana guest
 Flowers, Don – Urbana guest
 Vincent, Melinda – Urbana guest

CORRESPONDING MEMBERS AND THOSE GRANTED VOICE (not otherwise registered):

The confirmed attendance consisted of 18 ministers of the Word and Sacrament, 2 minister members from other denominations, 19 ruling elder commissioners (representing 18 congregations), 6 ruling elder members of presbytery, and 0 Certified Christian Educator Ruling Elder: total of 45 voting members. Also present and not otherwise registered but granted voice were 2. There were 6 guests. Total registered attendance was 52.

Count –

Pastors – 15	RE Church – 19	Total Voting – 45
MOAD – 2	RE Committee – 6	
HR – 3	RE CCE – 0	Total in attendance – 52
	Others present – 7	

Statement of Call - Sweeney

God has called me to serve and love the local church as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. Since I was seventeen years old, I have worked for the church in some fashion, and predominately, that call is to work with children, youth, and young adults. I see this group in ways similar to what is learned in the parable of the Lost Sheep. For decades this group was the one lost sheep that was away and forgotten while the 99 were attended to, ensuring their needs, wants, and wishes were granted. They were pushed away from leadership, and their voices were stifled to allow “grownups” to make the decisions, and I’m not sure where that got us exactly.

As an ordained teaching elder, I look forward to serving the local church in various ways through my passion for worship, mission, and program ministry. The Book of Order states, “The focus of these affirmations is God’s grace in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. The Protestant watchwords—grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone—embody principles of understanding that continue to guide and motivate the people of God in the life of faith.”¹

While serving in the church, I would like to challenge my church to look again and envision the traditional education model at the local church level to motivate them to believe that we are always reforming. By looking at the entire model, I’d work with the congregation of answering the basic question of, “does it serve our people today, or are we just repeating the same process as the generation before us?” With this new thought process, I aim to inspire volunteers to renew the lens through which they think about Christian Education and where we can meet people where they are instead of the formula “if we build it, they will come.”

I am passionate about working with the mission team at the local church level and abolishing the myth of the “white savior complex” and “serving poor people.” I have benefited

¹ Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). *Book of Order 2019-2021: The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II* (p. 42). Kindle Edition.

Statement of Faith
Bruce Miller

I believe God is the creator of all things.

I believe God created all things through God's *chesed* (a Hebrew word meaning God's unique love for creation, often translated as "steadfast love"), which is beyond full human comprehension. And by God's *chesed*, God created humanity in God's image (*imago Dei*) and imputed each of us with God's goodness.

I believe the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the triune God, interacting in a close intimate relationship and working for the good of all things.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, fully human, fully God.

I believe the Bible to be the written Word of God, which tells the story of God's *chesed* for all creation.

I believe God and science exist without conflict. Science is humankind's exploration of the unknown, and God's presence is in every discovery.

I believe that rebellion against God, or sin, was introduced by humanity, as depicted in the Garden of Eden, is both individual and corporate. Humanity's selfish desires reject God's original design, as demonstrated through the life of Jesus Christ. I believe the only cure for this disconnect is found in the *chesed* of Jesus Christ for all creation.

I believe that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. He died on the cross for all people, and on the third day, he was resurrected and now resides in heaven at the right hand of God.

I believe the Gospel articulates the story of Jesus' life and ministry across the ages, identifying him as the Messiah and Redeemer of all people. And that by his salvific death and resurrection, he reconciled the broken relationship between God and all humanity.

I believe confessing oneself as a Christian is admitting our shortcomings and imperfections while turning to God for mercy. Being a Christian is not passive but rather demands our highest loyalty to take up our cross, following the command of Jesus to love God and love others through action.

I believe that the Holy Spirit intercedes with humanity on God's behalf and communicates with God on humanity's behalf. The Holy Spirit is humanity's advocate and guide, continuously interacting with and speaking to us, revealing God's will for our lives.

I believe we are united in Jesus through the Holy Spirit as we celebrate the sacraments. Sharing in his life, death, and resurrection so that we will all be gathered as one family at his holy table one day.

I believe that Jesus will return one day in glory to judge all people by the *chesed* of God.

I believe that God does not change, but humanity's understanding of God continues to mature as we experience God's *chesed* through all aspects of life.

I believe the role of the Christian church is to bear witness to the *chesed* of God for all people through its active involvement in the community by loving all people and serving the least of these.



Bruce W. Miller

Bruce graduated from Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University with a Master of Divinity in December 2022. He is actively seeking a call within the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. (PCUSA) to be an ordained minister.

After nearly thirty years in corporate accounting and finance, Bruce decided to follow a different calling with similar roots in his passion for people and leadership. Before leaving the corporate world, he held several roles in executive management, where he developed his interest in the engagement, mentorship, and development of people.

Bruce and his wife of sixteen years, Jennifer Lyle, are the proud parents of four adult children and two grandchildren. Bruce enjoys reading, hiking, and watching sunsets, preferably sitting by the ocean.