

## Highlights from the November 2024 Session Meeting

The regular Session meeting was held on November 19, 2024. Devotions were centered on the Sermon on the Mount (the Beatitudes) as told in the Gospel of Matthew. After opening prayer and devotions, Session received the reports of staff, standing committees, and the Report of the Clerk and voted to approve all reports and items of a routine nature from committees and staff in the Consent Agenda.

- Total attendance figures for October 2024: **361** attended in-person Worship Services and **361** viewed services on-line. Average **Sunday** Worship attendance for the last several months: October **180**, September 163, August 147, July 148, June 147, May 168, April, 227, March 258, February, 226, January 2024, 217; December 2023, 271, November, 181, October, 168. Average weekly Sunday Worship attendance for 2023 was 193. Average weekly Sunday Worship attendance for 2024 is **188**.
- **Finance Report** – Elder John Walton, Chair of Finance reviewed the financial statements distributed with the Session packet. John noted that the statements are in DRAFT form for this month due to the bank statements not being available until after the Business Administrator went on vacation on November 5. Members of Session are referred to the Treasurer’s report in the packet distributed prior to this meeting for more detail on the financial statements. Receipts for October 2024 totaled \$55,619 compared to the October 2023 total of \$56,016. Average weekly giving for 2024 stands at \$11,535 per week versus \$10,319 for 2023. Expenses for the first ten months of 2024 are down 23.1% from the first ten months of 2023 and stand at 75.6% of total budgeted expenses for 2024, 10/12<sup>th</sup> through the year (if on budget, expenses would be at 83.3% of budget). The net income (revenue minus expenses) for the first ten months of 2024 is in the amount of \$5,074 compared to the first ten months of 2023 which produced a deficit of \$99,306. This increase in net income for 2024 is driven mostly by cost reductions in the salary lines. It was also noted that mission payments are ahead of schedule with 92% of the budgeted monies being paid out in the first ten months of 2024 compared to 79% for 2023.

Because of the increased investment of cash from the sale of 8 East Franklin, we have experienced an almost 5-fold increase in investment income this year versus last.

Sandy Campbell gave an update on the Stewardship Campaign. The campaign is doing very well at this time. As of November 18, we have received 60 pledges for 2025 compared to a total of 88 for 2024. The pledged giving for 2025 represents 70% of the total 2025 operating budget.

A financial review was conducted by Joe Hare, John Walton and Sandy Campbell and a report in letter form was given to Session outlining recommendations. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. Nothing significant was uncovered in the review of

the financials from February 2024 and several recommendations regarding bank reconciliations and the establishment of an Audit Committee are being studied by the Finance Committee.

The Session received an update on the search for the position of Children and Youth Ministry Director. The Search Committee has recommended to the Administration Committee and Administration has approved the hire of Tyler Harvey effective December 9, 2024. Congratulations to all those involved on a job well done!

A second reading of the new Bequest Policy was offered at this meeting as follows:

**“XXXX – Bequeathed Gift Policy** (gifts given as part of estate by the deceased)

Bequeathed gifts are gifts given by a deceased person or their Executor as part of an estate plan. The gifts given as a bequest should be utilized in a way that supports the church for generations to come. Unless directed otherwise by the estate, funds will be used as follows –

- 70% invested as principal in the (new) Capital/Building Endowment
- 20% invested as principal in the (new) Missions Endowment
- 10% may be allotted per Session decision for immediate needs or distribution to a designated fund.

Session can and should review and potentially revise this policy when the Capital/Building Endowment reaches \$1 million.”

**Rationale** – A bequest is a gift from the deceased as part of their estate planning. It is not that same as gifts given in honor or memory by friends and family. Bequests have the potential to be significantly larger than Memorial gifts.

A question was raised regarding the 20% going to mission being too low. Mission co-chair pointed out the fact that the Mission Committee has access to two large, designated funds that can be used and also that two of our mission partners next year are going to retire freeing up more funds. Session **APPROVED** the policy as written.

A Corporate Resolution was moved by the Finance Committee changing the signatories on the Tyndale Charitable Remainder Unitrust held at PNC Bank NA (copy attached). John Schoen was still listed as a signatory and this resolution changes those to Sandy Campbell, Joe Hare, and John Walton. Motion was **APPROVED**.

The Administration Committee presented Rev. Cagle’s 2025 Transitional Ministry Contract for approval. A copy is attached to these minutes. The only difference in the contract from 2024 was a reduction in the cost of health care benefits moving from ‘family’ coverage to ‘member and spouse’. Motion was **APPROVED**.

The Outreach Committee is seeking approval for the use of the sanctuary, Hassler Chapel, and the kitchen on Saturday, December 7, 2024, to participate in the Media Borough Holiday House Tour. Motion was **APPROVED**.

A motion from the Outreach Committee proposing the dedication of the worship service on a Sunday in the spring of 2025, to celebrate the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Media Presbyterian Church. The committee will return with a firm date after consultation with the Worship Committee. Motion was **APPROVED**.

A motion from the Worship Committee to apply the offering from the 2024 Christmas Concert to designated fund 4502, Special Worship Music. Motion was **APPROVED**.

A motion from the Worship Committee to sell or donate the old upright piano in Dale Hall. The instrument is not used and the committee feels it is not worth the money to have it repaired or tuned. Motion was **APPROVED**.

The Youth Committee is requesting the use of the facilities on Sunday, December 29, 2024, for a combined multi-church youth meeting and game night. Motion was **APPROVED**.

Joseph Hare  
Clerk of Session