

Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area

November meeting summary

Wow!

No break!

Witness to faith!

A lot of business!

Thank you all for coming!

That's a one, two, three, four, and five-word summary of the November 13, 2018, meeting of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. Following is the longer summary.

The Presbytery met at New Life Presbyterian Church in Roseville at a new (and experimental) time, 2 p.m. The Presbytery will be seeking to measure the impact of that time in the weeks to come. The eyeball test, however, showed a strong and diverse attendance from across the Presbytery, with a higher turnout of teaching elders than ruling elders. To all of you who attended the meeting, thank you very much for investing yourself in the work of the Presbytery.

A reminder: you can find the full docket and Presbytery packet online at <http://ptcaweb.org/presbytery-meetings>.

Committee on Ministry

The body sustained the examination for ordination for Philip Romine, currently serving United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities as its director of admissions. Phil was commended on the floor of Presbytery for his eloquent statement of faith. You can read that on page 42 of the Presbytery packet. His ordination date has not yet been set.

The body also sustained the examination of Michael Ireland to be a commissioned ruling elder, and after the affirmative vote, commissioned him to service at Presbyterian Church of the Way in Shoreview. Michael, both in

his statement of faith (page 44 of the packet) and in his answers to questions, spoke of his call especially to the pastoral care ministry of the church.

The body affirmed 2019 Presbytery salary minimums of \$51,887.12 (metro) and \$46,449.47 (non-metro), a 2.5 percent increase over 2018 minimums. It also encouraged congregations whose salary for pastors is over the minimum to consider a 2.5 percent cost of living increase.

Finally (from the report of the Committee on Ministry), the Presbytery affirmed a new parental leave policy, and asked the Committee on Ministry to identify sources of funds that could assist either congregations or pastors for whom the terms of the policy could present a financial hardship. “By mandating a parental leave policy and also providing a means of support for those congregations for whom this could be a financial burden,” the report concluded, “we can support the Biblical emphasis on families and the Presbyterian commitment to each other.”

Presbytery Leadership Team

The Presbytery Leadership Team presented the Presbytery’s 2019 budget: see the online version of the budget [here](#) and the PLT’s explanatory report beginning on page 16 of the packet. While a balanced budget, it is done so again through drawing on reserves and on the Presbytery Strategic Initiative Fund for financial support.

The Presbytery Strategic Initiative Fund is moving closer to operation. In a report beginning on page 21 of the pack, the PLT outlined the next steps in its effort to make the fund operational and available for significant Presbytery-supported initiatives in mission and ministry. Look for more details and particulars early in 2019.

Eden Prairie Presbyterian Church Administrative Commission

After four years of work, the EPPC-AC made their final report to the Presbytery (page 25 of the packet). Titled “What We’ve Learned,” the report, presented by EPPC-AC chair David Liddle, reviewed the process with Eden Prairie Presbyterian Church that ended earlier this year, when the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case. The Presbytery approved two recommendations to be added to the Presbytery’s bylaws or manual of operations, “in the hope they will help us better organize our life together,

honor our covenantal partnerships, and reduce the likelihood of similar situations developing in the future.”

Redress of Imbalance

Its name is hardly a common phrase, to be sure; its purpose, however, is foundationally Presbyterian: to provide the means by which equal numbers of teaching and ruling elders are invited to Presbytery as members and commissioners. The formula was approved, but with some very pointed questions about the nature and content of the Presbytery meetings themselves, and whether the Presbytery has failed its members and commissioners in the construct of the meetings. Those questions will go to the Presbytery Leadership Team, who holds the responsibility for Presbytery meetings.

Inclusion and Justice

This year, the Presbytery Leadership Team has structured Presbytery meetings around the theme “Nurturing thoughtful expressions of God’s mission in the world.” PLT invited the Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, director of the PCUSA’s Office for Public Witness in Washington, D.C., to a number of events throughout the Presbytery. The Rev. Hawkins’ visit culminated in an address to those gathered at the Stated Meeting, on the theme of “How do we move from a theology of inclusion and justice to a practice of inclusion and justice?” Please, go to the [OPW’s website](#) or its [blogsite](#). Sign up for its newsletter.

Worship was conducted with the same theme of inclusion and justice in mind, but from a different angle. With the guidance of the Disability Task Force, worship was designed to be dementia-friendly. The Task Force also reported to Presbytery and had packets of resources available at the meeting for each congregation. If you were not present, those resources are available to you via the Presbytery office.

In Other News...

- See the Self-Development of People committee’s report on page 51 of the packet, presented by David Stewart, chair.
- The Mission and Witness Committee announced the planning of a second Presbytery-wide mission trip March 30-April 7, 2019, to aid victims of Hurricane Florence in North Carolina, in partnership with Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. You’ll recall Mission and Witness

reported on its April 2018 mission trip to Louisiana at the September meeting.

- The Committee on Congregational Vitality announced its Congregational Grant process for 2019. Look to EMerge for additional details in the coming weeks. It also announced the availability of five \$500 scholarships to the national gathering of NEXT Church in March 2019, to be held in Seattle; those details will also be in EMerge.
- And the executive presbyter, Jeff Japinga, offered his regular report. You'll find that on page 12 of the packet.

The Presbytery Leadership Team will conduct intentional evaluation of the meeting, including an electronic survey of participants. This was a new time for Presbytery meeting, tried in response to your feedback and input, and there are things we can learn from this experiment. Thank you again for your participation and for your commitment to the work of the wider church through the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area.