Session Report

Laurie Jones, Clerk

Your Session met in-person for their regularly scheduled meeting on July 25. The evening began with a visit from Jo Wiersema as they seek to move further in the ordination process. Jo has been an Inquirer with the Presbytery for the last year, and they have advanced their studies at the Dubuque Theological Seminary. Jo is now ready to enter the second phase as a Candidate. Those present were happy to hear the progress Jo has made and about the four interesting positions Jo holds this summer. The Session wholeheartedly approved Jo's move from the Inquirer to Candidate stage in the ordination process. The request will now go to the Committee on Preparation for Ministry at the Presbytery level. We are exceedingly proud of Jo and our prayers continue for success in their final year of seminary training.

The second joyous topic was to welcome Megan Berry to her first Session meeting at Covenant. Following introductions, all were grateful to have her join our church family and look forward to working with her!

In other business, the new form to continue the search for another Associate Pastor, now called an MDP, or Mission Discernment Profile, was reviewed and approved. The Elders are very grateful to the APNC in their diligent work and continue their prayers for these faithful servants. The Finance Committee Chair reported that our financial status is strong and more policies were approved as they continue to work toward fulfilling the recommendations of the financial review consultants. With joy, the Nominating Committee announced they have a completed their search for 2024 officers and Vice-Chair people. This is the earliest the task has been completed! Election of the 2024 officers will happen at a congregational meeting this fall.

As summer continues, the Session will take the month of August off and reconvene in September. As we enter the fall, excitement is in the air with a new Associate Pastor, positive energy, and joy. Your Session is excited about participating in what is to come. Are you?

Mission Spotlight

RIP MEDICAL DEBT

Unfortunately, medical debt can be all too easy to accumulate. In many cases, all it takes is getting sick or being involved in an accident. From that point, the existence of medical debt turns many people's lives upside down. Home foreclosures and bankruptcies are common. A tarnished credit rating makes it next to impossible to take out a loan or to rent an apartment. In too many cases, trying to pay a medical bill depletes a person's savings. Some have even become homeless. Even worse, a lot of people carrying medical debt do not pursue the care they need or fail to buy medications that will keep them healthy.

RIP Medical Debt is an organization that is a leader in the purchase and forgiveness of medical debt. They buy debt that has been sent to a collection agency for pennies on the dollar. This method allows contributions to go much further toward the elimination of medical debt. A single dollar will remove at least $100 of medical debt for someone struggling to pay their bills.

Last year, the John Knox Presbytery sent $14,245.25 to RIP Medical Debt where it grew to take care of $1,925,734.76 worth of medical debt for 2,594 families. The presbytery will participate again this year in this ministry to relieve medical debt for as many families as possible.

As a Matthew 25 church, we are called to work toward the eradication of systemic poverty. Relieving the burden of medical debt will change peoples' lives and offer them hope for the future. The Mission Committee has chosen the John Knox Presbytery's Generosity Task Force Initiative with RIP Medical Debt as the beneficiary of our portion of the Peace & Global Witness Offering this year.