

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS: PART ONE

by Susan Farber, Clerk of Session

- Session approved dedicating the Thanksgiving Eve offering to the Deacon's Fund.
- Session accepted six new members following their Inquirers Class.
- Session welcomed Lisa Titus, chair of the Endowment Committee, for a presentation on the endowment process, church endowment procedures/polices, different types of funds (restricted and non-restricted), etc.
- Session approved, on the recommendation of the Endowment committee, a \$10,000 grant from the Barry Brandt Scholarship Fund to West Virginia University for the benefit of Elizabeth Escott for the Spring 2020 semester. We promptly received a thank you note from Elizabeth (*right*) expressing her great appreciation.
- The FPCB Visual Arts Team (formerly Decorations/Beautification), chaired by Rebecca Gorton and Jean Hunsicker, developed a charter for their mission, responsibilities and relations with others within the church. Session approved the charter. The team has made numerous changes/additions, particularly in the narthex and north link. Recently quilts have been hung in the hallway coming into the church through the south entrance.
- Session and the Pastoral Staff held an all-day retreat on January 18, 2020. During the retreat, Session approved several actions for presentation to the Congregation at the Annual Meeting including a 2020 budget and a decision to pay off the outstanding mortgage. [Note: the mortgage was paid off in full.] Session also approved a recommendation to the Congregation for the formation of an APNC (Associate Pastor Nominating Committee).
- Richard Hjorth and Phyllis Walker, as Presbytery Commissioners, updated Session on the November Presbytery Meeting. In particular it was announced that two of our Elders have accepted new responsibilities: Gail Watts has completed a three year term on the Committee for Preparation for Ministry and will begin a three year term on the Committee on Ministry, and Phyllis Walker was chosen to attend the General Assembly this year as a representative of our Presbytery. Thank you to both for the willingness to assume additional responsibilities and give of their time.



- Session approved, on the recommendation of the Discipleship Committee, a community presentation on “Constructive Conversations: Engaging Our Faith in Public Life” led by Pastor JC Austin on Saturday, Feb. 29, 2020.
- Session approved the Mission Committee’s recommendation to designate the Souper Bowl receipts to the Northeast Community Center.
- Session, on the recommendation of the Endowment Committee, established the “Barbara C. Reinoehl Fund” to be used for mission purposes. The church received a very generous gift of \$100,000 from J. Benjamin Reinoehl and family in memory of Barbara. Session approved placing \$75,000 in the named fund and the remaining \$25,000 in the general operating fund.
- Richard Hjorth and Joanne Kelhart will continue as commissioners to the Lehigh Presbytery. It is anticipated that our third representative will be a resting Elder. [Note: Ralph Laurita, a resting Elder from his previous church, volunteered to be the third commissioner.] Al Philpotts, Gail Watts and Kristen Benway will serve as Alternates when needed.
- Session approved the development of a Church Directory. Jackie Byrnes volunteered to chair the team working on the directory assisted by Linda Filipovits. Work on the Directory is proceeding well; approximately 300 members and regular attendees have completed their information forms. [Note: the directory project is currently on hold, in part due to restricted access to the church building.]
- Session examined and approved for ordination/installation the newly elected Elders, Deacons and Trustees following their training led by Rev. JC Austin.
- Session approved job descriptions for two part time positions – a Bookkeeper and a Business Manager. Session also approved the Personnel Committee to begin a search for the Business Manager Position.
- Session approved changes to the present Congregational Bylaws and the Bylaws of the Corporation recommended by Joanne Kelhart and her team.
- Session approved the calling of a Special Meeting of the Congregation on March 22 for the purposes of approving the Bylaw changes and electing an APNC.
- Session recognized the hard work, leadership and time commitment of Leslie Pohl who is ending her term as both an Elder and chair of the Mission Committee, and Melinda Stitt, Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee, who is transferring to the Board of Trustees.

