

## **September Session Update**

### **Opening Prayer and Devotion**

Our devotion was based on a Meditation on Gratitude, Chapter 12 (Gratitude) in *The Breath of the Soul*.

### **Clerk's Report**

Communion was celebrated on September 7.

#### Deaths

We received word of the July 3 death of June Mills.

September 1: Russell F. Miserendino

September 17: Nancy Mae McCormick

### **Pastor's Report**

Pastor Karen continues to work on all things transition, attending committee meetings, establishing teams to work on specific areas of transition, attend to the day-to-day administrative items that arise, and work on worship series to move us through grief and pain to hope.

Staff continues to work on their 2026 department budgets with the goal of having an overall budget to review in early October. Staff will then work with Finance to revise their department budgets as needed.

A small Preschool team (Advisory Committee and Director) have been working on their 2026 budget as well. Work is progressing nicely.

Brenda Robinson was offered and accepted the new position of Office Manager.

The Manual of Operations team continues to meet and receive needed documents for the manual. They hope to have a working manual by the end of the year. A Governance Structures and bylaws team has begun work.

The 150th Anniversary Celebration team has also begun work.

The added Minutes for Mission to the services have been well-received as people can actually see what the community of faith is involved in - individually and as a congregation. A huge shout-out to Judy Smullen and Pat Stanek for creating the table coverings for both the sanctuary and the fellowship hall.

### **Finance Committee Report**

Kim Miner reported on the new payroll system, Gusto, which integrates with Aplos, our accounting software. Session accepted the financial reports by consensus.

### **Continuing Business**

#### *Nominating Committee Update*

Rich Hjorth reported that the slate of new officers is complete and ready for voting at the October 26 congregational meeting. We are grateful for the servant-hearts of all who have agreed to roles:

Elders: Jon Conrad, 2nd term; Ted Masthay, 2nd term; Linda Filipovits, 2nd term; Aileen Williams, 1st full term; Jeanne Hunsicker, to complete the term vacated by Melody Engel.

Trustees: Glenn Rossetti, Susan Nelson, 2nd term.

Deacons: Marie Rosenthal, 2nd term; Deb Castellano, 2nd term; Jean Toulouse.

Nominating Committee: Pam Phillippe, Belle Marks, Bekah Masthay, Becky Gorton, Froy Thompson.

### **New Business**

### *150th Celebration and Stewardship Campaign*

Kari Keyock spoke of the theme, "Faithful Past, Hopeful Future: Built by Saints, Called to Serve." A vote of confidence in the Committee was also approved.

### *Baptism policy discussion re: church membership requirement*

Lindsey led a discussion of the membership requirement for the sacrament of baptism, proposing that it be waived for baptism of children who attend our Preschool. The wording in the Book of Order seems to allow such a practice:

*When a young child is presented for Baptism at least one parent (or person exercising parental responsibility) **should** be an active member of a Christian church, normally the congregation in which the baptism takes place. A council may authorize a Baptism, to be administered by a minister of the Word and Sacrament<sup>†</sup>, in certain situations beyond the congregational setting...* (Bolding is added, for emphasis that the wording is not the definitive "shall.")

Children who attend our Preschool do have a connection with our church, even though it's not membership. It was moved that Session approve the baptism of a child who attends our Preschool, who is not neurotypical and will require a quieter setting, outside of worship. The motion was seconded, and approved. When the child, Liam, is baptized, there will be representation from the congregation.

### *Report on Presbytery meeting of September 20*

Rich reported that there was a first reading of the merger documents at the Presbytery meeting in Hawley on Saturday. He also spoke of a bonding exercise in which attendees were paired to discuss special ministries at their churches. For instance:

- Faith church in Emmaus holds a collection of supplies for teachers in the community who might need them for their classroom. (We collect supplies for our Preschool classrooms and teachers.)
- Presbyterian Church of the Mountain, in Delaware Water Gap, has established an Artists in Residence mission to advance the arts in faith, church mission, and the community.

Knowing what other congregations devise may lead to ministries of our own.