

Highlights from the September 2024 Session Meeting

The regular Session meeting was held on September 17, 2024. Devotions were centered on the themes for the 2024-25 Stewardship Campaign. 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.

Informational:

- Total attendance figures for July 2024: **263** attended in-person Worship Services and **324** viewed services on-line. Average Sunday Worship attendance for the last several months: August **147**, July 148, June 147, May 168, April, 227, March, 258, February, 226, January 2024, 217; December 2023, 271, November, 181, October, 168; September, 189; August, 159, July, 160. Average weekly Sunday Worship attendance for 2023 was **193**. Average weekly Sunday Worship attendance for 2024 is **192**.
- **Finance Report** – Elder John Walton, Chair of Finance reviewed the financial statements distributed with the Session packet. Receipts for August 2024 totaled \$54,472 compared to August 2023's total of \$36,369. Average weekly giving for 2024 stands at \$11,881 per week versus \$10,256 for 2023. Expenses for the first eight months of 2024 are down 25.7% from the first eight months of 2023 and stand at 60.27% of total budgeted expenses for 2024, 8/12th through the year (if on budget, expenses would be at 66.7% of budget). The deficit for the first eight months of 2024 is in the amount of \$2,660 compared to the first eight months of 2023 which produced a deficit of \$85,739. This lower deficit for 2024 is driven mostly by cost reductions in the salary lines. It was also noted that mission payments are ahead of schedule with 82% of the budgeted monies being paid out in the first eight months of 2024 compared to 72% for 2023.

Regarding cash management, the Committee and treasurer have taken steps to open new CD's and a new savings bank account that will produce higher interest to MPC. The treasurer invested \$100,000 in a nine-month CD at 5.0% APY and another \$100,000 in a six-month CD at 4.75% APY. Additionally, a "Power Savings" account was opened at Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union producing an interest rate of 3.45% versus the old money market at 1.49% and the old savings account at 0.1%. A total of \$350,000 was transferred into this account. The limitation on the Power Savings account is that there is only one free withdrawal/transfer allowed per month.

The annual 4% disbursement from the Endowment Fund was completed this month with those funds moving into the Capital Reserve (3001) and the two missions designated funds (3099 and 3100).

- The Session received an update on the search for the position of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Director the committee made a **motion** to increase the starting salary for this position to \$51,500 annually and to change the title to Director of Children and Youth Ministries. The committee felt that the use of “Families” in the position title caused it to appear more than a full-time commitment. **Motion** was **APPROVED**.
- A **motion** from the Moderator to approve the 2024-2025 Elder committee assignments and At-Large members. Listing is included in the weekly *Stay Connected* newsletter. **Motion** was seconded and **APPROVED**.
- A **motion** from the Moderator to approve the appointment of Sandy Campbell as Corporate Treasurer for 2025. **Motion** was seconded and **APPROVED**.
- A **motion** from the Moderator to approve the appointment of Elder Kate Meehan as Chair and Elder Cindy McPeak as Vice-chair of the Congregational Nominating Committee for the 2024-2025 church year. **Motion** was seconded and **APPROVED**.
- A **motion** from Worship committee to approve a Thanksgiving Eve Soup and Service for Wednesday, November 27, 2024, at 6:00 PM with Communion. **Motion** was **APPROVED**.
- A **motion** from Outreach committee to approve the use of self-contained firepits on the front lawn of MPC during the Holiday Craft Show in order to invite folks to make smores. The firepits will be supervised by an adult at all times. **Motion** was **APPROVED**.
- A **motion** from the Finance Committee to create a new policy for distribution from Capital/Building Endowment. For consideration – “By policy, earnings from the Capital/Building Endowment are calculated at 4% of the 3-year, trialing average of the principal and distributed annually (usually mid-year) to 3001 Capital Reserve and 3565 Technology Fund. Finance Committee will determine distribution based on the needs of each committee. Recommended ranges are –
 - 10% - 50% to 3565 Technology Fund
 - 50% - 90% to 3001 Capital Reserve

Rationale – The physical plant will consistently have the larger proportion of expenditures; however, there could be times when the physical systems associated with technology could require upgrades, additions, or revisions. This policy should have flexibility to support those needs. **Motion** was **APPROVED**.

- The Finance Committee made the presentation of the 2025 Challenge Budget. This is not the final approved budget but simply the budget requested by the various committee chairs plus several one-time expenses that will be incurred in 2025. The Challenge Budget for

2025 was **APPROVED** and will be communicated to the congregation via a special mailing later in September.

Joseph Hare
Clerk of Session