

ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT 2021-2022



EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



June 26, 2022

Agenda for Annual Program Meeting

June 26, 2022

Call to Order, Declaration of Quorum Opening Prayer	Rev. Kristin Stroble, Moderator
Nominating Committee Report	Robin Bell, Chair
Motion to Amend Bylaws The Session is bringing the following motion to the congregation: To amend bylaw #12 to say "The Session shall consist of nine (9) elders divided into three (3) equal classes, one (1) class of which shall be elected each year at the called meeting of the congregation for a three-year (3) term."	Susan Smalley, Clerk of Session
Adjournment and Closing Prayer	Rev. Kristin Stroble, Moderator

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***Annual
Program
Year***

2021-2022

FROM YOUR PASTOR

Rev. Kristin Stroble

Reflection and Looking Ahead:

When the pandemic began, I thought that as a church we just needed to band together, power through, be inventive and make it to the other side. But these long years have taught us that there is no going back to pre-COVID. We've returned to in-person worship, but not all of us have returned. We are still struggling to figure out what it means to function in a hybrid manner, giving space for people to gather both virtually and in person. We are still discerning what our presence needs to be in the community. We know we have changed, but we don't know yet what the new thing is that we are becoming. In the midst of all of this we've lost a lot of our beloved saints of the church. This past year we've done a variety of gatherings and events to help us gather and reconnect. We've gone Christmas caroling, made gingerbread houses, and had adult education centered around "I've been meaning to ask..." We hosted a Ukrainian Easter Egg Workshop, packed lunches for Advent House and gathered for fellowship. This is what it means to be the church - to gather, pray, worship, serve and together name that Christ is in our midst. I don't know where we are going yet, but I think the next right steps are to continue to reconnect as a church, to embrace joy, to discern together the needs around us and how we address them, and be the beloved community together.



What's Changed This Year?

Most of our gatherings and worship services now have a hybrid format. Session, Deacons, Committees, Bible studies, PageTurners have met either only on Zoom or in-person with a Zoom option. This has allowed more people to participate throughout the year. We've intentionally been flexible with Christian Education this year, trying some different options such as small groups and giving lots of space for fellowship. We've done more one-time events and service opportunities this year as we've tried to figure out where the passions, interests, and needs of our community lie.

What I've Done for Continuing Education

This May, I had the opportunity to attend my first in-person conference since the pandemic began. I went to the NEXT Gathering held in Montreat, NC. The theme was "Rest, Restore, Explore" and the conference intentionally gave time for rest in the mountains. We had time to reflect on how we need to rest in our own personal lives and in the church. We were also invited to pay attention to whose bodies are granted rest and whose bodies rarely experience it.

Some of my favorite books I've read this year:

No Cure for Being Human by Kate Bowler

Bewilderment by Richard Powers

Wholehearted Faith by Rachel Held Evans

The Rose Code by Kate Quinn

Oona Out of Order by Margarita Montimore

Beautiful Ruins by Jess Walter



SERMON SERIES

SEPTEMBER 2021 TO AUGUST 2022



I've Been
Meaning to Ask
Sept. 19-
Oct. 17, 2021

Good Enough
March 6-
April 17, 2022



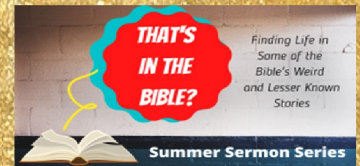
A Future with
Hope
Oct. 24-
Nov. 14, 2021

Matthew 25
May 1-
May 29, 2022



Close to Home
Nov. 28, 2021-
Jan. 2, 2022

That's in the
Bible?
June 12-
Sept. 4, 2022



Big Questions
Jan. 9-
Feb. 27, 2021



HYBRID WORSHIP

On August 8, 2021 we returned to in-person worship after 15 months of worshipping virtually. While we were thrilled to welcome folks back into our sanctuary it was not a return to the way



VIDEO PRODUCERS

Robin Bell, Mike Brown,
Heather Myer, Susan Smalley

things were. Initially we required masks and only sang the last hymn together. We continued to have fellowship outside after worship, so that masks weren't removed inside. We knew not everyone could or should return to in-person worship, so we transitioned to a hybrid model of worshipping.

This transition was once again a new learning experience. Elder Mike Jones worked to make sure we had stable wifi in the sanctuary that could support a livestream. Elder Heather Myer and Pastor Kristin set up the new live stream equipment in the sanctuary and Heather learned how to make it all work together. We appreciate everyone's patience as each week we tweaked the sound and video to try to get the best quality possible.

In the Fall of 2021, Heather started to train more volunteers on the live-stream and we now have four peo-

ple: Robin Bell, Mike Brown, Heather Myer, and Susan Smalley who are able to run the system. They not only help on Sunday mornings, but have also assisted with live-streaming memorial services, organ recitals and other special events and services in the sanctuary.

With the increase of volunteers, we ended the "Video Producer" staff position. We owe so much gratitude to Heather Myer for her role as Video Producer. She transitioned us to virtual worship by editing videos together to create our virtual services and then she transitioned us to our now hybrid model of worship.

We will continue to have a live-stream option for all our worship services. We have dreams for how we might continue to improve that system. You can view any of our previous worship services on our Youtube channel:

www.youtube.com/eastminsterpresbyterianchurcheastlansing





UKRAINIAN RELIEF

When Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, People wanted to be able to do something to help. Rev. Kristin Stroble contacted a colleague, Dr. Shannon Quinn from MSU, who was an expert at making and teaching how to make Ukrainian Easter Eggs.

Ukrainian Easter Eggs, also known as pysanky, are eggs that have been hallowed out and then decorated with traditional folk designs by inscribing the patterns with beeswax.

On March 19, more than 40 people—mostly visitors who do not attend Eastminster—gathered for a morning of making Easter eggs. All proceeds from the \$20 fee and other donations went directly to the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund, earmarked for Ukrainian relief.



After the workshop, people continued to donate money for Ukrainian relief.



**TOTAL RAISED
SO FAR:\$2,089**

WORSHIP

Ministry Highlights

Committee members: Robin Bell, elder, Bob Walters, elder, Sam O'Neill, Linda Hardenbergh chancel coordinator, Brenda Ramsby, Rev. Kristin Stroble, ex-officio

The Worship Team creatively adapted with each change we made in worship. We've helped with ideas on how to serve communion. We brainstormed how to have music, including soloists, special musicians and choir. Bob Walter took the lead in getting the choir reorganized and Sulin Campbell became our volunteer choir director. The committee helps create worship visuals that go with Kristin's sermon series as well as arranges for worship leaders.

One of our ongoing projects is getting a screen and projector installed in the sanctuary.

Thank you to all who helped with our worship services!



SPECIAL WORSHIP EVENTS

All-Saints Day

Blue Christmas

Christmas Eve

Ash Wednesday

Maundy Thursday

Easter

Life in the church 2021-2022



**1 new
baby**



**1 new
member**



**11 Funerals/
Interments**





Prayer Stations



MUSIC

Ministry Highlights

Music was different than it was before the pandemic, but we still lifted our voices in praise and made music together. When we first came back together, we only sang the closing hymn. The other music we hummed. We continued this practice until May when the COVID spread numbers were dropping.

Sulin Campbell became the volunteer director of the Chancel Choir and led them in singing the opening hymns each week along with anthems on Easter and Pentecost.

Tamar Mikeladze arranged for special musicians throughout the year. These included clarinet, violin, two saxophone quartets and others.

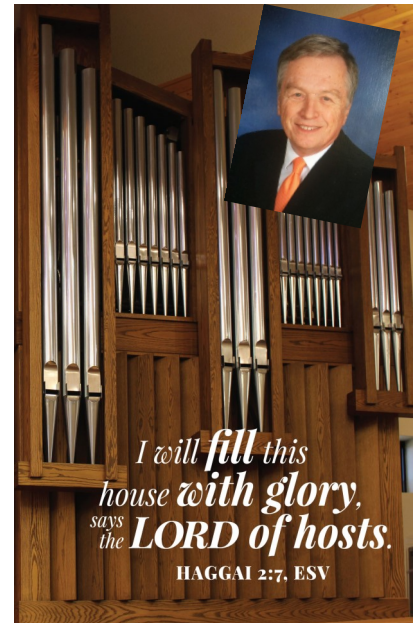
Heather Myer led the bell choir who played ten times between September and June. Bell choir members included

Terry Graham, Becky Brown, Megan Jones, Debi Cox, Linda Hardenbergh and Rev. Kristin Stroble.

Our instruments also saw plenty of use. We hosted two organ recitals—one a young person's recital coordinated by Jeff Mitchell, and the other led by Dale Voelker who has been practicing on the organ throughout the year.

We also used our harpsichord for Easter Sunday and in the second organ recital.

Rev. Kristin Stroble organized a group of carolers who went out to the homes of some members.



Dale Voelker held an organ recital at Eastminster on April 24.





MISSION

Ministry Highlights

Committee members: Estelle McGroarty (Elder & Chair) and Kristin Stroble (Pastor)

- Starting in October, the Mission Committee organized the packing of 60 bag lunches and provided canned soup for Advent House on the second Saturday of each month. Members of the church furnished components of the lunches and between 5 and 8 individuals packed the lunches.
- Starting in October, donations were solicited for the personal needs and other supplies for Advent Houses weekend day shelter.
- Solicitations went out for participation in or donations to Crop Walk. The walk for a group of church members was cancelled because of rain.
- A total of 10 Thanksgiving Baskets were provided to Christian Services.
- We again solicited donations for various organizations, including Haven House, during the “12 Days of Giving” initiative during Advent.
- We collected donations for the Refugee Services at St. Vincent Catholic Charities, especially the Afghan refugees that are settling in the Lansing Area.



The challenges that the committee had were to maintain our commitment to all of these organizations during the pandemic when meeting together was difficult to do. The congregation was more than up for the task and monetary resources were generously provided. Continuing to obtain commitments from the congregation for their time may be one of our most challenging concerns in the upcoming year.

DONATIONS AND GIFTS

2021-2022

Organizations	Gifts
Christmas Joy	\$648
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$1,825
Peace & Global Witness	\$565
Pentecost	\$251
Advent House	\$4,303
St. Vincent Catholic Charities	\$2,000
Alma Chapel Renovations	\$1,000
Refugee Development Center	\$2,000
Christian Services	\$1,000
MSU Food Bank	\$281
PCUSA Shared Mission	\$11,150
UKirk	\$7,000
Mission Co-Workers in Costa Rica	\$5,500
Medical Benevolence	\$1,200
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	\$1,039
TOTAL	\$39,762

The Mission Committee of Eastminster Presbyterian Church (EPC) supported these organizations/projects with either monetary donations or goods; and, in some cases, both:



**refugee
development center**



Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Presbyterian Mission

CHRISTIAN
services

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Ministry Highlights

It was another busy year for the building and grounds committee members. Thanks to Ron Davis, Jeff Lapinski, and all others who have helped maintain our beautiful building and magnificent grounds throughout the year. Highlights this year include:

- A washout in the memorial garden was repaired and additional drainage was added to prevent more erosion.
- Fellowship Hall floors and main floor carpets were cleaned.
- Technology updates to the building:
 - New fiber has been run to the sanctuary to enhance video streaming.
 - 5 wireless access points throughout the building were replaced and updated.
- Removed a large fallen tree at the entrance to the prayer path.
- A hole in the storage shed entry door has been blocked to keep critters out.

To improve internet access and streaming, the committee replaced and updated five wireless access points.



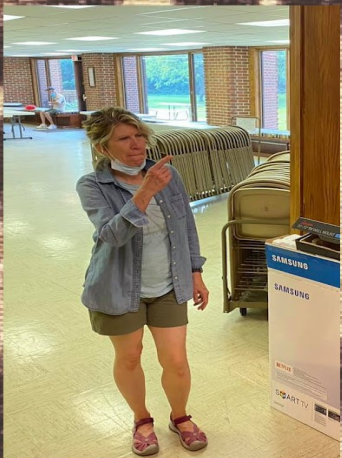
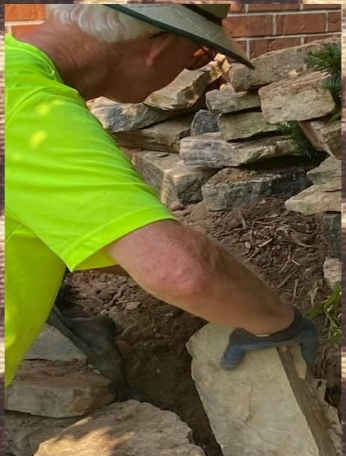
- Changed all the batteries in the church building.
- Fall Grounds clean-up was held.

As we look ahead to the next year, some items in progress are:

- Continue to improve landscaping around the sign
- Update and improve other signage on the grounds
- Implement additional safety and security measures around the building
- Evaluate accessibility in the Sanctuary

Respectfully Submitted,
Mike Jones, Building Chair

As we prepared to reopen to in-person services, church members and friends came out to help clean and put the church back in order.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Ministry Highlights

Christian Education Report 2021-22

Faith formation is a life-long invitation. It can take place in many ways at different times and different places. We can't always see the formation happening, but there are so many people in the life of Eastminster who regularly engage in numerous opportunities to explore scripture, theology and the interlocking nature of faith, life and current events. As we continue to emerge into new patterns of doing things post pandemic social distancing, some groups continued to utilize Zoom for their gatherings.

Faith formation is a life-long invitation.

Post-worship opportunities

I've Been Meaning to Ask

This intergenerational conversation series engaged the questions: Where are you from? Where does it hurt? What do you need? Where do we go from here? Each Sunday after worship a series of cards were handed out with different prompts to start discussion, share memories, and get to know each other better.

Adult forum

Topics included: A TheoEd talk by Austin Channing Brown titled The Double-Sided Pursuit of Racial Justice, a workshop on end-of-life financial asset planning led by Sam O'Neill, far too many discussions on instances of gun violence, a discussion on the invasion of Ukraine, and others.

Big Questions Series

Topics included: Predestination, The Cross, Heaven, The role of the church in 2022, and a game of Presbyterian Balderdash.

Lent Small Groups

We had several small groups that committed to meeting during Lent to engage devotions, scripture and entries from *Good Enough* by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Newly formed groups were facilitated by the CE team.



Eastminster's Book Club met at 10 a.m. the second Saturday of nearly every month of the year. This year they met over Zoom and in person. Books are listed on the website and all are welcome.



THANK YOU

Thanks to Elder Mike Brown and Director of Christian Education Neil Myer for their work during the year and to all members and friends of Eastminster who participated in any of the opportunities offered. We look forward to what the Spirit has in store in the upcoming year.

Wednesday bible study groups met faithfully throughout the year. The early morning men's group and the later Wednesday morning group both faithfully engage scripture and share life together each week. These will start again in September. Thanks to Rev. Kristin Stroble, Rev. Dr. Jeff O'Neill, Rev. Becky Jones Brown, and Elder Sam O'Neill for their facilitation of these groups.



Our Youngest Friends

One of the biggest joys of this past year was some of our youngest friends finally becoming eligible for vaccination against COVID-19. This was a turning point that allowed many of our young families to return to in person worship. Children regularly engage the worship service in surprising ways from their special area down front, and the congregation spontaneously helped with children's messages on Palm Sunday and Pentecost. There were several after-worship opportunities for kids to participate in which included an "I Spy" butterfly finding quest on Easter. The Heitman family hosted a late-spring lunch gathering at their home. Kids led in worship as acolytes, readers and worship leaders as well as with music. The CE team delivered *Faithful Families for Lent, Easter and Resurrection* by Traci Smith to home porches with a great discount offer from the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Ministry Highlights



The Young Adult Group met Thursdays at 7 p.m..

We had another interesting year in the community life of the church. We've reintroduced some in-person activities and are looking forward to what the summer and next fall will bring.

We started the program year with a Back Together Again party celebrating all the seasons of the church and year we missed during our time away. Next, we had a Gingerbread House Building Competition, where members and friends of the church gathered in teams and built, decorated and presented them to the group at large. So much fun!

Looking into the future we want the church to help us dream. What would you like to see as a community life event? What could we "bring back"—something that was fun in a time before? Do you have an idea but don't know how to go about planning it or if it's feasible in an Eastminster setting?

Some of our events this summer:

- Visiting the downtown El Fresno—more dates to come over the summer
- Yard games and bring-your-own picnic after worship on June 26th
- An Afternoon Tea to benefit Haven House
- A Lugnuts game
- Tours of MSU STEM Building and MSU Alumni Chapel

The Committee is looking forward to the upcoming months and year and we are thankful for this year past.

Sincerely,
Heather Myer, Elder
Chair
Beverly Bonning, Elder

A group of seven people, the trivia team, are posing for a photo. They are standing in front of a red wall. The text "TEAM: 'Merry Brood Of Vipers'" is overlaid at the top. At the bottom, there is a blue banner with the text "MONDAYS 7:00 PM" and "www.mitrivia.com". There are also logos for "R3 Perfect Place Plus LANSING" and "MI TRIVIA".

TEAM: "Merry Brood Of Vipers"

MONDAYS 7:00 PM
www.mitrivia.com

Every Monday night, Eastminster's trivia team plays at Royal Scott. Anyone is welcome to join.



Advent House

We've continued our monthly teamwork with the Mission committee in assisting Advent House in sack lunch meal packaging. After each morning when the work is complete, we fellowship with coffee and treats.

Back Together Again...



ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Ministry Highlights

Members: David Duryea, elder, Susan Smalley, elder, Bob Kleine, treasurer, Linda Hardenbergh

Staff: Rev. Kristin Stroble, Office Administrator Bridgette Redman



ADMINISTRATIVE WORK

We reviewed and made recommendations to substantially update Eastminster's Sexual Misconduct Policy. We reviewed Eastminster's Facilities Use Policy and added the Facilities Use Application to it. Both of these policies are now available on our website along with the church by-laws, the Safe Sanctuary Policy and the Endowment Policy.



Policies reviewed and updated:

- Sexual Misconduct Policy
- Building Use Policy

Plans are in place to review additional policies and recommend updates to Session as needed.

The office copier and laser printer (used to print checks) were both replaced this year. The copier has new features, including 3-hole punching and banner printing, while costing us less per month.

Meetings were held with all five staff members to review their work and follow-up letters sent to document the discussions. Eastminster is blessed with a FANTASTIC staff!

FINANCIAL WORK

We sought Request for Proposals from three accounting/auditing firms to conduct a financial audit, but all declined and indicated that the cost of such an audit would be prohibitive. Through contacts with her colleagues, Rev. Stroble learned that the Presbyterian Church of Okemos and the First Presbyterian Church in Holt annually review one another's financial records. These churches were contacted and agreed to include

Eastminster in the review process. Bridgette, Linda and Susan participated in reviewing records for Holt and Okemos. Eastminster's review is scheduled for June 28. Eastminster has already benefited by learning various approaches to procedures and issues common to all the churches.

Following the successful spring 2021 capital campaign, we oversaw the FINAL elevator loan payment and reduction of the remaining debt for the roadside sign and capital improvements.

Throughout the year, Barb Stowitts has volunteered on Thursdays to help with the weekly mailing and other tasks.

Other office volunteers have included Elizabeth Evangelista, Sam O'Neill, Linda Hardenbergh, and Susan Smalley.

After resumption of in-person worship services, we recontacted and scheduled offering counters, revised the form they use and created a counter training video. With many people continuing to give their contributions online or by mail, Sunday counting has been significantly reduced and the office administrator's time to process contributions significantly increased.

A highly successful pledge drive was conducted. We adjusted the annual budgeting process to request budget proposals by mid-October so that we could present those proposals to the congregation (along with indications of budget shortfalls) as a part of the request to pledge. Members and friends gave generously and Session approved the 2022 budget in mid-December.

After close scrutiny of the proposed budget, we recommended significant staff reductions for 2022, eliminating the positions of adult choir director, video producer and nursery attendants. Volunteers are currently active to provide webcasts and lead the choir and are being sought to staff the nursery.

In March of last year, Session established an Endowment Committee and charged the committee with revising the Endowment Policy and monitoring use of endowment funds on a regular basis. The committee met for several months and developed a new Endowment Policy that was approved by Session in October. One major change was ending the practice, in place since 2018, of using all endowment proceeds for general operating purposes.

The need in recent years to transfer funds from reserves to cover budget shortfalls, and the declining membership trend indicated the need for long-term financial projections. Treasurer Bob Kleine provided five-year projections indicating the need to significantly increase income or decrease expenditures if we wish to avoid depleting reserve and endowment accounts.

Eastminster's balance sheet has shown the value of our building and property at \$1,519,455 for several years. Our insurer currently estimates the replacement cost of our building at \$3,946,250, an increase of \$990,000 during 2021 due to increased costs of building materials. The committee is working on an updated list of assets and re-evaluating our balance sheet.



Susan Smalley, Linda Hardenbergh and Bridgette Redman met with members of the Okemos and Holt financial teams to perform a review of the books.

We reviewed descriptions of Eastminster's various special funds, recommending Session close the Elevator and Bequest funds and consolidate the Christian Education and Youth funds.

Membership on the Memorial Committee was established and they voted to fund half of the sanctuary projection project. The remaining half will be funded by endowment funds.



DEACONS

Ministry Highlights

This past year could be described as a year of “transition” or more accurately, “flying by the seat of our pants” as our church reopened for in-person worship after almost two years of online worship and fellowship! Our Deacons enthusiastically and joyfully stepped up to the challenge of assisting our church staff and Worship Team to reopen for in-person worship. We dusted off the acolyte lighters, checked the pews for Bibles and hymnals, reviewed our head usher procedures, reimagined Fellowship in light of COVID-19, scheduled ushers and greeters, scoped out a new location for the offering plates, and refreshed our memories on in-person worship duties and Communion preparation to be ready to roll out the “red carpet” when the church doors opened for our first in-person worship on August 8, 2021.

Throughout this past year of transition back to in-person Worship and Fellowship, the Deacons:

- Continued on-going contact with the congregation by making telephone calls or sending text messages/emails to those who could not worship in-person
- Prepared and delivered meals to our many members who were homebound for various reasons
- Continued our tradition of mailing cards to all members of our church for birthdays, anniversaries, get well, or just thinking of you
- Held monthly in-person and by Zoom meetings
- Coordinated and scheduled head ushers, ushers and greeters for Sunday worship
- Prepared and served Communion on the first Sunday of the month and for special worship services

Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:18-19



- Hosted Fellowship on each Sunday and for holiday services in many different configurations as COVID-19 rates subsided
- Coordinated transportation for individuals who are unable to drive to church functions
- Coordinated a substantial number of memorial services and luncheons
- Provided support for other committees' activities as requested
- Updated our Head Usher and Memorial Service procedures

Throughout the year, our Deacons quietly and diligently supported our flock as our congregation reemerged from a long period of isolation and separation. May we continue to be the hands and feet of our Lord in the future.

Beverly Bonning, Moderator

Deacons: 1st row (from l to r): Beverly Bonning, moderator, Judy Dickinson, Sue Kalvonjian, Barb Stowitts

2nd row: Sulin Campbell, Suzanne Hunt, Brenda Ramsby, Cindy Nixon



UKIRK CAMPUS MINISTRY

Ministry Highlights

What a year!

What a year it has been. It was wonderful to be able to be reunited in person (most of the year masked), some for the very first time in their college experience. Toward the end of the year, we were able to reinstate some of our hallmark hospitality practices and through it all we continued to grow in faith together. We are already looking forward to fall.



UKirk Class of 2022

Congratulations to our 2022 graduates! We finished the school year with our service of sending in which each grad received a UKirk blanket to remind them that wherever they go, and whatever callings they may answer, they are wrapped in the love of God!

UKirk Website: www.ukirkmsu.org

WAYS TO GIVE TO UKIRK

- Mail a check directly to UKirk at the address below
- Give online at www.ukirkmsu.org/give then follow the prompts.

UKirk @ MSU
1315 Abbot Rd.
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-897-1482



UKirk Trivia

We had an incredible turnout for our first UKirk at Michigan State Team Trivia night fundraiser, held at the Presbyterian Church of Okemos. We raised over 2,500 dollars and had a wonderful time. Mark your calendars now for the evening of Friday, November 4 for our next one!

Fundraiser



UKirk students are collecting new and gently used children's books for all ages up to grade 5. Our sample wish lists intentionally include books that highlight our BIPOC, Latinx, AAPI, and LGBTQIA+, siblings, people with disabilities and additional picture books that reflect the image of God in all human beings. We also want to highlight children's books written by diverse authors, and additional multicultural children's books.

UKirk alumna Heather Thum-Gerber was ordained as Pastor on May 21. She's been called to serve as pastor at the Hanover Presbyterian Church in Newark, Ohio.



NOMINATING

New Slate

Elders

One 2-year term
(Class of 2024)



**Bob
Walter**

Deacons

One 2-year term
(Class of 2024)



**Beverly
Bonning**

Three 3-year term
(Class of 2025)



**Mary Lou
Clifton**

Three 3-year term
(Class of 2025)



**Barb
Dalzell**



**Susan
Smalley**



**Sulin
Campbell**



**Terry
Graham**



**Jeff
Lapinski**

PURPOSE: To nominate persons to serve the church as ordained elders on the Session, ordained deacons on the Board of Deacons, and to serve as congregational representatives on the Nominating Committee.

MEMBERS: The Nominating Committee will be composed of two Elders designated by the Session and one Deacon as designated by the Board of Deacons and four active members of the congregation as elected by the congregation. The pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of the committee. All members of the Committee will be elected annually for a one year term, and may serve up to three consecutive terms. The Chair of this committee will be an Elder serving currently on the Session of the church.

Members of the Nominating Committee

Robin Bell, (Chairperson)

Mike Brown, Elder

Beverly Bonning, Deacon

Mary Lou Clifton, at-large

Rick Johnston, at-large

Jeff Lapinski, at-large

Barb Lowes, at-large

Rev. Kristin Stroble, pastor (ex-officio)



APPENDIX

New Sexual Misconduct Policy

Eastminster Presbyterian Church
East Lansing, MI 48823
Policy on Sexual Misconduct – Final

Introduction:

The ethical conduct of all who follow Jesus Christ is of vital importance to Eastminster Presbyterian Church because our lives demonstrate our understanding of God and the gospel. Sexual misconduct is a violation of principles set forth in Scripture, relationships of trust including the employment and professional relationship and is never permissible or acceptable.

Principles of Conduct:

1. Sexual misconduct violates the roles of pastors, Church members and its officers, employees, volunteers, etc. in a position of authority, who are called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity and caring in a trust relationship.
2. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power which breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relationship to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure and/or power in an abusive, exploitative and unjust manner. If the member, student, client, employee or anyone initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, the pastor, employee, member, officer, volunteer, leader or teacher is always responsible to maintain the appropriate role and to do whatever possible to prohibit an inappropriate relationship.
3. Sexual misconduct against children and other vulnerable persons takes advantage of their lack of power to protect themselves.
4. Sexual misconduct as outlined above always occurs without meaningful consent because equality does not exist in these relationships.
5. For these reasons, sexual misconduct is prohibited by this Church and will never be condoned or tolerated.

Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power which breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relationship to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure and/or power in an abusive, exploitative and unjust manner.

Definitions

- **Sexual Misconduct** is the comprehensive term used in this policy to include, but is not limited to child sexual abuse, sexual abuse of another person, sexual harassment, and production or distribution of pornography, all as more fully defined below.
- **Child Sexual Abuse** includes, but is not limited to, any contact or interaction between a child or an adult of diminished capacity and an adult, when the child is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult person or a third person. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Such behavior is always considered forced whether or not consented to by the child or the adult with diminished capacity. A child is any person under the age of 18 years. Any person under the age of 18 lacks the capacity to consent to such acts. See the church's Safe Sanctuary policy for specific actions.
- **Sexual Abuse of Another Person** includes any sexual conduct in relation to 1) any person under the age of 18 years, or over the age of 18 years without the mental capacity to consent, or 2) any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position. Lack of mental capacity may be a temporary incapacity due to the influence of a narcotic or intoxicating substance, or impaired capacity due to psychological, emotional, or spiritual vulnerability (e.g., due to grief resulting from a significant loss). Misuse of office or position refers to sexual conduct committed by one while functioning in relationship to the victim within the context of a ministerial or professional role. Mutual consent is NOT POSSIBLE when one party is a teaching elder/professional lay leader in a pastoral, counseling, employer or leadership position within the Church, related organization, or sponsored activity in which the other party is a parishioner, member, counselee, employee or participant, OR when one of the parties is a child or an adult of diminished capacity. Wherever a ministerial or professional relationship exists, it remains the responsibility of the teaching elder or professional to maintain appropriate boundaries and to decline to engage in a sexual relationship.
- **Sexual Harassment** includes unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
 - This conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment or reduces the opportunity to worship and participate in Church-related activities.
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual;
 - An individual is subjected to unwelcome sexual jokes, unwelcome or inappropriate touching, or display of sexual visuals that insult, degrade, and/or sexually exploit men, women, or children.
 - An individual is subjected to homophobia or transphobia, including disclosing a person's sexuality or gender without their consent.
 - Production or distribution of **pornography** or of any images of a sexual nature shared without consent of the person(s) in the photo.
 - Sexual harassment may occur in person or online (**digitally**).
- **Accused:** a person covered by this policy against whom a claim of sexual misconduct is made.
- **Reporter:** a person claiming and reporting knowledge of sexual misconduct by a person covered by this policy. The reporter may or may not be a victim of alleged sexual misconduct.
- **Victim:** a person, whether or not a member of Eastminster Presbyterian Church, who allegedly has been directly injured or harmed by the alleged sexual misconduct of a person covered by this policy.
- **Persons covered by this policy:** Persons covered by and expected by Eastminster Presbyterian Church to adhere to this policy are persons under its jurisdiction through the authority of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, USA, others under its oversight or serving the church in any way. They include:

1. Although the pastor is a member of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan and under its original jurisdiction in all matters of discipline, he/she/they are expected to adhere to the intent and purpose of this policy while serving the Church.
2. Members of this Church, with whom the Session has original jurisdiction in all matters of discipline and to whom the Book of Order (Rules of Discipline) apply.
3. All Church employees.
4. Volunteers and others, who are not members, acting on behalf of the Church.
5. All persons having contact with those listed above.

Hiring and Recruitment:

To provide an environment free from the threat and injury associated with sexual misconduct, staff members and those recruiting volunteer teachers, leaders, nursery attendants, helpers, etc. shall include the following in their hiring.

Reporting:

Reports of sexual misconduct are serious and are to be acted upon immediately by those who receive them. Anyone receiving a report of sexual misconduct by anyone covered by this policy must direct the reporter to:

1. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery in the case of a pastor.
2. The Pastor Head of Staff and the Clerk of Session in the case of a Church employee, Church member and in all other cases.

A written report of the sexual misconduct must be made by either the alleged victim or the reporter, if different from the alleged victim. All reports will be treated with confidentiality. The report will include the date of the incident, the time, the alleged Victim and Accused, and a description of what happened.

The Book of Order (Rules of Discipline) and the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Presbytery of Lake Michigan are the references that will be followed for alleged offenses by members of the Church. Sexual misconduct may be a violation of work rules and therefore the basis for discipline up to and including discharge. It may be a crime and subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

Policy Distribution, Information, Education & Training

- This policy shall be distributed to the pastor, staff members, elders, and deacons. Each person who receives a copy will be required to sign a written acknowledgement indicating that they have received the policy and agree to conduct themselves in accordance with it. The signed acknowledgements shall be retained in a file in the Church. Session or their representative is responsible to assist all persons who need aid to interpret or implement the policy.
- This policy shall be given to all reporters, alleged victims of sexual misconduct and accused.
- This policy shall be posted on Eastminster's website (www.eastminsterchurch.org).
- A brief overview of the policy plus a link to the entire policy shall be included in Eastminster's annual report and in the application for community members to use Eastminster facilities. Suggested overview: Sexual misconduct, including but not limited to child sexual abuse, sexual abuse of another person, sexual harassment, and production or distribution of pornography is prohibited by this church and will not be condoned or tolerated. Eastminster's complete Sexual Misconduct Policy may be found at (link).



**STAY CONNECTED
WITH EASTMINSTER**

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