

Presbytery of Lake Michigan  
Trustees  
Recommendation to Presbytery  
Westminster Presbyterian Church of Jackson, MI  
June 11, 2024

**Actions of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Jackson**

After an extensive time of discernment, Westminster Presbyterian Church of Jackson, MI took the following action at a Called Congregational Meeting on April 7, 2024:

**A motion was made and seconded that the congregation of Westminster Church join into a Joint Witness Relationship with St. John's United Church of Christ and minister at the new location of 801 S. Mechanic Street, Jackson, Michigan and to request Presbytery of Lake Michigan, sell Westminster's building at 2301 Ridgeway Road, Jackson, Michigan and give Westminster the proceeds to invest in ministry.**

Out of 47 active members, 40 members voted in favor of the motion. No negative votes were cast. The motion was carried by a margin of 85% of active members.

**COM Report**

The matter of joint witness and moving location for ministry belongs to the Commission on Ministry, who will be presenting their report/recommendation to the Presbytery on June 11, 2024.

**Request for Permission to Sell Building**

The Budget and Finance Committee/Trustees received a request from the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Jackson (WPCJ) for permission to sell their current building. This request was accompanied by appropriate documents: an appraisal of the property, a Cost-Sharing Agreement with Appendix, and registration of deed documents. Also included was a description of conversations with the neighboring Jackson Christian High School regarding their interest in the property.

The appraisal performed by Thomas Hardwick & Associates of Jackson places the current value of the estimated 4.59 acres and building to be Four Hundred Thousand dollars (\$400,000).

The church would like to see written provision for the care or movement of the memorial gardens which are part of the property.

**Consultation with Jackson Westminster**

The initial request was considered by the PLM Trustees at their May 14, 2024, meeting. After that meeting two members of the Trustees consulted with Pastor Karen Kelly to gain

additional insights and to discuss options to address Trustee concerns. WPCJ provided clarification regarding the Cost Sharing Appendix and provided financial statements as of March 31, 2024.

The PLM Trustees met on June 03, 2024, to consider the clarifications and formulate the following:

**Recommendations:**

- 1. That the Presbytery of Lake Michigan authorize the sale of the building and property described below for an amount equal to or more than the appraised value of Four Hundred Thousand dollars (\$ 400,000), if approved by the Presbytery Trustees, and if the way be clear.**
  
- 2. Sale documents shall contain written provisions for the care or movement of the memorial gardens.**

Address: 2301 Ridgeway Road, Jackson, MI 49203

Tax Identification 000-13-20-276-007-00

Legal Description

BEG AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE S LN OF RIDGEWAY RD WITH THE E LN OF SEC 20 TH W ALG  
THE S LN OF RIDGEWAY RD 966 FT TO A PT FOR PL OF BEG OF THIS DESCN TH S 0DEG 05'53"W  
500 FT TH N 89DEG 52'W 400 FT TH N 0DEG 05'53"E 500 FT TO THE S LN OF RIDGEWAY RD TH E  
ALG S LN OF SD RD 400 FT TO BEG SEC 20 T3S R1W

**Proceeds of Sale**

The WPCJ requested that the proceeds of the sale be given to the church to invest in their future ministry.

Considerations:

- A. Real Property used by a congregation is held in Trust for the ministries of the PCUSA.
- B. According to the Deed Recorded on January 26, 1959, the property was given to this congregation by the Synod of Michigan for a sum of less than one hundred dollars (\$100.).
- C. Throughout the years Westminster Presbyterian of Jackson procured loans which were approved and guaranteed by the Presbytery.
- D. This congregation has benefitted from numerous staff hours invested in assisting with its ministry and planning for its future throughout its history but especially in the last few years.

**Recommendations:**

- 1. That the net proceeds of the sale of this property be held in escrow by the Presbytery of Lake Michigan in a designated escrow account for the benefit of WPCJ subject to the following:**
  - a. Earnings within this account shall accrue to the balance within this account.**
  - b. Distribution requests from the escrow account are to be submitted in writing to the Commission on Ministry by the session of WPCJ.**
  - c. Distributed funds are to be used for support of the mission, ministry, outreach and staffing for the Westminster congregation.**
  - d. Distributed funds are not available for capital improvements to the host UCC church, except for use to purchase an exterior sign reflecting the location of WPCJ.**
- 2. If WPCJ ceases to exist as an entity within the structure of the PCUSA, any remaining funds in the escrow shall be distributed to the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, and the escrow shall cease to exist.**
- 3. Following PLM Trustee approval of the sale, WPCJ will provide a quit claim deed to the property to facilitate the sale of this property to the final purchaser by the Presbytery of Lake Michigan.**

The Trustees give thanks to God, to COM, and to WPCJ for finding this creative way to balance the needs and concerns of the parties involved. And the PLM Trustees add their prayers to those of others that this joint ministry will be a blessing to the congregations and communities involved.

In Christ,

Elder Beth Dyer (Kalamazoo First), Moderator  
Kirk Miller (Holt)  
Dan Anderson (Spring Lake)  
Lola Coke (Westminster GR)  
Todd Olson (Grand Haven)