



WESTMINSTER REFORMED

★ PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ★

Congregational Report 2023

1) Membership - Communicant: 16; Baptized: 7; Total: 23 (+3). 2) Average Worship Attendance - 21. 3) Professions - New Converts: 0; Covenant Children: 0; Total: 0. 4) Baptisms - Adult: 0; Children: 1; Total: 1. 5) Other Actions - Transfers (in): 4; Transfers (out): 0; Dismissals: 1.

Dear Fathers and Brethren,

Westminster Reformed Presbyterian Church continues to carry out an active, hopeful and joyful ministry in the north suburbs of Chicago. The RPCNA has maintained a witness to the Chicago area for over a century, and we trust that God will continue to use us to proclaim Christ and uphold the Reformed faith in this region. We are about the business of proclaiming the Gospel to a needy and wanting world. We first equip the saints and send them into the world. Our intention is to prepare our members of Westminster that they are ready to proclaim the love of Christ.

Worship

We have been able to meet each Lord's Day for corporate worship, proclaiming the Word of God and sitting together (monthly) at the Table of our Lord. Dr. Rev. Brett Mahlen has served as stated supply for the first part of the year and Joshua Smith accepted our call to serve as our pastor. He started on August 1 and was ordained on August 19th. Joshua started by preaching through the book of Philippians.

Ordained Leadership

For the first half of June, Dr. Brett Mahlen served as our stated supply. He is ordained in the OPC. He is now working with prisons ministry in Indiana.

In August 2022 Joshua Smith and his wife Brooke came to Westminster. Joshua now serves as our pastor.

We met in constituted court 14 times during 2022. These meetings usually were conducted on Zoom. We also had two congregational meetings during 2022. One was the traditional spring meeting, and the other was a special meeting to make a pastoral call. Wade Mann was our interim moderator along with Jack Baumgardner who served when Wade took sabbatical. Their work and assistance in helping us through the challenges of a call and ordination were appreciated. Wade has continued to serve with us as an advisory member of the session after Joshua's ordination. He will be stepping down from the role as interim elder in March. His wisdom and patience has been appreciated.

Jack Baumgardner also served as our interim moderator starting in May sharing his years of wisdom through the ordination of Joshua in August. We truly appreciate his willingness to take the time to work with us.

Fellowship

Recognizing the church as the “communion of the saints,” we gave a significant emphasis to fellowship. Beyond our Lord’s Day worship, we sat down each Lord’s Day after worship for meals. On the first Sunday of each month we had our monthly carry-in dinners, which are a bit more organized. The other weeks we call them a brown bag lunch, for people to bring food for themselves. However, people continue bringing casseroles, large salads and desserts to share. Many people drive long distances to attend Westminster and would like to eat a meal before they head home. This helps to accommodate them with an enjoyable time of fellowship. Thus, on average we are together each Lord’s Day from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm.

Currently the Facebook page is being updated by Joshua. This is helping to keep it fresh and relevant.

Education

Our educational ministries continue to thrive. We currently have one class that meets each Lord’s Day morning: an adult class. We started the year by discussing apologetics and going through lectures by Greg Bahnsen. In August, we began to work through “Understanding Biblical Doctrine”.

Twice a month, Bob Koch leads a study on the book of Joshua. It has been a long journey through this important book.

We also continue with our Zoom prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings. This has worked well. Because of the distance people have to travel, a weekly meeting has never been something we could do. However, we now have a Wednesday gathering on Zoom that is usually attended by two to six people.

Outreach

With the challenges of COVID behind us, communities are slowly starting to come out and the festivals have begun again. Now to figure out the best way to utilize those events for outreach. We did attempt to one event this summer at the local train station, but it was rained out. So we had some practice on getting ready, but were not able to follow through with this project. We will try again. We also have started to see some visitors from time to time which is encouraging. This fall we had a community gathering at the church and had a nice turnout. One woman had not been in a church building for decades. We need to continue to pray for wisdom on what we can do, with our limited numbers that would be effective and productive.

Property and Facilities

We are extremely thankful to God for the property we enjoy in Prairie View, Illinois. It provides us with a significant presence within the community. Both structures are sound and attractive, though not without maintenance challenges. The major challenge we have had in the last year was the water well collapsing and ceasing to function. It took several months to repair due to the winter weather. In March it was finally in place and the water has worked well. During the time that the well was broken, we were able to meet at a Messianic Jewish facility in Buffalo Grove. This was great blessing. They allowed us to use the facility as if it were our own, and we continued having lunch and second hour there.

Finances

2022 ended reasonably well. Our income fell short of our expenses by around \$12,000. This is of course a challenge, but we do have a reserve we were able to utilize to meet our expenses.

Challenges

Our small numbers and not meeting budget are concerns. Outreach is a challenge, and we will be trying some activities when the weather breaks and people are outside again.

Like all local congregations, we are not without our challenges, by which God keeps us humble, prayerful, and conscious of our utter dependence upon Him.

Conclusion

These are our major challenges, but this report began with a reference to Westminster as an active, hopeful and joyful ministry, and that certainly bears repeating. Our witness to Christ is clear, our fellowship is deep, and our expectation for the blessing of God is high. We face uncertainties but know that Christ is King and Head of His church and that He bears all power and authority. We pray that He will stir us by His Spirit, prosper us in His grace, and use us in a mighty way for His kingdom and glory. Please support and pray for us to this end. Thank you!

As we begin a new phase in the life of Westminster, with a new pastor, we are encouraged. We appreciate all the help we have received from Dr. Brett Mahlen, Wade Mann and Jack Baumgardner. Their care and concern for Westminster has helped this small church to thrive and continue to develop. Thank You.

2022 End of Year Financials

Category	Budget	Actual	2023 Budget
Income			\$87,000
Tithes & Offerings	\$78,000	\$51,458	\$87,000
		(\$26,542)	
Pastoral Support			\$53,000
Pastor's Salary	\$16,250	\$13,500	\$41,000
Pension	\$2,250	-	\$4,500
Other Expenses	\$5,000	\$5,237	\$500
Health Reimbursement Account	-	-	\$2,400
Interim Pastor's Salary	\$17,500	\$16,200	-
Interim Pastor's Expenses	\$4,200	\$1,895.78	-
Pastor's Expenses	\$3,100	-	\$3,100
Pastoral Development	\$500	-	\$500
Pastor's Book Allowance	-	\$170.22	\$1,000
		(\$11,797)	
Church Ministry			\$7,650
Christian Education	\$200	\$337.08	\$600
Fellowship Activities	\$500	-	\$1,000
Pastor's Ministry Expenses	-	\$127.46	\$3,000
Guest Ministry	\$2,500	\$3,191.97	\$500
Mercy Ministry	-	-	\$250
Advertising	-	-	\$500
Conference	\$1,000	1,325.56	\$1,000
Youth Ministry	\$500	-	\$500

Category	Budget	Actual	2023 Budget
Missions	-	-	\$300
Other	-	\$512.87	-
		(\$1,705.06)	
Administration			\$900
Church Office Expenses	\$300	\$56.89	\$500
Other	\$100	-	-
Worker's Comp Insurance	-	\$457.58	\$400
		(\$114.47)	
Denomination			\$3,010
Presbytery Assessments	\$1,000	\$404.21	\$810
Synod Assessments	\$1,140	\$1,689	\$1,200
Presby & Synod Delegates	-	-	\$500
RPM&M	\$500	-	\$500
		(\$547.79)	
Church Building			\$21,900
Mortgage	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Insurance	\$3,800	\$4,065	\$3,000
Cleaning	\$250	-	\$1,000
Maintenance	\$1,500	\$2,180.04	\$2,500
Security	\$1,200	-	\$1,000
Internet	\$2,250	\$2,311.03	\$1,000
Utilities	\$5,350	\$4,679.31	\$5,000
Church Equipment	\$500	-	\$500
		(\$1,614.62)	
Parsonage			\$5,000

Category	Budget	Actual	2023 Budget
Maintenance	\$1,200	\$2,113.42	\$700
Utilities	\$3,200	\$3,104.69	\$3,700
Improvements	\$2,500	-	\$600
		(\$1,681.89)	
Net Difference		(\$12,111.11)	