

ROLLS (coming soon)

Opening

The meeting came to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was present. Moderator Paula Steinbacher and Stated Clerk Olivia Hudson Smith were present.

Opening Prayer

Moderator Steinbacher opened with prayer.

Introduction of Business:

The purpose of this special called meeting is to read the order of the Permanent Judicial Commission in a disciplinary action.

Stated Clerk Report

Olivia Hudson Smith

*PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE
PREAMBLE
D-1.0101*

*Reading of the Order
Book of Order 2021-2023
D-11.0701 Reporting the Decision*

THE PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF THE PRESBYTERY OF DENVER DECISION

Presbytery of Denver for The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

v.

Reverend Doctor Louise Westfall, Minister of Word and Sacrament.

This is a Disciplinary case which has come before the Permanent Judicial Commission as the result of accusations submitted against the Reverend Doctor Louise Westfall, a Minister of the Word and Sacrament of the Presbytery of Denver.

The Permanent Judicial Council finds that it has jurisdiction, that the charges against Reverend Westfall were filed with the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Denver on June 11, 2021, which is within the required time limits.

The Investigating Committee was appointed on June 12, 2021. The Investigating Committee met for the first time and received the accusation on July 1, 2021. As the result of the investigation, the committee filed a Disciplinary Charge on December 4, 2021, to wit:

"During her tenure as the senior pastor of Fairmount Presbyterian Church (FPC) of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, you, Rev. Dr. Louise F. Westfall, did participate in an inappropriate, intimate, and adulterous relationship with [name redacted], a married man and member [ordained elder] of the Fairmount congregation, and did engage in sexual relations with him. This action is in violation of The Book of Order,

D-10.040(c) (2) misuse of ordered ministry, and by such offense, acting contrary to (the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Exodus 20:14."

The Investigating Committee met with the accused and her attorney on December 14, 2021. At the meeting of the committee and the accused, the accused admitted the charge and agreed upon an Alternate Form of Resolution.

On December 20, 2021, the Permanent Judicial Commission met with members of the Investigatory Committee, with the Stated Clerk, and with the accused and her Counsel via a recorded Zoom meeting to approve or disapprove of the said Alternative Form of Resolution. By vote of six of the seven members of the council, a margin of greater than two-thirds of the voting members, the Permanent Judicial Commission approved the Alternative Form of Resolution Agreement, and finds:


1. The Permanent Judicial Commission has jurisdiction of this matter, pursuant to D-3.0101(b)(1) and to D-10.0401 (c)(1) of the Book of Order.
2. By her signature to the Alternative Form of Resolution, and her verbal admission of guilt to the factual allegations set forth in the Disciplinary Charge to the Permanent Judicial Commission in the presence of her counsel during the December 20 meeting, the said charge is proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

WHEREFORE, This Permanent Judicial Commission, acting as a court of the church, imposes the censure of rebuke, to wit:

WHEREAS, you, Reverend Doctor Louise Westfall, have been found guilty of the offense of participating as senior pastor of the Fairmount Presbyterian Church (FPC) of Cleveland Heights, Ohio in an inappropriate, intimate and adulterous relationship with [name redacted], a married man and ordained elder of the Fairmount congregation, and did engage in sexual relations with him, contrary to the Scriptures and the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); now therefore, the Presbytery of Denver, in the name and authority of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), expresses its condemnation of this offense, and rebukes you. You are enjoined to be more watchful and avoid such offense in the future. We urge you to use diligently the means of grace to the end that you may be more obedient to our Lord Jesus Christ.

We also strongly recommend that you contact the victim through her advocate Reverend Jessica MacMillan, to attempt to begin to make amends. Reverend MacMillan should always be the guide and provide counsel as to be the most effective, caring and sympathetic approach in this matter with the victim.

Dated this 26th day of December, 2021.



Gregory V. Hopkins, Moderator

Closing Intercessory Prayer

John Yu

Adjournment and Benediction

Paula Steinbacher