

FELLOWSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell welcomed the elders and staff members at 6:00 PM in the Campus Center for dinner and discussion about seasons and summer memories. The elders and staff then moved to Room 206 of the Education Building for the Session meeting that began at 6:50 PM.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator) and Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas. Ruling Elders: Marcia Baarson, Linda Calvert, Joan Emrich, Andrea Jackson, John McQueen, Robin Segó, Lou Stern, Sandi Stewart, and Matthew Straeb. Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie, and Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski. Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski

EXCUSED: Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne; Ruling Elders, Gerry Hailey, Cliff McHenry, and Dotti Tyle; and, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp.

QUORUM, CALL TO ORDER, AND OPENING PRAYER: A quorum was established. Dr. McConnell served as Moderator. He called the meeting to order and opened with prayer. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To approve the Agenda for the Meeting.**

STORYTELLING 2.0: Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen opened the meeting with her story – *Christianity is an Orchestra*. Prayers were said for the storyteller.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: This month's spotlight shone on Operations - the "Silent Ministry," and was presented by Executive Director of Operations, Pam Gillespie.

STAFF REPORTS:

Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski:

- Meeting with Wilkinson School principal. They are very appreciative of the partnership with COP volunteers at the school. A wonderful way of engaging with the neighboring community.

Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne:

(The Clerk gave her report in her absence)

- Congregational Care is doing well.
- Shepherding Deacons will have their quarterly meeting on June 29.
- She is very grateful for the 3 week vacation in Myanmar with her family. It was a wonderful reunion of her entire family.

Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas:

- Several student summer trips are underway.
- Palms Pre-school. Our newly baptized twins attend there. Preschool families are drawn to the church and joining!

Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell:

- For summer reading – *The Great Emergence* by Phyllis Tickle. Referenced at the May Session Retreat. Not your easy beach read, but do your best! Will be discussed at the August Session dinner.

CORRESPONDENCE AND CLERK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS: *The Clerk to the Session emails to Staff and Elders pertinent correspondence received between Session Meetings.* The Clerk reported that:

- Correction to the Clerk's Reported as submitted – two references to remove Gwen Sullivan – one deleted and membership total corrected accordingly.
- At the request of the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry, Church of the Palms has been asked to participate in the pilot program creating Congregational Advocates for each church. This is an ongoing relationship to provide support and communication between the church and the COM. COP's liaison will be COM member Judy Bremer from Presbyterian Church of the Covenant in Sarasota.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Administration and Finance Chair Andrea Jackson reported:

- Great cash position.
- Budget surplus of \$178,785.
- Sarah Soboleski and Jacki Gomez in Communications - great job telling the COP story!
- Extra Mile campaign marching toward its goal-- keep telling the story!

OMNIBUS MOTION:

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To set aside for discussion or clarification, item F.3. of the Omnibus Motion as presented in the Agenda.

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To pass the following Omnibus Motion (Items A-F), less item F.3., as presented in the Agenda.

A. To APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

1. Stated Session Meeting – 05/20/19
2. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members - -6/09/19

B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK'S REPORT:

1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors - Month of July at 8:20 AM - Sr. Pastor's office – **Matthew Straeb**
 - b. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors - Month of August at 8:20 AM - Sr. Pastor's office – **Dotti Tyle**
 - c. Session Meeting Storyteller -August – **Laurie Haas**
 - d. Deacons' Exec. Comm. Meeting – Monday, August 5 at 7 PM - **Robin Segó**
 - e. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – Sunday, July 14 at 11 AM - Chapel Reception Room - **Group 3 Elders (J. Hailey, S. Stewart, D. Tyle)**
 - f. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – Sunday, August 11 at 11 AM - Chapel Reception Room - **Group 4 Elders (L. Calvert, J. McQueen, L. Stern)**
2. Membership Statistics, Baptisms & Weddings, Home Communion (see attached Clerk's Report *as corrected above*)

C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

1. Elder attending Deacons' Exec. Comm. meeting in June – Sandi Stewart

D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:

1. Administration and Finance - Ch. Andrea Jackson - includes Building and Grounds Team and The Generosity Team
2. Global Mission Partners - Ch. Dotti Tyle
3. Personnel - Ch. Joan Emrich

E. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM MINISTRY TEAMS:

1. Family & Student Ministries (includes Palms Preschool) – *see staff reports above*
2. Contemporary Worship Service Leadership – *no written report*
3. Presbyterian Women - *no written report*
4. Stephen Ministry Leadership - *no written report*

F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:

1. Deacons' Executive Committee - Ch. Carol Washchuk – *no written report*
2. Memorial Garden Board - Ch. Sue Angle – *no written report*
3. Nominating - Ch. Robin Segó - approved by separate motion

ITEMS FROM OMNIBUS SET ASIDE FOR CLARIFICATION OR DISCUSSION:

Item F.3. – Nominating Committee. Chair Robin Segó reported that a vacancy [resignation of Reid Wettersten] on the Memorial Garden Board was filled by the Nominating Committee according to Memorial Garden Board policies. The replacement member is Judy Armitage for the Class of 2022.

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To receive Omnibus Motion item F.3.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Mission Vision Strategic Priorities Update.** Dr. McConnell reviewed a handout that summarized the results of the Session Retreat in May and the follow up Staff Retreat. Strategic priorities and resulting initiatives will be based on the mission theme of: *Growing in love for God, for neighbor and for each other through a ministry of spirit, mind, and body.* Feedback was provided by the Session. Continuing work will be done on this. A formal report will be provided for the August Session meeting.
2. **Open Palms Extra Mile Update.** Director Gillespie proved an update on the campaign:
 - COP has “paid itself back” for cash advances made during the initial Open Palms project.
 - Extra Mile fund now has approximately \$200K available for anticipated projects.
 - Meetings were held with the architect and stakeholders about plans for the Chapel.
 - Meeting has been held with the architect about the Sanctuary.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Grant Request to the Foundation -Staff Leadership – Advanced Theological Education fund.** Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski was excused for the remainder of the meeting. Dr. McConnell provided an explanation of the grant request. [*Note from the Clerk: This fund was established by the Session in 2014 to assist senior staff members – see page 22 of the Employee Handbook.*]. The current intended recipients of this fund are Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp and Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski, who intend to pursue MDiv degrees using online studies provided through the University of Dubuque. Chair of Personnel Elder Joan Emrich confirmed that the request is supported by the Personnel Committee. Discussion regarding the need for more formal process for recommending staff

participants (query – to be formulated by the Personnel Committee?) and need to clarify the role of the Session in approving requests to the Foundation. Dr. McConnell will follow up in these areas. **MOTION, MADE, SECONDED and PASSED: To approve the submission to the Foundation of the Grant Request from the Personnel Committee for a four-year proposal totaling \$100,000 to fund the Leadership Theological Education account.** A copy of the Grant Request to the Foundation is attached to the official minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- See Summer reading assignment under Dr. McConnell’s report above.
- Reminder from the Clerk – the next Session meeting is August 26.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 9:05 PM to a Circle of Prayer.

By: _____
The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell
Moderator

By: _____
Linda R. Getzen
Clerk to the Session

Attachments to official minutes:

- Clerk’s Report (statistics)
- June 2019 Foundation Grant Request - Leadership Theological Education
(Fully signed copy will be attached to the official minutes when returned by the Foundation)