

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 based on reading *Tattoos On the Heart* by Father Gregory Boyle. The elders and staff then moved to Room 206 of the Education Building for the Session meeting that began at 6:45 PM.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator), Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne, and Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas. Ruling Elders: Marcia Baarson, Linda Calvert, Joan Emrich, Gerry Hailey, Andrea Jackson, Cliff McHenry, John McQueen, Robin Segó, Lou Stern, Sandi Stewart, and Dotti Tyle. Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski.

EXCUSED: Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie and Ruling Elder Matthew Straeb.

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: Elder Andrea Jackson opened the meeting with her story, *Loving Wanda and Gene*. Prayers were said for the storyteller.

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: This month's spotlight was presented by Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp and shone on the special bonds that are formed among members of the various music ministries.

STAFF REPORTS:

Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas:

- The 2020 Confirmation Class has started.
- Practicing for a group hike on the Appalachian Trail. The hike is May 3-9.

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

- Wednesday nights *God in Hollywood* series has 80+ attending.
- 14 new members received to start 2020.
- The Brownes hosted their Welcome Dinner for December and January new members in their home. A special evening. New members appreciate spending time with all of the pastors.
- Stephen Ministers held retreats this month.
- The congregational Life Together small groups based on the book *The Good and Beautiful Life* are going well.
- Tables of 6 groups are popular and continue.
- Wine tasting is coming up!

Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski:

- Applause for the beautiful 2019 Annual Report!

- Spring Connect is in the works with Jackie Gomez.
- Family Ministry held a retreat this month with 70 participants. Work done on a mission statement, goals, and benchmarks. Very positive experience for attendees.
- First Impressions appeal for volunteers was successful.
- Father Boyle talk on January 29 is sold out. Ticket proceeds will go toward our ministry to Wilkinson School. Church of the Palms was recently named “Partner of the Year” with the school!
- Jen Hatmaker talk is on March 18. Tickets are on sale.
- Seminary classes for Sarah and Genevieve start again next week.

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

- Congregational/Corporation Meeting held yesterday. Grateful for the Congregation and the trust they have placed in our lay leadership.
- James Thompson is back on staff as the Director of Property Management.

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:

- Notice received from the COP Foundation. The 2020 Foundation Grant guideline is \$247,699.
- \$10,000 Grant for Cedarkirk was approved by the Foundation on 1/14/2020. [Note: Grant details are attached to 12/16/2019 minutes].
- Clerk explained the 2019 Statistical Report to be filed with PCUSA.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: No additional information. See Session package for financial summary.

OMNIBUS MOTION:

MOTION made, seconded, and PASSED: To pass the following Omnibus Motion (Items A-F), as presented in the Agenda.

A. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

1. Stated Session Meeting: 12/16/2019
2. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members: 01/12/2020

B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK’S REPORT:

1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors: Month of February, 8:20 AM in Sr. Pastor’s office: Andrea Jackson
 - b. Session Meeting Storyteller for February: John McQueen
 - c. Deacons’ Exec. Comm. Meeting on Monday, Feb. 3 at 7 PM: Joan Emrich
 - d. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members on Sunday 02/09/2020, at 11 AM in Chapel Reception Room: Group 2 Elders (Joan Emrich, Robin Segó, and Matthew Straeb)
2. Membership Statistics, Baptisms & Weddings, Home Communion, and Quarterly Worship Service Attendance Report (see attached Clerk’s Report)
3. 2019 Statistical Report to be filed with PCUSA
4. Appointment of Elder Commissioners to the quarterly Peace River Presbytery meeting (Thursday, Feb. 27 at Church of the Palms). The Clerk is authorized to complete the appointment of elder commissioners in the event of a vacancy. Appointed John McQueen, Gerry Hailey, Linda Calvert and Dotti Tyle,

C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

1. Elder attending Deacons' Exec. Comm. meeting in January: Gerry Hailey

D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:

1. Administration and Finance: Ch. Andrea Jackson (includes Building and Grounds Team and The Generosity Team) [*Note: Includes renewal of the lease with Samaritan Counseling Services through 2020.*]
2. Global Mission Partners: Ch. Dotti Tyle, Incoming Ch. Matthew Straeb (*No written report this month*)
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 this month*)
3. Presbyterian Women (*No written report this month*)
4. Stephen Ministry Leadership

F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:

1. Deacons' Executive Committee: Ch. Carol Washchuk
2. Memorial Garden Board: Ch. Sue Angle (*No written report this month*)
3. Nominating: Ch. Robin Sego, Incoming Ch. Marcia Baarson (*No written report this month*)

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Peace River Presbytery meeting on February 27. Church of the Palms is hosting this meeting. Thank you to Elder Dotti Tyle for coordinating the volunteers.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Allocation of Surplus Funds. Dr. McConnell and Elder Jackson reported on a recommendation from the Administration and Finance Committee regarding allocation of excess funds from the 2019 Operating Ministry Budget (plus some additional available cash). See page 20 of Session package. **MOTION coming from the Administration and Finance Committee and PASSED: To allocate the sum of \$415,000 as follows:**
 - Capital Reserve: \$325,000** [Noted by Elder Jackson that this is a Session designated fund]
 - Open Palms Capital campaign: \$40,000**
 - Global Mission Partners: \$25,000. These funds must be disbursed by the Global Mission Partners by the end of 2020.**
 - Sabbatical Leave: \$15,000**
 - Employee Bonus: \$5,000**
 - New Ministry Initiatives: \$5000.**
2. Giving Guidelines and Policies Update. Elder Jackson reported. The Legacy Society and the Administration and Finance Committee have completed their periodic review and update of various giving policies. *See the January Session package for full text.* These policies are also submitted to the Foundation for their review and approval. **MOTION coming from the Administration and Finance Committee and PASSED: To approve the following policies: Donor Bill of Rights, General Gift Acceptance Policy, and Legacy Giving Policies and Guidelines.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Reading for discussion at February Session dinner: *The Good and Beautiful Life* by James Bryan Smith
2. First Chair Yoga class at the Palms Center had 25 attendees!
3. 2019 increase in church attendance over 2018 to be celebrated!

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION made, seconded, and PASSED: To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 8:18 PM to a Circle of Prayer.

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

By: _____
Linda R. Getzen
Clerk to the Session

Attachment to official minutes:
Clerk's Report (statistics)
2019 PCUSA Statistical Report