

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 around *Barking at the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship* by 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) an, Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne. Ruling Elders: Joan Emrich, Andrea Jackson, Cliff McHenry, John McQueen, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Segó, Sandi Stewart, and Dotti Tyle. Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski.

EXCUSED: Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas and Ruling Elders Sandy Snyder, Lou Stern, and Tom Taylor.

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: Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie opened the meeting with her story – *For Everything There is a Season*. Prayers were said for the storyteller.

STAFF REPORTS:

Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski:

- Jackie Gomez and Sarah are working on a pamphlet promoting COP's global and local mission efforts.
- Making small changes to the Sunday bulletin to better provide information.
- Doing a facelift of the Foundation and Legacy Society giving materials.
- Website – Youth and family pages have been reworked.
- Facebook – pleased with the engagement.
- Keeping up with publicity for Pastor Hmingi's many events!

Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie:

- Looking for part-time custodian – 20 hr./wk.
- Church representative needed for Boy Scout Troop now meeting at COP.
- Starting work on the 2019 budget – doing it in a new manner.

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

- Loves to lead new member classes.
- Beth Moore event – Close to 60% of attendees came from outside COP.
- Dr. Peter Graper wellness event is October 17.
- There are now 23 Tables of 6+.
- Life Together – 8 Small Groups are forming. Looking to have 2 more.
- 2 adult Sunday school classes are doing well.

- Looking for more nominees for Shepherding Deacons.
- Wednesday Night Life is going very well. The middle school group is growing. Trying to provide interests for all age groups.

Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:

- Happy energy in music - growth in numbers.
- A Small Group has formed based on F. Morgan Roberts' book *28 Hymns to Sing Before You Die*.
- Choral Artists of Sarasota is now rehearsing at COP.
- *Piano Grand III* will be performed at the Sarasota Opera House on Saturday, October 6 at 4 PM – familiar classics and popular songs by 10 renowned pianists – including our own Genevieve!
- Handbell tables have been removed from the Sanctuary – frees up space.
- SYV is growing again.

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

- Our staff – what a great team!

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:

- Positive feedback provided by Elder Joan Emrich, Elder Sandi Stewart, and the Clerk on attending the Presbytery Northern Cluster Gathering on 09/06/18.
- Presbytery Triennial visit to COP was held on 09/04/18. Dr. McConnell, Dr. Browne, Elder Andrea Jackson, Elder Joan Emrich, and the Clerk met with the COM representative.
- Grant Request for Faith and Society Forum lecture series was approved by the Foundation for \$30,000. Increased initial request by \$5000 for publicity budget.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Administration & Finance Chair Elder Andrea Jackson reported:

- See page 13 of the Session package for an overview from the Executive Director of Operations.
- Budget is net positive through August.
- EDO Pam Gillespie is doing a phenomenal job. Great approach to the 2019 budget process.

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 – 08/27/18
2. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – 09/09/18

B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK'S REPORT:

1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers with the Pastors - Month of October – Sandi Stewart
 - b. Session Meeting Storyteller - October – Sandi Stewart
 - c. Deacons' Exec. Comm. Meeting – Monday, October 1 - 7 PM - Sandy Snyder
 - d. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members - Sunday, October 14 - 11 AM - Chapel Reception Room - Group 2 Elders (J Emrich, J. McQueen, R. Segó)
2. Membership Statistics, Baptisms & Weddings, and Home Communion (see attached

- Clerk's Report)
3. Appoint Cathie Silbaugh as reader for the Annual Review of Session Records by the Presbytery
- C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:**
1. Elder attending Deacons' Exec. Comm. meeting 09/04/18 - Cliff McHenry – *no report*
- D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:**
1. Administration and Finance - Ch. Andrea Jackson - includes Building and Grounds Team and The Generosity Team – **INCLUDES RECEIPT OF THE 2017 FINANCIAL AUDIT FROM INDEPENDENT AUDITOR KENNETH F. KANDEFER CPA.**
 2. Global Mission Partners - Ch. Dotti Tyle
 3. Personnel - Ch. Marlene Petro
- 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
- F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:**
1. Deacons' Executive Committee - Ch. Marie Bonifield
 2. Memorial Garden Board - Ch. Sue Angle – *no written report*
 3. Nominating - Ch. Robin Segó

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Church-wide Goal Setting 2018-19.** Dr. McConnell reported. He provided a “first look” overview of the 2018-19 Goals and Initiatives that the staff is working on, based on our established Mission, Vision, and Strategic Priorities. A summary handout provided. The Session was asked to think and pray about these as they become finalized for the next Session meeting. The ministry paradigm of a plant having a seed, roots, stem, and fruit is based on Ephesians 4:15-16:
Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love. (RSV).
2. **Open Palms Campaign Discussion.** Administration & Finance Chair Elder Jackson reported. A handout was provided that summarizes the revenue and expenses of the Open Palms Campaign through September 20, 2018. Discussion was held on remaining deferred maintenance items and funding to finish this journey and move forward.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Election of Foundation Director.** The Session is entitled to elect one director to the Foundation for the next term. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To elect Chris Bonnet as a Class of 2022 Director for the Foundation for the Church of the Palms.** Chris is being elected to his second consecutive term on the Foundation board. The Clerk will notify the Foundation president

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Reading for October Session dinner – *A Generous Orthodoxy* by Brian McLaren. The Clerk will email Elders for book orders.

2. October is Staff Appreciation Month!!!!
3. The staff was excused from the meeting and the Ruling Elders were provided with information from the Clerk and the Personnel Committee chair on a personnel matter.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 9:00 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)