

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 chapters 1-4 of *Blood Done Sign My Name* by Timothy B. Tyson. Prayers with the laying on of hands were given for retiring Session members: Bob Baarson, Marty Guice, Bill Mallett, and Jane Delgado Semidei. The elders, staff, and guests then moved to Room 206 of the Education Building for the Session meeting that began around 6:55 PM.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator) and Congregational Care Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne. Ruling Elders: Andrea Jackson, Bob Baarson, Marty Guice, Bill Mallett, John McQueen, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Sego, Jane Delgado Semidei, Sandy Snyder, and Dotti Tyle. Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie, Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson.

EXCUSED: Ruling Elder Tom Taylor and Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski.

GUESTS: Class of 2021 Elders: Joan Emrich, Cliff McHenry, Lou Stern, and Sandi Stewart.

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, as amended to include under New Business personnel matters to be discussed without staff present.**

STORYTELLING: Elder Sego opened the meeting with her story about One God. Prayers were said for the storyteller.

STAFF REPORTS:

Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas:

- April 20 is the Confirmation Dinner and Special Session Meeting. 6:30 PM Campus Center. She will send an email to Elders for RSVPs.
- Palms Center - Pickleball Clinic April 19 – 6-8 PM. Coming up on future Friday nights there will be age group events.
- Contemporary Service is growing – 135-138 attending.

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

- Thank you to Elder Marlene Petro for planning and coordinating the wonderful Palms Center opening.
- 10 Stephen Ministers all graduated!
- Deacons and Shepherding Deacons are in training. 80+ Shepherding Deacons attended the quarterly meeting in March.
- No home communion in April due to the timing of Easter (communion will be on Maundy Thursday, instead of on April 1)

Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie:

- Executive Director's written report is on page 18 of the Session package.
- In the absence of Community Engagement Director Sarah Soboleski, Pam reported that the April/May Connect magazine is ready for distribution. COP now has 1000 Facebook followers. The website redesign preview will be ready for the April Session meeting.
- The County attorney is reviewing the Certificate of Occupancy for the Palms Center.

Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:

- The March 4 Concert for the Children reached community organizations in a new way, Focused awareness about children in need. New volunteers were recruited. Community singers participated. \$5600 was raised for UNICEF.
- Now into the busy music time of Holy Week.

Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson:

- Finished a 5-week Lenten Study led by Charlie Haeussner – 35-38 attended.
- Palms Center – Ethel Webb's fitness classes on Monday and Friday mornings will combine exercise, devotion, and prayer.
- 2 upcoming studies. Member Bill Tiffan will teach *Getting Our Priorities Straight* on Wednesday evenings. Retired pastor Mike Murphy will teach *Discovering Our Spiritual Identity* on Friday mornings.

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

- Easter Egg Hunt for the community on Saturday – 400 families. Thank you to staff and volunteers!
- Followed by Sunday's Palms Center grand opening. Looking at many opportunities – activities will blossom.

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

- Request to Receive New Members: A pastor was not available to moderate the 03/11/18 Special Session meeting to receive the March New Member Class. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To receive the March New Member Class into the membership of Church of the Palms on March 26, 2018.** [Note: See attached Clerk's Report for names].
- FYI - A&F Grant Request to Foundation for \$20,204 for computer server project – Approved by Foundation [Copy attached to February minutes].
- Draft of Elder Assignments for 2018-2019. Please email contact corrections to the Clerk.
- Storytellers sign-up sheet – Passed around at the Session meeting for additional names.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie reported:

- Finances are doing well. Revenue is somewhat behind, but so are expenses. Clearer picture after the end of the quarter.
- Many Open Palms pledges have been paid in full.
- May access the line of credit for remaining project expenses starting in April.
- Deferred maintenance – next projects are drainage and landscaping. Due to construction boom, there have been difficulties in getting work contracted.
- Gratitude to the Foundation of the forgiveness of an outstanding loan to the church of \$61,400. Seconded by the Session!

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 – 02/11/18
- B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK’S REPORT:**
1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors - Month of April – John McQueen
 - c. Session Meeting Storyteller - April – Sandy Snyder
 - d. Diaconate Exec. Comm. Meeting – Monday 04/02/18 at 7 PM – Dottie Tyle
 - e. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – Sunday 04/08/18 at 11 AM - Group 4 Elders (R. Segó, S. Snyder, T. Taylor)
 - f. **Dinner and Special Session Meeting to Receive Confirmation Class – Friday 04/20/18 - 6:00 - 7:30PM - All Elders on 2017-2018 Session**
 - g. FYI – Ordination Sunday for incoming Elders, Deacons and Shepherding Deacons – Sunday 04/08/18 – Sanctuary 9 AM.
 2. Membership Statistics, Baptisms & Weddings, Home Communion (see attached Clerk’s Report)
- C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:**
1. Elder attending Diaconate Exec. Committee meeting in March – John McQueen
- D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:**
1. Administration and Finance - Ch. Tom Taylor - includes Building and Grounds - Ch. Paul Ross and The Generosity Team - Ch. Bob Baarson
 2. Global Mission Partners - Co-Chs. Jane Delgado Semidei and Dotti Tyle
 3. Personnel - Ch. Marlene Petro
- E. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM MINISTRY TEAMS:**
1. Equipping Ministry - Dir. Carolyn Wilson - *see staff reports above*
 2. Family & Student Ministries (includes Palms Preschool) - Exec. Dir. Laurie Haas - *see also staff reports above*
 3. The Garden Leadership
 4. Legacy Giving - *no written report*
 5. Presbyterian Women - *no written report*
 6. Stephen Ministry Leadership
 7. Worship Planning - *no written report*
- F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:**
1. Diaconate Exec. Comm. - Ch. Barry Buchanan
 2. Memorial Garden Board - Ch. Sue Angle
 3. Nominating - Ch. Robin Segó - *no written report this month*

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Building Committee** - Elder Reynolds provided an update on the Palms Center. A punch list is being worked on with the contractor. The Certificate of Occupancy from the County should arrive this week. For the church records, he would like to obtain “as built” drawings of the Palms Center, particularly the electrical and mechanical installations. He is looking into the cost. Contingency funds are available. The Session applauded Elder Reynolds for all his efforts as the Building Committee Chair. Additional brief discussion was had about the pond – more to follow.

2. **Foundation Distributions for 2018** – The February Motion regarding the total of 2018 distributions from the Foundation allowable without further Session consent was incorrect. After the February Session meeting, the Clerk was informed by the Foundation that, in early January, the Foundation had already distributed \$110K to the Open Palms Campaign, bringing the total pledges paid or to be paid to \$330K in 2018. The February Motion did not include the first \$110K payment in the 2018 distribution total and needed to be amended. In addition, the Foundation recently announced that it has forgiven an outstanding loan owed by the Church in the amount of \$61,400. This forgiveness is also a 2018 distribution and should be included in the 2018 distribution total. Therefore, the February Motion needed to be replaced. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED UNANIMOUSLY: To consent to a distribution by the Foundation of \$220,000 to the Open Palms capital campaign; representing the fourth and fifth payments on its 5-year pledge, and consents the forgiveness of the loan to the church in the amount of \$61,400. In addition, the Session consents to additional distributions the Foundation may make during the year under its 2018 annual distribution guideline of \$220,387, so that the total distributable by the Foundation in 2018 without Session consent shall be \$611,787.** Note: Per the Foundation bylaws, this vote required at least 75% approval of those Elders present. To be effective, a similar motion needs to be passed by at least 75% of the Foundation board members present at its meeting.
[From the Clerk: For information, after applying the above distributions, the Foundation has approved distributions of \$411,604 to date (includes the February computer server grant)].

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Carolyn Wilson.** Director of Equipping Carolyn Wilson provided an update on her path to ordination. She will graduate from seminary in May and will take her final ordination exams. Carolyn then announced that she has been approached to become the Associate Pastor at Venice Presbyterian Church, and she has accepted. She will start as a director and then be installed as the associate pastor when the way is clear after she is ordained. Her time table is short because the Venice PC senior pastor is going on a long study leave shortly. Carolyn will preach at our 9 and 11 AM services on April 8. A farewell reception will be held for her between those services. She will start work at Venice PC on April 15. Although very saddened by Carolyn's departure from our church, the Session was thrilled for Carolyn in her new ministry opportunity. Prayers with the laying on of hands were given for our Carolyn.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Prayers were given for Elder Bill Mallett on the passing of his mother this evening.
- Reading for April Session dinner: *Blood Done Sign My Name* by Timothy B. Tyson, through Chapter 5- 8.
- **Session Retreat – Saturday, April 28, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM – Palms Center.**

Addition to Agenda – Personnel matters: The staff was excused for this part of the Session meeting.

- The terms of the Staff Leadership Fund [*established through a grant from the Foundation in 2014*] were discussed. The Foundation members have unanimously agreed to release Carolyn Wilson from any obligation to repay her student loan from the Staff Leadership Fund, through service to Church of the Palms or otherwise. The Personnel Committee supports this action and consents to release. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To ratify the actions of the Personnel Committee regarding the Staff Leadership Fund loan to Carolyn Wilson.**

- Dr. McConnell indicated that staff and lay leadership will be looking at ways to carry forward Carolyn’s work, move onward with the Palms Center programming expansion, and continue development of the ministry of hospitality. Salaries and the budget are considerations. A clearer view will be provided at the April Session meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 8:53 PM with a closing prayer by Dr. McConnell.

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

By: _____
Linda R. Getzen
Clerk to the Session

Attachment to official minutes:
Clerk’s Report (statistics)

MINUTES

A Special Meeting of the Session of Church of the Palms was held as part of the Confirmand/Session annual dinner in the Campus Center on Friday, April 20, 2018. The event began at 6:30 PM and was opened with prayer by Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas. After dinner, the Session meeting portion began at 7:20 PM.

CALLED PURPOSE: To receive the 2018 Confirmation Class into the membership of Church of the Palms.

SESSION PRESENT: Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell and Congregational Care Pastor The Reverend Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne. Ruling Elders: Andrea Jackson, Cliff McHenry, John McQueen, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Segó, Sandi Stewart, and Dotti Tyle. Also present: Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen and Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas. A quorum being present, Dr. McConnell opened the meeting and served as Moderator.

BUSINESS: Sixteen confirmands were present and introduced themselves. Dr. McConnell recognized the ruling elders of the Session who were present. Dr. McConnell asked the required questions of the confirmands and affirmative answers were given. **MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED: To receive the following confirmands into the membership of Church of the Palms by Profession of Faith:**

<u>Last Name:</u>	<u>First Name:</u>	<u>Last Name:</u>	<u>First Name:</u>
Arguello	Matthew	Riley	Brooke
Carrion	James	Riley	Jenna
Collins	Grant	Saba	Matthew
Dreels	Jacob	Scarlett	Ella
Gardner	Rebecca	Southerland	Kevin
Hume	Nathan	Vafeas	Alexander
MacIndoe	Tyler	VanDerzee	Ashley
Pettingell	Jake	Volino	Calder

MOTION WAS MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED: To approve the requests for baptism of the following members on Confirmation Sunday – April 29, 2018: Matthew Arguello and Nathan Daniel Hume [Note from Clerk: Customary additional information will be set forth in April 23, 2018 Clerk’s Report].

Dr. McConnell welcomed the new members. He told them: Somewhere along your life you are going to feel you are all by yourself. But know by the answers you have given to the questions today, that Jesus will be with you. For the rest of your life, He will always be by your side.

Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas then recognized and thanked the confirmation leaders and mentors. There being no further business, the meeting portion was closed with prayer by Dr. McConnell and adjourned at approximately 7:35 PM.

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

By: _____
Linda Getzen
Clerk to the Session