

**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 *The Horse and His Boy* by C.S. Lewis. The elders and staff then moved to Room 206 of the Education Building for the Session meeting that began at 7:00 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: Bob Baarson Donald Browning, Marty Guice, Al Jeffrey, David MacMillan, Bill Mallett, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Segó, and Sandy Snyder.

Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Aimee McCullough, Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson.

**EXCUSED:** Ruling Elders Jane Delgado Semidei and Tom Taylor.

**QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER:** A quorum was established. Dr. McConnell served as Moderator and called the meeting to order. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the Agenda for the Meeting with the addition of New Business item 2 – Grant request to Foundation for digital sign.**

**OPENING PRAYER:** Elder MacMillan opened the meeting with prayer.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

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

- Thank you for the wonderful team effort at the recent congregational meeting about the revised Open Palms plan.

**Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas:**

- Pentecost celebration in the courtyard between services. A bridge between The Garden and Sanctuary worshippers. Would like to see more of this coming-together.
- Search will begin to replace Megan Mooney as The Garden worship leader.
- Search for Student Ministry Director continues. Reposting the position.

**Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:**

- In the goal setting period – Determining how more people can be reached and how to attract more volunteers.
- Upcoming – series of music and teaching by the music staff and Dr. McConnell focusing on Bach.
- SYV travel to England and Ireland is upcoming. The chancel choir has been very supportive of the girls.

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

- New Stephen Ministers being put to work.
- It is a privilege to walk with people on their journey home to God.

- Upcoming area of interest – Celtic Spirituality.
- Thank you to all for prayers on the death of her sister-in-law.

**Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson:**

- Wednesday night – good participation for dinner and evening talk by Missionary Elmarie Parker from the Middle East.
- Wednesday classes are done until fall.
- Sunday – new small groups starting.

**Executive Director of Operations Aimee McCullough:**

- Report to the Administration & Finance Committee is on page 19 of the Session package.
- Welcoming James Thompson back to work on June 6.
- Draft copy of the reserve study for capital maintenance items has been received.
- Working with Cathie Silbaugh on external marketing.
- Working with Elder Baarson and Director Haas on focus groups.

**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:

- The Clerk appointed Elder Pat Kindt to substitute for Elder Jane Delgado Semidei as a Commissioner to the April Presbytery meeting.
- Amended 2015 grant request approved at the April Session meeting was approved by the Foundation on 5/10/16.
- Distributed sets of minutes for the May 19, 2016 Special Session meeting and the May 22 Special Meeting of the Congregation re Open Palms (in draft). Minutes will be added to the church website.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE:** Elder Bob Baarson reported in the absence of Administration and Finance Committee Chair Elder Taylor:

- Referred to detailed report at page 20 in Session package. Finance are operating \$25,000 better than budget. Giving is on budget. Food, ECC and Family ministries have some overages. Overall doing very well.
- Thank you to Director McCullough and her staff.

**OMNIBUS MOTION:**

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO SET ASIDE FOR DISCUSSION OR CLARIFICATION, items A and B of the Omnibus Motion as presented in the Agenda.**

**MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO PASS the Omnibus Motion (Items A-F), less items A and B, presented in the Agenda.**

**A. [APPROVED SEPARATELY BELOW] TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:**

1. Stated Session Meeting – April 24, 2016
2. Special Session Meeting – May 19, 2016

**B. [APPROVED SEPARATELY BELOW] TO APPROVE THE CLERK’S REPORT:**

1. Assignments and Meetings:
  - a. Sunday Morning Prayers with the Pastors – Month of June – Robin Segó
  - c. Session Meeting Opening Prayer – June 27 – Don Browning
  - d. Deacons’ Diaconate Meeting – June 6 – Marty Guice
  - e. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – June 12 – Elder Group 2

2. Membership Statistics (items 2-4 see attached Clerk's Report (as revised))
  3. Baptisms & Weddings
  4. Home Communions
- C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:**
1. Elder attending Deacons' Diaconate meeting in May – Bob Baarson  
Commissioners attending the Presbytery Meeting in April – Marty Guice
- D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:**
1. Administration and Finance Committee – Ch. Tom Taylor (includes Building and Grounds Committee (Ch. Paul Ross) and The Generosity Team (Ch. Bob Baarson) - *[Clerk's Note: For reference - updated Financial Operations Manual is included in the Session package beginning at page 41].*
  2. Mission Committee – Ch. Jane Delgado Semidei
  3. Personnel Committee – 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 Early Childhood Center) – Exec. Dir. Laurie Haas – *see Staff Reports above*
  3. The Garden Leadership
  4. Legacy Giving – *no written report this month*
  5. Presbyterian Women – *no written report this month*
  6. Stephen Ministry Leadership
  7. Worship Planning – *no written report this month*
- F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:**
1. Deacons' Diaconate – Ch. Joan Emrich
  2. Memorial Garden Board – Ch. Sue Angle – *no written report this month*
  3. Nominating – Ch. David MacMillan - *no written report this month*

**ITEMS FROM OMNIBUS SET ASIDE FOR CLARIFICATION OR DISCUSSION:**

**Item A.** – The Clerk submitted the minutes from the May 19, 2016 Special Session meeting to be approved as part of item A. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE Omnibus Motion item A, as amended.**

**Item B.** – The Clerk received a request to transfer two Affiliate members into full membership at Church of the Palms. The Clerk's Report will be amended to add their names. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO RECEIVE Ernest L. Hellenen and Lynn T. Hellenen into the active membership of Church of the Palms. MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To APPROVE Omnibus Motion item B, as amended.**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. Open Palms update - Discussion led by Director McCullough:
  - A communications plan is being developed to celebrate Open Palms and keep momentum going.
  - There will be help for people to begin their actual giving.
  - The \$300,000 challenge to the congregation will be highlighted in communications.

2. Facilities Master Plan update – Discussion led by Elder Reynolds:

- On behalf of the Building Committee, Elder Reynolds introduced the Master Project Schedule for the building timeline. Detailed plans will be developed during the summer. The selection process for the construction manager will occur over the next month and a recommendation will be brought to the Session in June. Seven firms have been identified to receive a Request for Proposal.
- Discussion was held regarding communications to the congregation to keep all apprised of the building project stages. Also, communications will be made to the congregation about the \$30,000 mission gift made to Beth El Farmworkers Ministries from the beginning receipts of the Open Palms campaign.
- Contract proposals from Carlson Studio Architecture (“Carlson”) for design services related to the Palms Center, and to Carlson from Kimley- Horn (“K-H”) for engineering services were received and reviewed and revised by the Building Committee, which recommended approval as revised. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the Carlson and K-H contracts as revised, subject to approval by attorneys for the church.**

3. Update on Inquirers – Discussion led by Elder Petro:

- Inquirer Laurie Haas - Her Session Liaison Marlene Petro reported that Laurie is taking intensive classes in June, and then summer classes through Dubuque for Presbyterian studies. After remaining courses, clinical hours, and an internship, she will graduate in May 2017.
- Inquirer Carolyn Wilson – Her Session Liaison Judy Fulton reported to Elder Petro that Carolyn is on schedule to graduate from Dubuque in 2018 – 4 semesters remaining. She will be doing internships and continuing classes this year.
- Inquirer Leslie Hazlett – Her Session liaison Linda Getzen reported that Leslie is continuing to excel in her classes and Leslie is discerning whether her path will continue toward ordination. Dr. McConnell will be meeting with Leslie.
- Inquirer Jordan Goodwin – Her Session Liaison Sandy Snyder reported that our newest Inquirer was just received by the Presbytery in April. Jordan started at Princeton Seminary last fall and is doing well.
- Director Aimee McCullough, although not an Inquirer, is also in seminary. The Session is joyful for them all!

4. 2016-2017 Goals – Discussion led by Dr. McConnell:

- 2016-2017 Strategic Initiative and Goals, based on the P.A.L.M.S. acronym, are attached to these minutes for convenience.
- Initiative 1 states the new Mission: *To Love God, Love Neighbor*; and the new Vision: *To Become the Most Loving Place in Town*. Members of Church of the Palms seek to live their lives in these statements.
- Items 3-5 have goals that will be brought back to the Session to be set in September. As indicated, a database tracking system and baseline numbers will be developed by June 30.

- After discussion and small wording revision, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the 2016-2017 Strategic Goals and Initiatives, as revised.**
5. Security events – Reported by Director McCullough. Some housing areas surrounding the church campus have been deteriorating. Work is being done to heighten security and awareness. Developing protocols with police and training staff so that the church campus will continue to be a welcoming and safe place.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Foundation letter regarding Memorial Garden - discussion tabled until June Session meeting.
2. Grant request to Foundation for Digital Sign – Director McCullough reported on a request coming from the Building and Grounds Committee through the Administration and Finance Committee for a digital sign to be installed in place of the existing static sign at Bee Ridge and Lockwood Ridge Roads. All local representatives will be handling the project. A copy of the grant request for the Foundation is attached to the official minutes. **MOTION was MADE SECONDED and PASSED: To APPROVE submission to the Foundation of the Building and Grounds Committee Grant Request for a digital sign, at a cost not to exceed \$48,400. In addition, the following MOTION was MADE, SECONDED, and UNANIMOUSLY PASSED: TO APPROVE the Foundation exceeding the 2016 annual distribution guideline for this request, if the request is granted by the Foundation. [Clerk’s note: Under the Foundation bylaws, consent by 75% of Foundation board members and 75% of Session members present at their respective meetings and voting in separate actions is required because the distribution exceeds the 2016 annual distribution guideline].**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. Reading for discussion at next Session dinner: *The Silver Chair* by C.S. Lewis.
2. Director Wilson announced that there will be no new member classes in July and August.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO ADJOURN the meeting** at approximately 8:38 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) as revised
- Grant request to Foundation for digital sign
- 2016-2017 Strategic Initiatives and Goals as approved (also attach online)

**MINUTES**

A Special Meeting of the Session of Church of the Palms called by the Moderator was held in Room 202 of the Education Building on June 5, 2016 at 10:20 AM.

**CALLED PURPOSE:** To provide an update to the Session on various personnel matters.

**PRESENT:** Teaching Elder: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator). Ruling Elders: Bob Baarson, Donald Browning, Al Jeffrey, Marty Guice, David MacMillan, Bill Mallett, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Segó, Jane Delgado Semidei, and Tom Taylor. Also present, Executive Director of Operations Aimee McCullough, Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas, and Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen.

**EXCUSED:** Teaching Elder Congregational Care Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne, Ruling Elders Jane Delgado Semidei and Sandy Snyder, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson.

A quorum being present, Dr. McConnell served as Moderator and opened the meeting with prayer.

**BUSINESS:** Dr. McConnell brought the Session up to date on the following personnel matters:

- A finalist candidate for the Director of Student Ministry position and his family are visiting the church campus today.
- As previously announced, The Garden Worship Leader Megan Mooney is leaving to following another calling. Her last service will be June 26. Laurie Haas and staff are working with The Garden Leadership team on an interim plan.
- Preliminary discussions are being had about the possibility of establishing a second place of worship in the community to be led by Joe Davis.
- The resignation of the Early Childhood Center Director Lorrie Young was received on Friday, June 3. Teacher Sandy Sinkfield will serve as interim director while a search is being done for a new Director.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:37 AM. Dr. McConnell closed the meeting with prayer.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell  
Moderator

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Linda R. Getzen  
Clerk to the Session