

FELLOWSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell welcomed the elders and staff members at 5:00 PM in the Campus Center for dinner and discussion related to C.S. Lewis' *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. The elders and staff then moved to Room 206 of the Education Building for the Session meeting that began at 6:00 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, David MacMillan, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Sego, Jane Delgado Semidei, Sandy Snyder, and Tom Taylor.

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 Al Jeffrey and Bill Mallett.

QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER: A quorum was established. Dr. McConnell served as Moderator and called the meeting to order. Newly trained, ordained, and installed Ruling Elders Bill Reynolds and Tom Taylor were welcomed to the Session, as well as re-elected Ruling Elders Marlene Petro and Sandy Snyder. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the Agenda for the Meeting.**

OPENING PRAYER: Elder Petro opened the meeting with prayer.

STAFF REPORTS:

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

- 9 new Stephen Ministers in training and will be installed on Sunday. 4 new Stephen Ministry leaders.
- Home communion visits now headed by Elder Snyder.
- 164 Shepherding Deacons with "flocks." 4 waiting for flocks.
- 84 Shepherding Deacons at the quarterly meeting.

Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:

- Away most of April – ran a marathon in Paris!
- Easter services were successful.
- SYV year-end concert.
- Beginning planning for next year

Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson:

- James Leake's class at McCurdy's Comedy Club, *Following Jesus with a Rock and Roll Heart*, is growing. Will start up again in the fall. Please thank the McCurdys for their generosity and all they have done for this project.
- Carolyn's seminary class in World Religions required her to strike up a relationship with someone from another religion. She chose Islam and went to the local mosque to seek

out a follower. She interviewed the imam and took a tour. It was a life changing experience for her.

- The Spring Leadership Forum will be held on May 21. Time Management.

Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas:

- Confirmation class is finishing up its faith statements. Thank you for the Session support at the recent dinner.
- Student Ministry candidate will be here for an on campus interview.

Executive Director of Operations Aimee McCullough:

- Written report pages 13-15 of the Session package.
- Working on plans for the new campus signage at Lockwood Ridge Road intersection.
- Capital needs appraisal has been started.
- New front office coordinator starts.

Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D McConnell:

- *Under Old and New Business.*

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:

- \$99 from Elders for Session dinners may be paid to Aimee McCullough by check to COP or paid online.
- All insurance coverage for the church has been reviewed and renewed. Information is in the Session package.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Administration and Finance Committee Chair Elder Taylor and The Generosity Team Chair Bob Baarson reported:

- YTD quarter giving down \$21K, but expenses were lower, resulting in \$26K better than budget.
- Capital expenses have been significant. The capital needs appraisal will be very helpful in planning.
- Elder Baarson distributed figures for the 2016 stewardship campaign to date. Achieved 93% of goal. Units pledging were 594 of 1161 or 51% (612 of 1283 or 47% in 2015). Average pledge dropped to \$2,788 (\$2,943.89 in 2015). Capital campaign may have had some effect. Follow-up phone calls were made and a few members thought they had made a stewardship pledge, but had only made a capital campaign pledge. To address this, a letter will be going out with the quarterly contribution statements stating what has been recorded as their capital and stewardship pledges. A final report to the congregation will be made at a later date, after the responses to the letter are received.
- Pledged Dollars vs. Non-Pledged Dollars (see page 35 of the package). Continuing the trending toward a higher percentage of non-pledged dollars. To address this shift in giving, the Generosity Team will be looking at new ways to work with this trend.

OMNIBUS MOTION:

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To PASS the Omnibus Motion (Items A-F) presented in the Agenda.

A. To APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

1. Stated Session Meeting – March 28, 2016
2. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – April 10, 2016
3. Special Session Meeting to Receive Confirmation Class – April 15, 2016

B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK'S REPORT:

1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers w/ Pastors – Month of May – Sandy Snyder
 - b. Session Meeting - May 23 - Opening Prayer – David MacMillan
 - c. Diaconate Meeting – May 2 – Bob Baarson
 - d. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – **Cancelled (Mother's Day)**
 - e. Calendar of Stated Session Meetings for 2016-17 Session Year (all Mondays): April 25, May 23, June 27 (*no July meeting*), August 22, September 26, October 24, November 28, December 19 (*1 week early*), January 23, February 26, and March 24. First meeting of 2017-18 Session is April 24, 2017.
2. Membership Statistics (items 2-5 see attached Clerk's Report)
3. Baptisms & Weddings
4. Home Communion
5. Quarterly attendance statistics – January – March 2016

C. TO RECEIVE REPORT FROM:

1. Elder attending Diaconate meeting in April – Sandy Snyder

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. Mission – Ch. Jane Delgado Semidei
3. Personnel – Ch. Marlene Petro – *no written report this month*

E. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM MINISTRY TEAMS:

1. Equipping Ministry – *See staff report of Director Wilson*
2. Family & Student Ministries (includes Early Childhood Center) – *See staff report of Exec. Director Haas*
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 ELECTED COMMITTEES:

1. Diaconate – Ch. Joan Emrich
2. Memorial Garden – Ch. Sue Angle
3. Nominating – Ch. David MacMillan

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Open Palms Update and Facilities Master Plan (items 1 and 2).** *[Clerk's note: The Open Palms Campaign and the Facilities Master Plan were discussed interchangeably during the meeting, so this summary is for both items.]* Dr. McConnell presented his views on the capital campaign and referred to a pledge analysis report by Generis Partners. This expansion is a turning point in the future of Church of the Palms. Better aligning our mission and vision statements with the work of our ministries is extremely important and both statements will be reviewed and discussed at the upcoming Session retreat. Commitments to the campaign totaling \$4,300,000 have been made to date. Elder MacMillan, Secretary and Director of the Foundation, reported that the Foundation passed a motion to provide a \$250,000 capstone gift that will bring the total pledged for the core project to \$4,550,000. Director McCullough then reviewed the proposed revised design for the new building. Dr. McConnell led the discussion about the cost projections. All line items in the campaign have been examined and proportionally adjusted, except for

deferred maintenance. The mission component is \$65,000. The maintenance reserve has been eliminated. Elder MacMillan stated that the Foundation was concerned that the core project budget calls for a reduced mission component and elimination of the maintenance reserve. The Foundation asked the Session to challenge the congregation to match the \$250,000 capstone donation from the Foundation so that the mission component will receive \$35,000 (to fully fund its \$100,000) and \$215,000 to be used for a maintenance reserve. This would bring the total project budget to \$4,800,000. After discussion, the following motions were addressed:

MOTION was MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the building design and the core project budget of \$4,550,000. Clerk’s note: Building design is attached to the official minutes. Total core project budget as follows:

Palms Center	\$3,500,000
Building costs	\$2,002,764
Soft costs & FFE	500,691
Site construction	677,241
Contingency	319,304
Deferred maintenance projects	800,000
Missions	65,000
Campaign expenses & financing	185,000
Total Open Palms Project	\$4,550,000
Open Palms Commitments	4,300,000
Foundation Capstone	250,000
Balance Remaining	-0-

MOTION was MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the project budget of \$4,800,000, which includes a challenge to the congregation to raise \$250,000 to provide an additional \$35,000 to fund the mission component and a \$215,000 maintenance reserve. Clerk’s note: Total project budget with challenge as follows:

Palms Center	\$3,500,000
Building costs	\$2,002,764
Soft costs & FFE	500,691
Site construction	677,241
Contingency	319,304
Deferred maintenance projects	800,000
Missions	100,000
Maintenance reserve	215,000
Campaign expenses & financing	185,000
Total Open Palms Project	\$4,800,000
Open Palms Commitments	4,300,000
Foundation Capstone	250,000
Balance remaining for challenge to the congregation	250,000

MOTION was MADE, SECONDED, and UNANIMOUSLY PASSED: TO APPROVE the distribution by the Foundation of \$250,000 to be donated to the Open Palms capital campaign. [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].

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Election of Officers.** MOTION was MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO ELECT the following church/corporate officers to a one year term:
President – Tom Taylor
Vice President – Donald Browning
Treasurer – Fred Chamberlain
Secretary/Clerk to the Session – Linda Getzen
2. **Amended Grant Request to Foundation.** Director McCullough presented an amended grant proposal coming from the Administration and Finance Committee to the Foundation for the Church of the Palms. The original grant of \$95,000 dated 08-20-15 was approved by the Foundation for A/C replacements and other specified capital items. Funds of \$18,280 remain from the original grant. The Foundation has requested an amended grant proposal so that the remaining funds can be used for additional capital items. No additional funds are being requested. A copy of the grant request for the Foundation is attached to the official minutes and the additional project items are shown at the end of that request. **MOTION was MADE SECONDED and PASSED: To APPROVE submission to the Foundation of an Amended Administration and Finance Committee Grant Request originally dated 08-20-15.**
3. **Special Meeting of the Congregation.** MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO CALL A SPECIAL MEETING of the Congregation for Sunday, May 22, 2016 at 10:00 AM in the Sanctuary, for the purpose of receiving and voting on the building project, and TO DIRECT that notice of the meeting be announced from the pulpit and placed in the church bulletin on consecutive Sundays.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Session retreat – Saturday, April 30 - 9:00 AM to noon in Room 206. Fellowship time at 8:30 AM. Goal setting and mission and vision.
2. Next C.S. Lewis reading for April Session dinner: *The Horse and His Boy*.
3. Elder Petro to sub for Elder Snyder – 05-01-16 Prayers for the Pastors.
4. Thank you from Elder Sego for cards, flowers, and especially prayers.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO ADJOURN the meeting** at approximately 7:45 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)
- Palms Center Building Design
- Amended Grant Request to Foundation (attach when returned by the Foundation)

MINUTES

A Special Meeting of the Session of Church of the Palms called by the Moderator was held in Room 206 of the Education Building on May 19, 2016 at 6:00 PM.

CALLED PURPOSE: To approve the revised Open Palms budget and formalize a motion for the congregation.

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, Sandy Snyder, and Tom Taylor. Also present, Executive Director of Operations Aimee McCullough and Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas.

EXCUSED: Teaching Elder Congregational Care Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne, Ruling Elder Bill Reynolds, Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson.

A quorum being present, Dr. McConnell served as Moderator and opened the meeting with prayer. In the absence of the Clerk to the Session, Elder David MacMillan was appointed as Clerk Pro Tem for the meeting.

BUSINESS: The Session reviewed and discussed the revised core budget for Open Palms, including changes to commitments made, the mission component, and results of a commissioned study on deferred maintenance issues. The revised plan calls for a project budget of \$4,769,500, which provides \$65,000 for mission, \$719,500 for deferred maintenance projects, and includes a challenge to the congregation to raise \$300,000 to provide additional funds for deferred maintenance projects. **MOTION coming from the Administration & Finance Committee was MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: TO APPROVE the Open Palms revised core budget and adopt the \$300,000 congregation challenge.** Note: The Open Palms core budget with challenge is as follows:

Palms Center including	\$3,500,000
Building costs	
Soft costs & FFE	
Site construction	
Contingency	
Deferred maintenance projects	719,500
Campaign Financing	185,000
Mission	100,000
Capital Reserve	--
Total Open Palms Project	\$4,469,500
Open Palms Commitments	4,469,500
Balance remaining	--
Congregation Challenge	300,000

At the congregational meeting on May 22, Elder Bob Baarson will present a motion on behalf of the Session that the congregation adopt the Open Palms Core plan and budget and the \$300,000 congregation challenge.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:36 PM. Director Haas closed the meeting with prayer.

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

By: _____
David MacMillan
Clerk Pro Tem

*****DRAFT MINUTES*****

(Not official until approved at the annual congregational meeting)

A Special Meeting of the Congregation of Church of the Palms – Presbyterian (USA) ("Congregation") called by the Session, was held at 10:05 AM on Sunday, May 22, 2016, in the Sanctuary. The called purpose of the meeting was for the Congregation to receive and vote upon the revised plan and budget for the Open Palms core plan.

QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell served as Moderator and called the meeting to order. A quorum was declared by the Clerk to the Session.

OPENING PRAYER: Dr. McConnell opened the meeting with prayer.

BUSINESS: Dr. McConnell explained that for more than two years, we have been pondering the next chapter in the life of Church of the Palms. The Open Palms plan is a wonderful opportunity to expand the church campus. The first great need is the Palms Center, a large activity center. The plan has been scaled back to a one-story building to fit within the results of the recent capital campaign. Dr. McConnell is confident that the Palms Center will provide what is needed for church programs. Dr. McConnell presented slides to illustrate the space that will be used seven days a week by the church community and community partners. He called it the "big side door" into the ministry of Church of the Palms.

Executive Director of Operations Aimee McCullough and Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee Elder Tom Taylor explained the revised budget for the Open Palms core plan.

Palms Center including	\$3,500,000
Building costs	
Soft costs & FFE	
Site construction	
Contingency	
Deferred maintenance projects	719,500
Campaign Financing	185,000
Mission	100,000
Capital Reserve	--
Total Open Palms Project	\$4,469,500
Open Palms Commitments	4,469,500
Balance remaining	--
Congregation Challenge	300,000

As part of the commitments, The Foundation for the Church of the Palms pledged to provide \$250,000 as a capping grant. The Foundation has challenged the Congregation to raise an additional \$300,000. Funds received from that challenge will be added to the fund for additional deferred maintenance projects. Director McCullough explained that projects totaling approximately \$1.2 million have been identified. Dr. McConnell thanked Elder Bill Reynolds and the Building Committee for their hard work on the building project.

On behalf of the Session, Elder Bob Baarson presented the following motion, which was seconded: **That the proposed Open Palms core plan and budget and the \$300,000 congregation challenge be adopted.**

Questions answered:

- There is an estimate of \$100,000 per year to be included in the church operating budget for the Palms Center. The plan is for the building to be budget neutral in 4-5 years as the Congregation grows.
- The Mission component of the project has been scaled-back by 1/3, as has the building project. There are two identified mission projects. Funds have been committed to Beth El Farmworker Ministries in Wimauma for their warehouse construction project. It has been proposed to provide funds to our mission partner Kirkuk Presbyterian Church in Iraq to help support 16 refugee families. A possible third project might benefit the homeless in Sarasota.
- There will be a new parking lot to the south and east of the present sanctuary. The cost of the parking lot is part of the core budget.
- The Palms Center will not have a second floor. To make up for the three classrooms not being put in the Palms Center, it is hoped that additional classrooms will be built in another area as part of a future phase of the master facilities plan.
- There is no targeted date for the \$300,000 congregation challenge to end. Raising funds from the challenge will not be a determiner for the start of construction because these funds will be used for deferred maintenance. Dr. McConnell hopes that the challenge can be met by year end.
- The core budget includes soft costs allocated for fixtures, furniture and equipment for the Palms Center.
- The estimated \$100,000 operating cost per year includes staffing of the building.
- Next steps: the Session will consider and select a construction manager. It is anticipated that ground will be broken in December or January.

Motion was made to call the question. Motion passed and discussion ended. There was a time of prayer led by Dr. McConnell. **Then the vote was taken on the main motion - which PASSED.**

Dr. McConnell thanked the Open Palms Committee. The Congregation then sang The Doxology.

There being no further business to come before the Congregation, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:25 AM with a closing prayer by Dr. McConnell.

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

By: _____
Linda R. Getzen
Clerk to the Session