

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 *Dangerous Wonder: The Adventure of a Childlike Faith* by Michael Yaconelli – Chapters 1-5. The elders and staff then moved to Room 206 of the Education Building for the Session meeting that began at 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, Bill Mallett, John McQueen, Marlene Petro, Bill Reynolds, Robin Segó, Jane Delgado Semidei, Sandy Snyder, Tom Taylor, and Dotti Tyle. Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson.

EXCUSED: Ruling Elder Marty Guice and Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas.

QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER: 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 - Elder Baarson opened the meeting with his story – *Jesus Loves Me, This I Know, Because....* Prayers were said for the storyteller.

STAFF REPORTS:

Equipping Director Carolyn Wilson:

- Very successful Reformation class series taught by Will and Hmingi Browne – approximately 60 participants.
- November 8 – Dinner and Speaker Tremper Longman on the Exodus.
- Advent series theme – Music of Christmas – starts the Wednesday before Advent.

Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:

- Messiah rehearsals start October 24. Performance December 9.
- Special music for Reformation Sunday on October 29.
- Music room renovations – hanging in there!
- In November, composer David Berman (sp?) will be working with the Chancel Choir and SYV.

Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie:

- Reporting under Old and New Business below.
- See also written report on page 17 of the Session package.

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

- Enjoying teaching her Reformation class series.
- 90+ birthday lunch was held on October 7.
- Advent devotional will be ready for December.
- Congregational Care – recruiting Shepherding Deacons, and Stephen Ministers – please send prayers.

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

- At the general staff meeting this week, the staff told little “amazing” stories that were wonderful to hear – many were about people, volunteers.
- Elder Baarson mentions that Steve Sipes, the new worship leader at the Contemporary Service is very good – attendance is growing.

Executive Director of Ministries Laurie Haas: Bill Mallett report for Laurie Haas who is on study leave – taking her ordination exams!

- 12 Junior and Seniors have started in a Leadership Academy. Will meet several times throughout the year.
- Echoed Elder Baarson sentiments that Steve Sipes and the contemporary service leadership are doing well.
- 20 middle schoolers had a Discipleship Now retreat last weekend.
- “Weaves” of fabric are being created with expressions of gratitude that will be displayed. Urged the elders to participate in the weaves.

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

- Thank you to Elder Petro for taking the minutes as Clerk Pro Tem last month.
- Answered question brought up at the previous session meeting on the definition of “bylaw” – rules and regulations adopted by organizations and corporations – “organization” is a broadly defined term – not limited to statutory entities.
- The annual Clerk’s Records review by the Presbytery was held on October 21. COP Clerk’s records passed with flying colors.
- New Book of Order 2017-2019 can be downloaded at the PCUSA Bookstore.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Administration and Finance Committee Chair Elder Taylor reported:

- See details on Financial Recap on page 19 of the Session package.
- Revenue lagged in September, primarily due to Hurricane Irma and cancelled Sunday worship. Revenue is ahead of 2016. YTD net revenue lags budget by about \$78,000.
- The staff continues to manage expenses well. YTD expenses are under budget.
- Global mission holdback has been released.
- Remaining building and grounds funds will be spent by year end.

OMNIBUS MOTION:

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To set aside for discussion or clarification, items D.1., D.3., and D.2 of the Omnibus Motion as presented in the Agenda.

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To pass the following Omnibus Motion (Items A-F), less items D.1., D.3., and D.2, as presented in the Agenda.

A. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:

1. Stated Session Meeting – 09/25/17
2. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – 10/08/17

B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK’S REPORT:

1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers with the Pastors – Month of Nov. – Bill Reynolds
 - c. Session Meeting Storyteller –11/27/17 – Hmingi Browne
 - d. Diaconate Exec. Comm. Meeting – 11/6/17 – 7PM – Tom Taylor
 - e. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members – 11/12/17 – 11 AM Chapel Narthex - Group 3 Elders (B. Mallett, M. Petro, and D. Tyle)
2. Membership Statistics (items 2-5 see attached Clerk’s Report)
3. Baptisms & Weddings
4. Home Communion
5. Quarterly Worship Service Attendance Report
6. Appointment of Elder Commissioners to the stated Peace River Presbytery meeting (9:30-3:00 – Thursday, November 16 – Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 6101 Cortez Rd W, Bradenton, FL). The Clerk is authorized to complete the appointment of elder commissioners in the event of a vacancy:
 1. L. Getzen
 2. B. Baarson
 3. J. Semidei
 4. _____

C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:

1. Elder attending Deacons’ Diaconate meeting in October – Robin Segó

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 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 report above
2. Family & Student Ministries (includes Early Childhood Center) – Exec. Dir. Laurie Haas - also see staff report 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. Diaconate Exec. Comm. - Ch. Barry Buchanan
2. Memorial Garden Board – Ch. Sue Angle
3. Nominating – Ch. Robin Segó

ITEMS FROM OMNIBUS SET ASIDE FOR CLARIFICATION OR DISCUSSION:

Item D.1. - Building and Grounds Report - Pam Gillespie addressed a question to clarify the status of the elevator in the Sanctuary (used by some choir members).

Item D.3. - Personnel – Update on Youth Director position was addressed.

Item D.2. - Global Partners – After discussion about the name of the committee and the use of the term “mission” in the COP community, **MOTION COMING FROM THE COMMITTEE and PASSED: To change the name of the committee to Global Mission Partners Committee.**

The Clerk asked that it be noted in the minutes that the Administration and Finance Committee Report received above by the Session contains the 2018 Generosity Plan, which among other provisions, lists special offerings and appeals for the coming calendar year.

MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To receive Omnibus Items D.1., D.2. and D.3.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Building Committee** – Bill Reynolds and Pam Gillespie reported. The Palms Center roof has had some work-related delays that may cause the construction schedule to slip. The replacement of the Sanctuary roof is scheduled to start Nov. 6 and will delay the Palms Center parking lot completion. Discussion regarding the parking lot schedule and readiness for Christmas Eve. For additional construction details, see written report in Session package.
2. **Hurricane Relief Distributions** – Jane Delgado Semidei reported. Discussion was had regarding various allocations of mission funds received for disaster relief. **MOTION MADE (J. Semidei), SECONDED, and PASSED:**
 - (1) To allocate \$3,116.14 from the 2015 global mission carryover to Peace River Presbytery for the Mision Peniel (Immokalee) Disaster Relief effort.
 - (2) To allocate \$3,500 among current Global Mission Partners involved in disaster relief, allocated to be determined by the committee.
 - (3) To direct Pastor McConnell and Elders Semidei and Tyle to allocate the approximately \$14,000 donated by the congregation for disaster relief, and provide a summary of the allocation to the Session by email.
3. **Update on Deferred Maintenance** – Pam Gillespie reported. The playground upgrade is due to be finished by next week. Dedication will be November 6. A work time line has been requested from the contractor for the Sanctuary roof replacement. Work will soon begin on the courtyard drainage issues.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Staff Assignments** – Pam Gillespie reported. Sarah Sobeleski is the new Director of Community Engagement -- aimed at letting the community know what is happening at COP. Cathie Silbaugh is now the Office Manager and Event Coordinator. As mentioned above, Steve Sipes has been hired as the new Contemporary Worship leader.

2. Ministry Overview – Dr. McConnell reported. He explained the “Sea Level Rise” that is happening. The church is experiencing forces beyond its control that are causing nationwide shifts – attendance drops, pledging, etc. Cultural changes are pushing the need to adapt to this new reality. He repeated the COP Vision to “Become a growing and sustainable ministry,” the Mission “Love God. Love Neighbor,” and the tag line “Love. Life.” He provided an update on the work with the Be Known For Something consultants and explained the 3 sample demographic targets they had generated for COP. Dr. McConnell reintroduced the 3 strategic priorities that had been adopted based on the Vision: (1) Have a compelling Sunday morning experience, (2) Make COP a household name to the identified primary demographic areas, and (3) Minister to the whole person. Dr. McConnell then outlined the framework for upcoming budget decisions by explaining the various funds – annual revenue, operating cash, Foundation resources, Open Palms Campaign funds, and funding from potential partnerships around the use of the Palms Center. He also outlined the various expenses of the budget, which involve operations (organizational community), program (spiritual community – small at 8%), personnel, global mission partners, COP based mission (food pantry, etc.), and debt (due to increase as construction of the Palms Center progresses). The 2018 budget will be shaped around the Vision and striving to attain the 3 strategic priorities. This focus may mean changes in support and emphasis (increases or decreases) in various areas.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Reading for November Session dinner – *Dangerous Wonder: The Adventure of a Childlike Faith* by Michael Yaconelli – Chapters 6 to end.
2. October is Staff Appreciation Month! On behalf of the Session, Elder Petro expressed appreciation to Dr. McConnell and Dr. Browne for their leadership.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 9:08 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)