

**Due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the elders and staff met via a video conference Session meeting that began at 7:00 PM.**

#### MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator), Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne, and Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas. Ruling Elders: Jeanne Asakura, Marcia Baarson, Linda Calvert, Gerry Hailey, Andrea Jackson, Cliff McHenry, Jason Morton, Lou Stern, Sandi Stewart, Matthew Straeb, and Pam Williams. Also present, Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie, Director of Outreach & Families Sarah Soboleski, and Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp.

**EXCUSED:** Ruling Elder Joan Emrich.

**QUORUM, CALL TO ORDER, AND OPENING PRAYER:** A quorum was established. Dr. McConnell served as Moderator. He called the meeting to order, opened with a devotion based on Psalm 139 as we take our individual journeys during Lent, and he offered the prayer. **MOTION PASSED BY CONSENSUS: To approve the Agenda for the Meeting.**

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

- **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED: To receive the following new members who attended Pastor Hmingi's February New Member Classes: Darol C. "Buck" Fry, Peggy B. Fry, Jerre W. Pietsch, and Mary M. Pietsch.**
- For information: Draft minutes of the 01/31/2021 Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation were submitted.
- Incoming Elders Class of 2024 will be invited to observe the March Session meeting.
- Ordination and Installation of Elders and Deacons is set for Sunday April 18. Retiring Elders Class of 2021 were reminded that they will serve until that date.

#### STAFF REPORTS:

##### Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie:

- For details, see written report at page 22 of Session package.
- 3 members of the Global Partners Mission Committee and 3 staff members have formed a team to review how COP might best use the large balance in the Food Pantry account to ease current hunger in our community. 2 members for All Faiths Food Bank will join in on a video conference to discuss ideas.
- Re-roofing project is a little behind due to new county code requirements for trusses. Additional costs will be absorbed by the vendor.
- COP holds on its books shares of Xcel Energy that should be sold. A Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to handle the paperwork is required by the company. **MOTION MADE SECONDED, and PASSED: To approve a resolution to be signed by the Clerk and the Corporate authorizing the Executive Director of Operations to execute all documentation needed to sell the Xcel Energy shares.**

**Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:**

- Chancel Choir is meeting via video conference and also in small in-person groups.
- Handbell Choir is meeting in small in-person groups.
- SYV is also meeting in small groups.
- Worship music in February honors Black History month.
- She has recorded a new Taizé service in the Chapel with SYV members and instruments.
- Brava to Genevieve for all of her work on the Ash Wednesday Service and her wonderfully delivered first sermon!
- Studying Greek in seminary this semester – whew!

**Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas:**

- The Second Drive-Thru was held on 2/14/2021. A Valentine's Day success that dodged the raindrops - 120 cars, 200 people and 10 dogs had fun!
- Race and the Church video conferences – 80+ participants in good discussions.
- Contemporary Service is connecting to COP with a new worship bulletin – has a doodle section to encourage creativity when listening to the sermon and a unique reaffirmation of faith each week.
- Planning for the Easter Sunrise Service on Lido Beach.

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

- Congregational Life is thriving. Thank you to the 200+ volunteers who are reaching out to the homebound, including Stephen Ministers, Deacons and Shepherding Deacons.
- Several groups are meeting via video conference.
- The TV ministry is attracting new members.
- New Wednesday night lecture series begins next week.

**Director of Outreach & Families Sarah Soboleski**

- Provided analytics on worship attendance in person and via media for the last few months – strong combined numbers. In person attendance is rising.
- Shared one of the Generosity “spots” produced by Director of Digital Ministry Matt Liddell.
- Student Ministry: Conor Peters will start full time on June 7 as Director of Family and Student Ministries (the “youth pastor” position). He is working part time now. Will be married shortly.
- Children's Ministry Director Carol Homeister has good numbers for children's Sunday attendance. She provides a fun environment for them. There will be a March 2 day trip to Cedarkirk.
- Communications: Thank you to Jackie Gomez for her expertise on the recent Connect magazine.

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

- Seminarian Sarah Soboleski will be delivering the sermon on Good Friday!
- Analytics show a small drop in views for the Daily Devotionals. As the COVID-19 pandemic lessens and the country reopens, this is one example of an allocation of resources that will be re-examined.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE:** Administration and Finance Chair Andrea Jackson reported. 2021 revenue is slightly behind projections, and this will continue to be monitored as finances remain unpredictable due to the effects of the pandemic. The federal PPP loan has officially been forgiven. The loan proceeds will be taken into income for 2021 with the allocation to be determined by year end based on economic factors.

**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: 01/25/2021.
2. Special Session Meeting: 01/26/2021 to receive two additional confirmands

**B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK'S REPORT:**

1. Assignments and Meetings:
  - a. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors: Month of March (until further notice, please email prayers before Thursday's taping of service): **Lou Stern**
  - c. Deacons' Exec. Comm. Mtg: Tentative Mon. March 1 at 7 PM: **Pam Williams**
  - d. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members: Tentative Sunday, Mar 14 at 11 AM (may be cancelled or date changed by Pastor Hmingi Browne or done via teleconference: **Group 3 Elders (G. Hailey, S. Stewart, P. Williams)**)
2. Membership Statistics, Baptisms & Weddings, and Home Communion (see attached Clerk's Report)

**C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:**

1. Elder attending Deacons' Exec. Comm. meeting in February: Joan Emrich.

**D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:**

1. Administration and Finance: Ch. Andrea Jackson (includes Building and Grounds Team)
2. Global Partner Mission: Ch. Matthew Straeb *No written report this month*
3. Personnel: Ch. Joan Emrich

**E. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM MINISTRY TEAMS:**

1. Family & Student Ministries (includes Palms Preschool) *See staff reports below*
2. Contemporary Worship Service Leadership *No written report this month*
3. Presbyterian Women *No written report this month*
4. Stephen Ministry Leadership

**F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:**

1. Deacons' Executive Committee: Ch. Carol Washchuk
2. Memorial Garden Board: Ch. Sue Angle
3. Nominating: Ch. Marcia Baarson *No written report this month*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Pastoral Statement.** Continuing the discussion began at the December Session meeting, Dr. McConnell emailed to the Session links to several sources that discuss the differing public views on the LGBTQ community and the church. He proposed a video conference call on Monday March 15 at 7:00 PM for those Session members interested further discussion. Incoming Elders will be invited.
2. **COVID-19 Protocol.** Dr. McConnell provided an update. The COVID task force continues to meet and monitor the pandemic. As the vaccines roll out to more and more people, changes to church protocols will be considered. Looking toward how to handle Easter services attendance.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Grant Request to the Foundation:** Global Partners Mission Chair Matthew Straeb reported on a Grant Request coming from his committee. This request is similar to one granted in 2019. The grant will provide 8 new Habitat homes with washers/dryers, dishwashers, and microwaves.  
**MOTION MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED: To approve submission to the Foundation of the Grant Request for \$9,695.84 for the Habitat for Humanity project.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** The Rev. Fred Marsh has entered hospice care. Much beloved, Fred served for many years as Visitation Pastor at COP. Pastor Hmingi asked for prayers for all those in her home country of Myanmar as it struggles with the recent military coup. She has friends and relatives supporting democracy who are in harm's way.

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, AND PASSED:**  
**To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 8:06 PM with the sharing of prayer concerns and prayer by the Moderator.

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

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

Attachments to official minutes:

Clerk's Report (statistics)

Grant Request to the Foundation – For appliances in Habitat homes