

### FELLOWSHIP

Due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the elders and staff met via a video conference Session meeting that began at 7:03 PM.

### MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator) and Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas. Ruling Elders: Jeanne Asakura, Marcia Baarson, Linda Calvert, Diane Curtis, Gerry Hailey, Andrea Jackson, Maxine Perry, Steve Rowe, Matthew Straeb, and Pam Williams. Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen, Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie, Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp, and Director of Outreach & Families Sarah Soboleski.

**EXCUSED:** Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne (on sabbatical) and Ruling Elder 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 a devotion about fostering relationships and Jemar Tisby's *How to Fight Racism*, and prayer. **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED: 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 that:

- **MOTION MADE SECONDED AND PASSED: To receive into membership the following who attended one of Pastor Laurie's recent New Member Classes: Joseph G. Hameline, Pamela E. Hameline, Lee David Layton, Karrie Layton, and Patricia C. Nairn.**
- Follow up from April Session meeting: Grant Requests approved by the Foundation on 5/11/2021: Presbytery Emergency Capital Repair Fund (\$50,000), Samaritan Counseling multi-year request (Total = \$189,324) (Year 1 = \$75,000), Community Speakers (\$10,000), and Memorial Garden request for restricted funds (not a grant).

### STAFF REPORTS:

#### Executive Director of Operations Pam Gillespie:

- See written report on page 2 of Session package.
- Provided a summary of the \$131K in distributions directed by the Food Scarcity Team from the Food Pantry designated fund.

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

- How to Fight Racism – May 10 video conference with members from Light of the World Church. A reminder that such conversations are not always easy with differing opinions within our own church.
- Eagle Scout butterfly garden project. Scout Ryan has received many donations to help with the costs of the butterfly garden.
- Joys:
  - Working with Elder Linda Calvert and the new member class.
  - Pentecost services – Hearing the Apostles' Creed in the different languages of our congregation.

**Music Director Genevieve Beauchamp:**

- Sarasota Music Conservatory student musicians will be performing the prelude about once a month during services.
- Working on the new concert series to be performed in the Chapel.
- The last Taizé service is now available to view online.
- Sarasota Young Voices – 40 auditions for spots!
- During the summer, there will be a variety of singers leading services until the choir returns in August.
- Lay leaders for the prayer of invocation – Yoko Spivey will be contacting Session elders to participate on Sundays.
- She has enjoyed working with Ruling Elder Jeanne Asakura on the noon concert series.

**Director of Outreach & Families Sarah Soboleski:**

- Analytics – will email latest numbers to the Session.
- Students:
  - High School graduating seniors honored at services a few weeks ago.
  - The youth group met on Sunday with Conor Peters, who has started part time as Director of Family and Student Ministries
- Communications - Jackie Gomez and Matt Liddell will be reviewing and making recommendations regarding the overall communications plan.

**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: 04/26/2021

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

1. Assignments and Meetings:
  - a. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors: Month of June (*Note from the Clerk: please email prayers to the pastors before Thursday's taping of the service – ends with June 10 taping. After that date, please meet with the pastors in Steve's office on Sundays at 8:20 AM*): Jeanne Asakura
  - b. Deacons' Exec. Comm. Mtg. on Mon. June 7 at 7 PM via Zoom: Jeanne Asakura
2. Membership Statistics, Baptisms & Weddings, Home Communion (see attached Clerk's Report). **Clerk's note: Approval of Clerk's Report includes transfers of Janet F. Brandt and Ronald E. Brandt from Affiliate Rolls to Member Rolls.**

**C. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM:**

1. Elder attending Deacons' Exec. Comm. meeting in May: Linda Calvert
2. Commissioners attending the Presbytery Mtg. on 5/13: Steve Rowe *No written report*

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

1. Administration and Finance: Ch. Andrea Jackson (includes Building and Grounds Team)
2. Global Partners Mission: Ch. Matthew Straeb
3. Personnel: Ch. Diane Curtis

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

1. Family & Student Ministries (includes Palms Preschool) *See staff reports above*
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. Elizabeth Dexter
  2. Memorial Garden Board: Ch. Paul Nielsen *No written report this month*
  3. Nominating: Ch. Marcia Baarson *No written report this month*

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. and 2. In-Person Meetings and COVID Changes: Dr. McConnell reported.
  - Per CDC guidelines - No face masks needed for the fully vaccinated! The church campus is opening up again.
  - Attendance is up in the Contemporary Service. Overall worship attendance remains constant when considering all mediums (excluding cable TV – no metrics available). Fewer in-person attendees, but many more via media. May 2019 average attendance was 906. May 2021 averaged 1228.
  - June 13 – Congregational singing during worship restarts. Return to the full worship service format. Fellowship time under the oak tree resumes. Thursday taping of the worship service will cease, and live stream on Sundays will resume.
  - June 7 – Staff back in the office on a regular basis.
  - Daily Devotions – These are much appreciated by the congregation. Will be testing sending these 3 days per week.
  - August 23 - Session returns to in-person meetings with dinner. Discussion will be based on the book *How to Fight Racism*.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Summer Planning – Leadership Team reported.
  - Upcoming sermon series – *Windows on the Word*. Based on the stained glass windows in the newly renovated Chapel. Encouraging people to visit the beautiful “new” space.
  - Planning a slow return to campus life over the summer. August 29 Fall Kickoff – food and festivities.
  - Facilities – Developing a master plan for use of the undeveloped “back 40” part of the church campus.
2. The Year of Living Biblically
  - The pastors will be preaching thru the Lectionary.
  - Dr. McConnell will be leading a class in Sept – Nov exploring how we approach the Bible in our lives as we emerge from the isolating social restrictions imposed by the COVID pandemic. How we expand our beings by worshipping together in-person, serving others, and experiencing fellowship and learning in small groups.
3. Question answered about the status of Senior Well-Being project. Project coordinators are meeting. Pastor Laurie anticipates there will be a “soft” opening later in the summer. She will have a full report at the June Session meeting.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE:** Administration and Finance Chair Andrea Jackson reported: All is healthy with the church finances.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Praises to our impressive Leadership Team from Elder Jeanne Asakura!
- Reading: *How to Fight Racism* by Jemar Tisby

There being no further business to come before the Session, **MOTION MADE, SECONDED, and PASSED:**  
**To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 8:08 PM with prayer concerns and a closing prayer by the Moderator.

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

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

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