

FELLOWSHIP

The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell welcomed the Session and guests at 6:00 PM in the Campus Center for dinner and discussion based on the recent Faith & Society talk given by Ross Douthat from the NY Times. They then moved to Chapel Reception Room for a meeting that began at 6:50 PM.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Teaching Elders: Senior Pastor The Rev. Dr. Stephen D. McConnell (Moderator), Congregational Life Pastor The Rev. Dr. Lal Hmingliani Browne, Family Life Pastor The Rev. Laurie Haas, Executive Pastor The Rev. Sarah Soboleski, and Pastor of Music and Worship The Rev. Genevieve Beauchamp. Ruling Elders: Jeanne Asakura, Darrel Jordan, Andrew McFall, Maxine Perry, Marlene Petro, Steve Rowe, Dimitrios Vafeas, and Pam Williams. Also present: Clerk to the Session Linda Getzen.

EXCUSED: Lesley Conzelman, Diane Curtis, Andrea Jackson, and Sandi Stewart.

GUESTS: Incoming Ruling Elders Linda Calvert, Al Jeffrey, Keith Maddox, and Fee Mercer.

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 prayer. The Session shared introductions with the incoming Ruling Elders who will join the Session in April. **Motion made, seconded, and passed by consensus: To approve the Agenda for the Meeting.**

STORYTELLER: Andrew McFall told his story: *Faith, Family, and Football*. Prayers were given for the storyteller.

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

- Status of Foundation Grant Request – Civil Rights Tour: Granted by Foundation.
- Status of Foundation Restricted Funds Request – Memorial Garden: Approved by Foundation.
- Status of Foundation Grant Request - Funding for Advanced Theological Education for Staff Leadership: Granted by Foundation.
- Dr. McConnell held an orientation and training of incoming Elders on 03/11/2023. Dr. Browne held an orientation and training of incoming Deacons.
- Draft Session Roster for 2023-24 with assignments is in the Session package. Please review your information and note your assignments. Email the Clerk with any corrections.
- At its 03/02/2023 meeting, our Presbytery voted on changes to the Book of Order proposed at the 2022 General Assembly. See Commissioner's Report in the Session package for a summary.

FINANCIAL UPDATE: Administration and Finance Chair Dimitrios Vafeas reported:

- Through mid-March, finances are in a strong position and close to budget.
- Qualification for the Employee Retention Credit allowed by the federal government has been researched. The ERC is a refundable tax credit for businesses that continued to pay employees while shut down due to the COVID pandemic or had significant declines in gross receipts from 03/13/20 – 12/31/21. Eligible employers can claim the ERC on an original or adjusted employment tax return for a period within those dates. COP will submit its ERC application shortly.

- Cash reserve positions are being reviewed in light of the recent bank problems in the news.
- Answered various questions about budget items.

OMNIBUS MOTION: Motion, made, seconded, and passed unanimously: To pass the following Omnibus Motion (Items A-F) as presented in the Agenda.

- A. TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MINUTES:**
1. Stated Session Meeting: 02/27/2023
 2. Special Session Meeting to Receive New Members: 03/12/2023
- B. TO APPROVE THE CLERK'S REPORT:**
1. Assignments and Meetings:
 - a. Sunday Morning Prayers for the Pastors 8:15 AM: Month of April: Steve Rowe
 - b. Deacons' Exec. Comm. Meeting on Monday, April 3, 7 PM: Marlene Petro (switch with Andrew McFall)
 - c. Storyteller for April Session meeting: Genevieve Beauchamp
 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 March: Pam Williams
 2. Commissioners attending the Presbytery Meeting on 03/02/2023: Linda Getzen
- D. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM SESSION COMMITTEES:**
1. Administration & Finance: Ch. Dimitrios Vafeas (includes Building & Grounds Team)
 2. Global Mission Partners: Ch. Lesley Conzelman
 3. Personnel: Ch. Diane Curtis
- E. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM MINISTRY TEAMS:**
1. Family & Student Ministries (includes Palms Preschool) *See Old/New Business below.*
 2. Contemporary Worship Service Leadership *See Old/New Business below.*
 3. Presbyterian Women
 4. Stephen Ministry Leadership
- F. TO RECEIVE REPORTS FROM CONGREGATION COMMITTEES:**
1. Deacons' Executive Committee: Ch. Elizabeth Dexter
 2. Memorial Garden Board: Ch. Judy Armitage
 3. Nominating: Ch. Marlene Petro *No written report this month.*

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS: *What's On the Horizon?* Rev. Soboleski prepared a PowerPoint presentation and led the Session discussion regarding emerging opportunities and/or needs based on the Strategic Priorities and Goals that have been adopted. All five pastors reported on the various Priorities:

1. Increasing Sunday Attendance:
 - a. Hospitality.
 - b. Sanctuary improvements.
 - c. Contemporary Service review.
 - d. Gather and Grow series between services.
2. Engaging Volunteers:
 - a. New Member Assimilation into volunteer positions.
 - b. New uses of the Volunteer Accelerator 2.0
3. Engagement in Well-Being Ministries:
 - a. Senior Well-Being ministry.
 - b. Emerging needs in facilities: For example, the Food Pantry and children's nursery are short on space. Imaging and planning space needs.

4. Engagement with Digital Communications:
 - a. Content – varying and increasing.
 - b. Distributions channels – increasing pathways for people to connect.
 - c. Using analytics to help determine what is working and what is not.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Reading: *Short Stories by Jesus* by Amy-Jill Levine – please read the intro. Contact Cathie Lloyd in the church office if you wish to order the book – which will be delivered to your church mailbox. Those who prefer e-books are on their own to order.
2. Thank you to Ruling Elders Jeanne Asakura, Andrea Jackson, Sandi Stewart, and Pam Williams as they retire from the Session. Well done, good and faithful servants!

There was no further business to come before the Session. **Motion made, seconded, and passed unanimously: To adjourn the meeting** at approximately 8:50 PM to a Circle of Prayer with a laying-on of hands to say farewell to Ruling Elders, Jeanne Asakura, Andrea Jackson, Sandi Stewart, and Pam Williams.

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

By: _____
Linda R. Getzen
Clerk to the Session

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