

Stated Session Meeting

North Decatur Presbyterian Church

September 17, 2017

The Session of NDPC met for a stated meeting on **Sunday, September 17, 2017, at approximately 12:30 p.m.** in the Church Fellowship Hall.

Elders present: Charles Bonner, Ginny Bowen, Genia Cayce, Heid Gleason, Annie Godfrey, Mike Johnson, Pam Joyce, Mary Nevil, Martha Osborne, Marion Reeves, Kathryn Sandifer, Martha Shepherd, Carol Tveit, Bob Way, Holly Williams

Elders excused: David Markham, Sallie Owens, Bryden Sandifer

Elders absent: None

Pastors and Staff present: Co-pastors David Lewicki and Beth Waltemath, Clint Miller, Amanda Osenga

Guests: Penny Cannon, Susan Constantine, David Evans, Carolyn French, Sherrill Terry

The meeting was called to order in the Fellowship Hall by Rev. David Lewicki; a quorum was declared present by the Clerk and the agenda adopted as submitted, with the addition of an item from the Evangelism Committee. (The moderator, Rev. Beth Waltemath, arrived subsequent to the opening of the meeting.)

Devotional: Kathryn Sandifer led the Session in an opening devotional and prayer.

Approval of August Session Minutes: Minutes from the prior August Session meeting were approved unanimously, with no changes.

Approval of Upcoming Baptisms: A motion was made by Rev. David Lewicki to approve upcoming baptisms for Isabel Hahn and William Bruce Waltemath Lewicki; **the motion was unanimously approved by the Session.**

Elder Nominating Committee: Sherrill Terry, chair of the Elder Nominating Committee, provided an update to the Session on the selection process. The task of the committee is to complete a slate of nominations to present at the Congregational meeting on October 29, 2017, to fill six positions for the class of 2020, one for the class of 2019, and one one-year youth slot. At the time of the meeting, seven of the eight nominees had agreed to be presented for approval (subsequent to the meeting, the full slate of eight nominees has been completed).

Capital Campaign, Phase 2 Solicitation: As chair of the capital campaign, David Evans discussed the current status of the campaign. To date, 60 pledges have been received, raising approximately \$330,000 in pledges relative to the \$550,000 goal. The campaign is scheduled to close in two weeks, on September 30th, to avoid overlap with the traditional benevolence campaign. As such, David requested Session assistance to engage in a calling campaign focused on those who regularly pledge to support NDPC and/or who pledged during the initial capital campaign but have not yet pledged for phase two. A signup sheet for Session members

willing to participate in the calling effort was distributed. A suggestion was also submitted to distribute pledge cards during the upcoming worship service.

Strategic Plan Status and Next Steps: Penny Cannon shared a draft overview of the proposed strategic plan, highlighting four main goals, with specific aims and proposals for each goal. The four draft goals are:

1. Enriching Ministry and Leadership at NDPC
2. Elevating Fellowship at NDPC
3. Engaging with the Neighborhood
4. Strategic Mission Focus on Affordable Housing

A general discussion of the budget implications of the plan, including opportunities to include some proposals in a future grant request, ensued. Also discussed at length were the potential implications for the existing committee and governance structure of the church.

Regarding next steps, Session members were asked to review the handout for comments and suggestions. Specifically, committee chairs should consider how their respective committees align with the plan, including budget implications, deliverables that might be necessary for success, and support needed to implement the plan. The Planning Committee agreed to follow-up with committee chairs in the next few weeks for further discussion and feedback. Mike Johnson also agreed to distribute a copy of the presentation electronically, including contact information for The Planning Committee members (completed on September 21st).

Council and Committee Updates/Action Items

Facilities Committee - The Facilities Committee, consisting of Carolyn French, Susan Constantine and Bob Way, provided background information on the use of NDPC facilities and proposed revised policies, guidelines and expectations to govern their use. By way of background, Carolyn mentioned that over 20,000 people representing more than 30 groups used the NDPC facilities last year. Usage time was evenly divided throughout the week, and food consumption was also evenly divided between food preparation and catered events. Regular users express a tremendous amount of gratitude for the use of this important space, with the Fellowship Hall serving as the center/heart of the Church.

The committee then presented several new policies, guidelines and expectations designed to ensure proper use, cleanliness and maintenance of the property. The committee also recommended the appointment of a new Facilities Coordinator(s), on a one year trial basis, whose primary role would be to ensure users adhere to these expectations. **The Session unanimously approved the policies and the Facilities Coordinator role as presented.**

Global Mission - Genia Cayce requested Session approval for Global Mission to submit a PATH Fund grant request to the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. The request seeks funding for the Haitian EcoVillage Schools project to expand the school's garden, which provides food for children's lunches. **The Session voted unanimously in favor of submission of the grant request.**

Congregational Care Framework - Pam Joyce provide a detailed overview and update to the Session on who and how NDPC provides pastoral care to its congregation. The ensuing discussion was engaging, focusing on the question of "how does the Session view its role in providing pastoral care?" Several suggestions were provided for Pam to

consider. For example, the Session expressed a strong desire to stay informed through weekly updates that include all non-confidential care requests.

Leader Support - Kathryn Sandifer provided an overview of the revised Time & Talent sheets and requested a last round of corrections. She also reminded the group of the committee chairs meeting the following Sunday to discuss thoughts on how to equip the upcoming new elders.

Worship Committee - Several items were addressed by Martha Shepherd related to the Worship Committee. First, **Martha request Session approval to solicit donations from the Congregation for Advent sanctuary decorations; Session approval was granted unanimously.**

Second, Martha provided an overview of the feedback from the Preaching Focus Group. Feedback from a group of 8 representative individuals was gather, specifically, they answered specific questions related to seven of David's sermons delivered in the first part of the year. Martha was pleased with the Focus Group format and recommended the approach for future use. The specific survey results were subsequently distributed to the Session for their review on September 21st.

Third, Martha highlighted the success off the "It's Worth the Effort" offering initiative. In June, the initiative collected \$639.39 for Community Ministries; in July, \$1015.13 for Global Mission; and in August, \$863.86 for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Everyone was pleased with the positive response and felt that this was a very good practice, especially for children. As a next step, Martha agreed to talk to Sallie Owens, Finance Committee chair, to develop a proposal designed to continue the practice while minimizing the impact to the general fund.

Peace and Justice Committee - Carol Tveit, representing this committee, requested Session approval to launch a trial initiative allowing Just Bakery of Atlanta to sell baked good at NDPC. Just Bakery supports second incomes for immigrant families. October 22 was suggested as a possible date, and **the Session voted unanimously to approve the Just Bakery sales trial.**

Community Ministries Committee - Martha Osborne requested Session authorization to hold the annual Initiative Christmas Party on December 9, for which the Session approved with unanimous consent.

Evangelism Committee - (Note, this was an addition to the agenda.) On behalf of Fran Mohr, Heidi Gleason informed the Session of the committee's intention to hold a community viewing of the film Miracles from Heaven, parts of which were shot on NDPC property and included several NDPC members as extras. **Session approval to solicited donations was requested and received unanimously.**

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta Report: Martha Shepherd, Annie Godfrey, and Heidi Gleason provided an update related to the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta meeting held on August 19 at McDonough Presbyterian Church. The sermon, based on the prodigal son, was linked to recent events in Charlottesville and well received. Three new pastors were also received at the meeting, and Presbytery member dues raised for 2018.

Upcoming Meetings:

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 15, 2017, at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**

After a closing prayer led by moderator Rev. Beth Waltemath, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Johnson, Clerk of Session