



Stated Session Meeting

North Decatur Presbyterian Church

November 19, 2017

The Session of NDPC met for a stated meeting on **Sunday, November 19, 2017, at approximately 12:45 p.m.** in the Church Fellowship Hall.

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

Elders excused: Annie Godfrey, David Markham

Elders absent: None

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

Guests: Iyabo Onipede

The meeting was called to order in the Fellowship Hall by Rev. Beth Waltemath; a quorum was declared present by the Clerk and the agenda adopted as submitted, with the addition of several new members to be examined.

Devotional: Carol Tveit led the Session in an opening devotional and prayer.

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

Examination of New Members: Prospective new members were introduced. This was followed by introductory comments from each Session member, after which the prospective new members introduced themselves and reflected upon their respective interests in joining NDPC. After further discussion, **the Session voted by unanimous consent to accept the following as new members** and welcomed them to the NDPC congregation: Dante Renzulli (reaffirmation of faith), Mary Beth Marchione (reaffirmation of faith).

Communications, Reminders and 2018 Calendar: Mike Johnson distributed several "thank you" letters recently received from various organizations supported by NDPC as a reminder of the good works and positive impact the ministries of NDPC has on the many people in need in our local communities and surrounding areas.

Mike also distributed a draft Session calendar for 2018 that included stated meetings for each month, except July, and with a December meeting scheduled on an as needed basis. The Session agreed to move the June meeting from the 17th as proposed to the 10th to avoid a conflict with Fathers Day and to move a half day meeting originally proposed for Saturday, August 18th, to a regular meeting following worship on August 19th. **With these two changes, a motion was made and seconded to approve and adopt the calendar of stated session meetings for 2018 as proposed; the motion was adopted by unanimous consent.**

Kathryn Sandifer then reminded the Session to update their respective committee manuals, which is particularly important to support the transition of new committee chairs heading into 2018. Rev. Beth Waltemath discussed new elder assignments for next year, and encouraged members to reach out to any new chairs to begin the transition process. Kathryn also reminded the group to plan to attend a Session celebration event on February 11th at 5:30 at Carol Tveit's home to celebrate both incoming and outgoing elders.

Strategic Plan Review and Discussion: David Markham, the chair of the planning committee was unable to attend, therefore Rev. Beth Waltemath led a brief discussion of the strategic plan on his behalf, a copy of which was distributed in advance of the meeting. Thanks were expressed to the Planning Committee members for integrating prior feedback comments into the plan, which has materially improved the document. Rev. David Lewicki asked everyone to spend time with the plan and consider questions, comments or concerns in advance of further discussion at the December Session meeting, at which time we hope to finalize and approve the three year strategic plan.

Council and Committee Updates/Action Items

Leadership Support/Communications - Rev. Beth Waltemath introduced Iyabo Onipede, who started supporting NDPC's communications activities as a part time employee earlier this summer. Iyabo introduced herself, and her goals in support of communication tools such as InTouch, The Communicator, and the Quarterly Newsletter. A handout titled "Communications and Recruitment" that provides further details was also provided. Iyabo's discussion clearly displayed her strong enthusiasm for this assignment and was warmly received.

Community Fellowship/Parishes - Mary Nevil led this discussion by first informing the session of the plan to consolidate the Parishes ministry into the Community Fellowship Committee. Next, she discussed plans to enhance communications, awareness and engagement by leveraging the Fellowship hour before worship. Specifically, the idea is for each committee (except for worship and the education committees) to host the Fellowship time with food and drinks as an opportunity to advertise the group's work, solicit volunteers, etc., during the first week of each month. The 2nd and 3rd week of each month would be hosted by the Parishes on a rotating basis, while the 4th week would be a freelance opportunity. Smaller groups would also have an opportunity to host during months with a 5th Sunday. There were a number of questions to ensure a full understanding of the idea, which is targeted for implementation in 2018.

Personnel Committee - on behalf of Annie Godfrey, Mike Johnson discussed a motion to amend the sabbatical policy to ensure it is in alignment with the recommended standard benefit. Specifically, the recommendations would extend the allowable sabbatical leave from 2 to 3 months, with up to 4 consecutive months when combined with vacation. Another recommended amendment would allow for more than one staff member to take a sabbatical leave in any calendar year but only subject to Session permission. The Session had a rigorous discussion of these proposed changes including potential budget implications and whether it should be required to take consecutive leave or allow flexibility, among other topics. The motion was tabled to allow for 1) review of the entire sabbatical policy (rather than just the amended recommendations), 2) further modification of the consecutive time period language, and 3) discussion of prior experiences with managing sabbatical leave. It is anticipated that the Session will review this topic again at its meeting in December.

Staff Reports: Rev. Beth Waltemath began the co-pastors report with an overview of the new elders training held on November 18th jointly with Morningside Presbyterian Church; Kathryn Sandifer also supported the training. New elders were presented with a sizable package of information and the good news is they all remain committed to serve! Committee chairs were again encouraged to begin reaching out to the new elders to support their transition.

Rev. David Lewicki has discussed the important role for elders of the church to be visible at events such as attending funerals, since this is an important aspect of church life. There were a number of suggestions on how to improve connections with NDPC membership such as adding Parish connections to the church directory among other ideas.

Rev. Beth Waltemath informed the Session that interviews for Maria's replacement in the church office are progressing well, and that we expect to fill the position shortly.

Clint Miller provided the Music Ministries report. For him “this is the most wonderful time of the year” as he has been very busy planning the annual Christmas Concert on December 10th at 3:00. This year’s event will include a bonfire on the patio! Clint requested approval to hold a goodwill offering at the Christmas Concert with half of the proceeds for APO and half to a ministry determined by Community Ministries. **A motion was made to authorize the goodwill offering, the motion was seconded, and approved by unanimous vote of the Session.**

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta Meeting: Marion Reeves provided an overview of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta meeting held on November 14 at the Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church in Duluth, Georgia. Carol Tveit and Mary Nevil also represented NDPC at the meeting. Nine candidates were examined for various Presbytery and pastoral call positions, and West Point Presbyterian Church was formally dismissed from the Presbytery. **Marion also mentioned that a called Presbytery meeting is scheduled for December 9th at Radcliffe Presbyterian Church; Kathryn Sandifer volunteered to represent NDPC at this upcoming meeting.**

Upcoming Meetings:

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 17, 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 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Johnson, Clerk of Session