

Stated Session Meeting

North Decatur Presbyterian Church

December 17, 2017

The Session of NDPC met for a stated meeting on **Sunday, December 17, 2017, at approximately 12:40 p.m.** in the Church Parlor.

Elders present: Charles Bonner, Ginny Bowen, Heidi Gleason, Annie Godfrey, Mike Johnson, Pam Joyce, David Markham, Martha Osborne, Sallie Owens, Mary Nevil, Marion Reeves, Martha Shepherd, Carol Tveit, Bob Way, Holly Williams

Elders excused: Kathryn Sandifer

Elders absent: Genia Cayce, Bryden Sandifer

Pastors and Staff present: Co-pastor David Lewicki, Clint Miller

Guests: Jarvis Ellis, Clarke Hair, Carol Morgan, Emily Peterson, Thom Schreck

The meeting was called to order in the Parlor by Rev. David Lewicki; a quorum was declared present by the Clerk and the agenda adopted as submitted, but with the deletion of the new members examination of Amy and Ian Anderson who were unable to attend.

Devotional: Annie Godfrey led the Session in an opening devotional and prayer.

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

Examination of New Members: A prospective new member, Emily Peterson, was introduced by the moderator. This was followed by introductory comments from each Session member, after which Emily introduced herself and reflected upon her respective interests in joining NDPC. After further discussion, **the Session voted by unanimous consent to accept Emily Peterson as a new member** and welcomed her to the NDPC congregation.

2018 Communion Schedule: Martha Shepherd summarized the proposed 2018 communion schedule which had been previously distributed. After a brief discussion of the rationale for communion by passing versus intinction, **the Session voted unanimously to approve the communion schedule for 2018 as proposed.**

Presbyterian Investment & Loan Program: Mike Johnson informed the Session that the interest rate on the Church's PILP loan, with a current principal balance of \$101,357, was

reduced from 3.80% to 3.50% effective November 2, 2017. **The loan term adjustment was unanimously accepted by the Session.**

While he had the floor, Mike Johnson also informed the Session that the Church had recently received several letters of thanks from the Decatur Cooperative Ministry as well as a Christmas card from Rosalyn and Jimmy Carter. *He also mentioned that committee annual reports for inclusion in the bulletin for the January 27 Congregational Meeting are due to the Church office by **January 10, 2018.***

Strategic Plan Review and Discussion: David Markham, the chair of the planning committee, began this discussion by describing the planning process, goals, and objectives associated with the proposed strategic plan. Other planning committee members in attendance, Clarke Hair and Carol Morgan, also added their perspectives regarding the plan; in particular, planning committee members noted that the plan is designed to be inclusive and directional but not task-oriented. Rather, the plan is focused on areas of emphasis to grow and prioritize and, importantly, the plan is not a laundry list of current activities. Session members agreed that effectively communicating this approach will be important to the successful roll out of the plan. Successful implementation of the plan will also require a review of the current committee structure to ensure appropriate alignment with plan priorities. In response to a question about its role going forward, planning committee members agreed to support the roll out and communication process and to generally serve as a resource. Based on the recommendation of the planning committee, **the Session voted unanimously to approve the new three year strategic plan for NDPC.**

Sabbatical Policy Review and Discussion: Annie Godfrey summarized proposed amendments to the sabbatical policy, which were distributed in advance of the meeting. Staff were then excused and the Session met in executive session for further discussion. Proposed changes to the sabbatical policy include: 1) extending the allowable sabbatical leave from 2 to 3 months, with up to 4 consecutive months when combined with vacation; 2) allowing for more than one staff member to take a sabbatical leave in a calendar year subject to Session approval; and 3) ensuring that, if more than one sabbatical leave occurs in a calendar year, they do not overlap.

The Session was in agreement with the proposal to extend the allowable sabbatical leave to 3 months, but had a robust discussion of the remaining two proposed policy changes. Numerous scenarios were discussed and various points of view offered. Ultimately, a recommendation was submitted to amend the sabbatical policy to indicate the Session's encouragement or preference for a consecutive sabbatical leave period and for multiple sabbatical leaves to not overlap, but allowing for exceptions subject to Session approval. **A motion was made to approve the proposed sabbatical policy changes consistent with this recommendation; the motion was seconded and the revised policy was approved unanimously by the Session.**

Upcoming Meetings:

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 21, 2018, at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**

After a closing prayer led by moderator Rev. David Lewicki, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Johnson, Clerk of Session