

Stated Session Meeting

North Decatur Presbyterian Church

August 19, 2018

The Session of NDPC met for a stated meeting on **Sunday, August 19, 2018, at approximately 11:30 p.m.** in the Church Parlor.

Elders present: Charles Bonner, Ginny Bowen, Ryan Cass, Wendy Cromwell, Jarvis Ellis, Nancy Gathany, Ellen Herbert, Janet Jasper, Mike Johnson, Sallie Owens, Gabriel Ramirez, Marion Reeves, Kathryn Sandifer, Holly Williams

Elders excused: Pam Joyce, Thom Schreck,

Elders absent: David Markham, Bob Way

Pastors and Staff present: Rev. David Lewicki, Rev. Beth Waltemath, Sabbatical Pastors Rick Neale and Bobbie Wrenn Banks,

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order in the Parlor by the moderator, Rev. David Lewicki; a quorum was declared present by the Clerk and the agenda adopted as submitted.

Devotional: Nancy Gathany led the Session in the opening devotional and prayer focused on Matthew 25.

Approval of the June Stated Session Minutes and Called June and August Session Minutes: Minutes from the prior June Stated Session meeting and the two Called Session meetings in June and August, respectively, were approved unanimously, with no changes.

Sabbatical Pastors Report: The Sabbatical Pastors, Bobbie Wrenn Banks and Rick Neale, submitted their report of activities and primary efforts for them over the summer, a copy of which is attached. They thanked everyone for their commitment, hard work, and support of the congregation, noting it was clearly a team effort. They also thanked Beth Waltemath and Clint Miller specifically for their work in supporting the transition. Primary efforts over the summer consisted of three memorial services, the Science of Fun lease, leading the staff, leading, planning, coordinating, and preaching worship services, and staff support. They indicated that we have a "Can do Congregation!" The Session also thanks Bobbie Wrenn and Rick for their terrific leadership during this period!

Affordable Housing Initiative: Bobby Wrenn and Nancy Gathany previously agreed to coordinate initial efforts to launch this important strategic initiative. To that end, they authored an

article for the Communicator to solicit initial interest, and a number of individuals (10) have already agreed to participate. Annie Godfried has gratuitously agreed to serve as co-chair; a kick-off meeting will be scheduled shortly. Rev. David Lewicki provided additional commentary on the need for affordable housing and importance of advocacy.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA): Rev. Beth Waltemath updated the Session on recent developments related to CSA, and specifically building security questions for vegetable boxes that are picked up from the Fellowship Hall between 4-7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. CSA provided coverage for the boxes over the summer, and there is a need for a longer term solution to coverage for building and security access issues (note, Science of Fun's last pick up ends at 6:00 and they usually leave following cleanup at approximately 6:30). Beth discussed possible alternatives like shortening the hours to end at 6:00 or soliciting engagement volunteers or sharing duties with signup volunteers between NDPC and CSA. Beth will continue to work with CSA on a solution and report back to the Session.

Council and Committee Updates / Action Items:

- *Worship Committee* - **A motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to authorize Jennifer Harvey to preach on Sunday, September 2, 2018.** Later in the meeting, a question was raised whether or not Jennifer should autograph and sell books following the service; it was agreed that the Congregation will be encouraged to buy her books in advance if they wish and then afforded the opportunity to have her sign the books following worship.
- *Adult Education* - Ginny Bowen provided a handout with the Adult Education class schedule for the upcoming Fall and Spring semester. Following her summary and discussion, including broad support for the excellent lineup, **a motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously to adopt the adult education class schedule as submitted.**
- *Creation Care Committee* - Ellen Herbert indicated that Creation Care is hosting a lunch on Sunday, September 23, and is seeking approval to sell reusable produce bags for \$2 a piece as a fundraiser during the lunch. **A motion was made and approved unanimously to authorize the sale of the reusable produce bags.**
- *Engagement Committee* - Ellen Herbert entered a motion to authorize a reduced quorum of 7 Elders solely for the purpose of interviewing new members. This is designed to balance the need for responsiveness for new members and Session engagement in the process. Regardless, ALL Session members are encouraged to attend Called meetings for this purpose. **The motion was adopted unanimously by the Session.**
- *CYF Committee* - Marion Reeves previously distributed various forms and appendices to the Child Protection Policy, which was previously revised and approved. There was some discussion of the background check process and need for examples regarding how "hits" might be handled. Marion agreed to follow up with the Session on this point, and **a motion was made and approved by unanimous consent to adopt the forms and appendices as submitted.**

- *Personnel Committee* - Wendy Cromwell provided an update on personnel related matters. Specifically, she mentioned that the committee is focused on the following: 1) developing a strategic staffing plan, 2) tabling the process of hiring a replacement for Amanda Osenga pending the staffing plan (but expect to meet with CYF chair, Marion Reeves, to ensure coordination), 3) working with Finance on potentially enhancing staff benefits, 4) revising the performance evaluation forms for staff and implemented the evaluation process, and 5) considering whether a volunteer position to support the operations position would be viable. No specific Session actions were necessary at this time.
- *Property Committee* - Jarvis Ellis mentioned that the committee has received bids for cleaning, pressure washing, repairing, and painting the exterior of the church. The recommended bid would cost approximately \$47,000, and will be paid from the property contingency fund. Separately, Jarvis mentioned that bids had also been solicited to build a fence around the outdoor HVAC components, noting that copper thefts from such systems have become commonplace. The recommended bid on the fencing would cost approximately \$8,000 and also be funded from the property reserve. There were numerous questions about the style of the fencing and its possible effectiveness. As a result, more research was needed on this issue, and **a motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to proceed with the cleaning, repairing and painting of the church exterior.**
- *Elder Nominating Committee* - Mike Johnson provided an update of the nominating committee progress starting with the identification of the chair of this year's committee, Heidi Gleason. Mike mentioned that the committee has held several meetings and also soliciting several nominees already. Heidi will attend the September Session meeting to provide a more detailed update, which will be followed by a Congregational meeting to accept the nominations on October 21st and Session investigation at our meeting in January.

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta Meeting: Janet Jasper and Nancy Gathany, along with our permanent representative, Martha Shepherd, attended a meeting of the Presbytery on Saturday, August 18th. The meeting focused on the "Done's, Young's, and None's" related to church attendance and commitment, which included a lengthy conversation. A report was provided relative to the recent Hunger Walk, which raised \$33,277, for a 95% increase from the prior year. (NDPC was the 7th largest fundraiser). The next meeting is scheduled for November 10th, and will focus on "Fearless Dialogue"; all are encouraged to attend. Janet and Nancy also mentioned that volunteers are welcome to support numerous Presbytery committees.

Co-Pastors Sabbatical Report: Rev. Beth Waltemath walked through a moving slide show titled "Sabbatical 2018: A Search for Silence and Voice". During this time, Beth completed a draft of her book, spent key time with family, discussed her time at the "one square inch of silence" and other reflective experiences. The Session thanked her for sharing these intimate experiences and thanked her for her personal reflections.

Calendar “Go Round” Discussion: Given the time, no calendar go round discussions were held.

Upcoming Meetings:

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on **Sunday, September 16, 2018, at 12:30 in the Parlor.**

After a closing prayer led by moderator Rev. David Lewicki, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Johnson, Clerk of Session