

## **Stated Session Meeting**

### **North Decatur Presbyterian Church**

**September 22, 2019**

The Session of NDPC met for a stated meeting on **Sunday, September 22, 2019, at approximately 12:30 p.m.** in the Church Parlor.

Elders present: Nancy Gathany, Audra Grace, Ellen Herbert, Jill Jacques, Janet Jasper, Mike Johnson, Carol Morgan, Deedee Murphy, Gabriel Ramirez, Thom Schreck, Carol Tveit, Ike Veal, David Wilkes, Holly Williams

Elders excused: Charles Bonner, Wendy Cromwell, Jarvis Ellis, Marion Reeves, David Root

Elders absent: Macon Sandifer

Pastors and Staff present: Rev. David Lewicki, Erin Cooper

Guests: Ofe Abreu Rosario

**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, with one minor adjustment - amend to reflect that Carol Morgan would lead the Elder Nominating Committee discussion rather than Cindy Hays, who was unable to attend.**

**Devotional:** Carol Morgan led the Session in an opening prayer and devotional focused on creation.

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

**Elder Nominating Committee Update:** Carol Morgan updated the Session on the slate of elders identified by the Nominating Committee to be presented to the congregation for approval as the class of 2023. The slate of nominees includes the following individuals:

- Claudia Brogan
- Mark Cochran
- Virginia Pribbenow
- David Roberts
- Cile Vardeman
- Susan White

Youth elder nominees include:

- Claire Dishman

- Audrey Markham

Session expressed enthusiastic support for this excellent slate and thanked the Nominating Committee for their work. In addition, Mike Johnson summarized the next steps which include a vote on the nominations at the upcoming Congregational meeting on October 27th, followed by new elder training, and formal examination of the new elder class by Session at its meeting in January.

Specific roles for each elder still need to be determined and, to support that process, Carol Morgan invited each elder to consider whether their current role is a suitable fit and **asked any who would like to consider a change to contact her and Rev. Waltemath early the following week.** Carol along with Rev. Lewicki also led a general discussion of ways to better manage the elder workload to decrease overall burden. Mike mentioned that the Nominating Committee had some discussion of the potential benefits of expanding the size of Session to address transition and burden, but this approach also has cons that would need to be more fully considered. It was agreed that this would be a suitable topic for a future Session meeting.

**Revitalization Grant Approval, Celebration, Next Steps:** Rev. Lewicki informed Session of the terrific news that the Revitalization Grant had been approved by the Presbytery for \$55,000! He also mentioned that the cover letter was not updated for the revised grant amount of \$67,000; with no guarantees, the hope is the Presbytery will reconsider and approve the entire \$67,000 at an upcoming meeting. Rev. Lewicki reminded Session that the purpose of the grant is to 1) revitalize the physical campus, especially the playground, 2) provide for a choral scholar program, and 3) grow and support our community of young adults.

Rev. Lewicki introduced Ofe Abreu Rosario, one of NDPC's new interns, who will be leading the young adult effort. Ofe discussed the 1001 worshipping communities' concept that will provide the basis for this effort. He will be focusing on young adults ages 21-35 by gathering information on their respective needs, doubts and questions. This is the fastest growing demographic in the church neighborhood representing potential future membership growth. A number of questions and comments about the program, discernment process, etc. were discussed with all expressing support for this important effort.

**Approval of Upcoming Baptism:** By motion, second and unanimous consent, the Session approved the upcoming baptism of Noah Wrenn Banks Root.

**Amendments to the Official Rolls:** Mike Johnson distributed in advance a list of inactive members, with Rev. Lewicki noting that the Realm transition has identified several questions with respect to the rolls. Of course, rolls are important to ensure the church maintains an accurate record of its membership. The status of several of the individuals on the list were discussed with some updates and revisions mentioned. In addition, Rev. Lewicki clarified that individuals would be contacted with an opportunity to re-engage with NDPC and not just automatically removed from

the rolls. There was a general discussion that included several good suggestions to include in the communication.

Rev. Lewicki also discussed the importance for adult children of members to affirm their interest in being active participants in the church. Similar communications will be directed to them along with an invitation and offer of opportunities to reconnect. For example, a specific suggestion was made to host a dinner for inactive adult children living in the area. Following this discussion, **a motion was made, seconded and approved with unanimous consent to contact the individuals listed and remove or otherwise amend the NDPC official rolls accordingly.**

### **Council and Committee Updates / Action Items:**

- *Community Ministries and CYF Committee* - Nancy Gathany discussed an idea and motion for a school supply drive that would be a joint effort between Community Ministries and the CYF Committee on behalf of the International Community School (ICS). The idea is to hold the drive in the Fall to coincide with related Sunday school curriculum; based on this, Sunday school children would bring abacuses, soccer balls and water bottles for ICS children. A proposal was made to expand the collection of items for the ICS beyond Sunday school by, for example, linking it to Change for a Change and similar efforts. **The motion was approved unanimously.**
- *Community Ministries* - Nancy also discussed a motion from Community Ministries to use funds from the unrestricted memorial fund account for the purchase of a new oven for Hagar's House (a copy of the request and motion was previously distributed). This sparked a larger discussion of the appropriate use of memorial funds as well as reserve funds. Numerous points of view were expressed but all agreed that a common set of policies and principles for reserve fund usage was needed. With this in mind, **Nancy agreed to table her original motion, while Rev. Lewicki entered a new motion to form a small group consisting of members of the Finance Committee and other volunteers to develop specific policies for the use of all reserve funds, including the memorial reserve, and to present these policies at the November Session meeting (Nancy, Holly Williams and Rev. Lewicki volunteered to join the group); the motion was seconded and approved unanimously.** Nancy then re-entered her motion to use \$4,000 from the memorial fund for the purchase of an oven for Hagar's House; **this motion was approved by a vote of all Session members present except Gabriel Ramirez, who abstained.**
- *Global Missions* - In light of the discussion referenced above, Deedee Murphy withdrew the proposal from Global Missions (previously distributed) pending completion and adoption of the reserve fund policies that are now under development.
- *Stewardship Committee* - Jill Jacques mentioned that October is stewardship month; letters are crafted and will be sent to the congregation the following week. She also requested that Councils think about and be prepared to discuss what stewardship "brings to life" in the mission of the church. The discussion then shifted to the Time and Talent forms, with only about 1/3 of the congregation completing online versions of the forms last year. Almost all committees indicated that they use the information in some manner, so it is helpful. Ideas were offered such as providing both an online and written form, and all agreed that the form

itself needs simplification and streamlining. Jill will be sending the forms out to all committees for their review and simplification feedback.

- *Worship Committee* - Janet Jasper discussed a fundraiser request coming out of the Worship Committee for flowers and greenery for the Christmas season; **the motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Staff Reports:**

- *Children and Youth Ministries Report* - Erin Cooper mentioned that Sunday school is up and running smoothly, and it is so wonderful to see everyone support the program with their many spiritual gifts. The Sunday evening children's choir and youth dinner is going well but they are in need of volunteers for those who may be interested.
- *Co-Pastors Report* - Rev. Lewicki is excited about the life, health and overall vitality of the congregation. There are many visitors coming in, Adult Education classes are strong and well attended, it is great to have Erin Cooper on board, the new parenting group is meeting, and the worship themes and recent grants are unique. Overall, the church is in great shape!

**Calendar "Go Round" Discussion:** Mike Johnson noted that the originally scheduled Session meeting for October was moved from October 20th to the 27th given the conflict with the all-church retreat. Unfortunately, now this meeting conflicts with the Congregational meeting and NDPC birthday celebration. Rather than move the date of the meeting, Session agreed to focus the meeting **ONLY** on critical, time sensitive business, with the goal of potentially canceling it if possible. More information will come as the date gets closer.

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

The next Stated Session Meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 27, 2019, at 12:30 p.m. in the Parlor** (if necessary).

After a closing prayer led by moderator Rev. Lewicki, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Michael Johnson*, Clerk of Session