



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

January 24, 2021

2020 was to be the year of clear and perfect vision — or so said the goals of many individuals and institutions. By mid-March, the world was submerged in a pandemic and everyone, including the “faithful” retreated into their homes in self-exile from public life and congregational worship.

Perhaps the better way to understand vision in 2020 is the kind of theophany we see in the Bible over and over when prophets and disciples lose their way and God appears to them in the deepest night, the most remote space, or their hour of uncertainty. In the Book of Acts, it is through “a vision” that God appears to the Apostle Paul with this message:

“Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent.” (18:9).

Like many of you, 2020 meant losing our hold on some beloved habits and traditions and taking our eyes off some well-articulated goals in order to reconnect to the heart of our mission. We released the need for clarity and perfection in our church life, and opened ourselves to a new experience of vision. Vision was no longer what we planned in advance and set to accomplish on our own. Vision was the experience of God meeting us where we were to dispel our fears, to fuel our praise and to embolden our truth-telling.

2020 does mark our ten-year anniversary as co-pastors of this church, which we have come to know as the most special of congregations and so we do look back to where we were in 2010 and where we are now. We are struck by how the steady growth and commitment that we have felt qualitatively through every interaction with new and old members is also reflected in the data. In 2010, 105 households supported this church with a pledged income of \$454,000. In 2020, 155 households pledged \$725,000 to our mission and ministry. What’s most humbling is how each year has added interesting and gifted people to our numbers who have integrated into our fold and inspired us to be more true to our promises. This year we are particularly mindful of the great witnesses we have lost along the way, but in the details of this report you will see the many ways their witness lives on in new faces and innovating ministry.

As your co-pastors, we give thanks for all the ways that you stepped into the uncertainty of this year, with generosity, compassion, and creativity to ensure that together we tended to the needs of individuals, the church and the community as best we could — even as we were learning new technology, reacting to the latest science and evaluating the safest protocols in a swarm of misinformation. We are grateful for the dedication of our elders and committee chairs who knew better than “to pour new wine into old wineskins” and fashioned some of the most innovative ways to keep us in worship, fellowship and mission together. This Annual Report is a testimony to the love and commitment you have to NDPC as a visionary place where God appears and inspires us all.

In Christ’s Peace,
Beth and David

Worship

Learn

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Serve

Connect

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Worship

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ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Elder Nominating

We nominated eight people as the Elder Class of 2023. They were unanimously elected by a vote of the congregation on November 1, 2020 in a called congregational meeting via Zoom.

Jack Kittle
Lee Nichols
Nancy Strockbine Meinersmann
Erika Meyer
Brock Savage
Lin Wormley
Youth Elders:
Sam Fisher
Freeman Mosley

Sincere thanks to all who served on this ENC: Cindy Hays (ex-officio), Carol Morgan, Jarvis Ellis, Nancy Gathany, Ellen Herbert, Larry Mosley, and Marie Schoeneberg.

Gordon French, Chair

Administration

The Administration Committee's work covers an array of subject areas. At the inception of the pandemic the committee drafted COVID-19 facility usage policies to help protect the church's members and guests. We worked with our tenants the Hess School and Science of Fun as they temporarily closed, lost revenue, and then struggled to re-open. The committee's work has also touched on personnel matters, including updating the Church's personnel handbook. Finally, the committee continues to attend to issues related to the Church's physical plant and insurance needs.

David Root, Chair

Communications

With in-person activities at the church coming to a halt in March, the Communications Committee worked faithfully to keep everyone in the loop while physically apart. Iyabo Onipede, along with numerous contributors, continued to keep the congregation "in touch" via our weekly e-newsletters, *In Touch* and *The Communicator*, as well as through our quarterly mailed newsletter, *Seasons*, which Communications assisted in copyediting.

Communications hit our stride with church banners, which convey important messages both about church and civic life. After some trial and error, and thanks to the practical knowledge of Sam Reid, (knowledge gained installing wind screens around tennis courts in his 20s!), we realized that we

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needed to hang banners made of super thick vinyl, with vents cut into them in order to withstand the strong winds at the intersection of North Decatur, Scott, and Medlock. Jim at Sprint Print created fantastic banners for us, and even *drove over to the church* (!) to fix a banner that had an incorrect date printed on it, gluing the correct date on top of the erroneous one with such expertise it was hard to tell a mistake had ever been made.

In general, the banners facing Scott Blvd / North Decatur Blvd were more philosophical, whereas the banners facing Medlock were more pragmatic. For example, the various banners we hung at Scott / N. Decatur, read:

Love Your Neighbor; Stay Home (message at the beginning of the pandemic)

Love Your Neighbor: End Systemic Racism (message in response to George Floyd's murder, as well as ongoing systemic racism in our country)

“Your Vote Is Precious, Almost Sacred” – John Lewis (message in advance of November presidential election, with early voting and Election Day dates provided)

The banners facing Medlock were more informational in nature, providing details about how to worship with NDPC online, and how to worship with us on Christmas Eve.

Communications, with the approval of Session, hired New Tricks design firm to update / revamp NDPC's website. Our vision is to stick with the current colors and logo (the impressionistic stain-glassed window), while reorganizing and refreshing the website to better serve both church members and folks who might want to “meet” us online before venturing to a church service (particularly post-Covid.) We have been meeting with New Tricks weekly (via Zoom) to tackle the challenge of how to organize the multiple layers of information our website needs to provide in a beautiful and user-friendly manner. David Lewicki and Susan White have also been editing the content currently on our website. We anticipate an Easter launch.

Thanks so much to everyone who has supported the mission of Communications! We appreciate you.

Susan White, Chair

Personnel

The NDPC Personnel Committee works to foster and support a strong and dedicated staff (support, program and pastoral) in the service of God, our community, and our congregation. Our goals are to nurture and ensure the professional growth of church staff and to streamline and document processes and policies to ensure consistency during transitions of elders and committees. Our mission is to maintain and support the qualified staff needed to support the

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

advance of North Decatur Presbyterian Church with adequate compensation, recognition, and encouragement.

To that end, in 2020, we pivoted early in the pandemic to virtual platforms to ensure the safety and health of our staff. We entered the final phase of implementing the strategic staffing plan, <http://ndpc.org/combined-strategic-staffing-model/>, and expanding the co-pastors' hours. After three years of editing and review, we rolled out the new personnel handbook for staff, as well as a buddy system that pairs staff members with key committee members.

The committee, comprised of Corey Dunn, Steve Hendry, Mike Johnson and session members Wendy Cromwell, Jill Jacques, Gabriel Ramirez, David Roberts and David Root, continued our work in enhancing the review process to ensure a greater congregational feedback, as well as streamlining policies and procedures.

In addition, we said goodbye to our longtime music director, Clint Miller, and hello to our interim director, Paul Vasile. We also began a relationship with the choral scholars master's program of Georgia State University and hired a choral directing intern, Kristen Vradenburgh to work with children and youth this spring during our transition between full-time directors. In early 2021, we will launch the search for a new music director. The committee will continue to monitor rising health care costs and make adjustments as needed. In addition, the committee will be awarding well-deserved merit raises for staff members.

Wendy Cromwell, Chair

Planning and Leader Support

Planning and Leader Support provided assistance on various matters, including the following:

- Organized a church-wide celebration of new, current, and former elders and a special commemoration for Burt and Martha Vardeman for their many years of service to the church in January
- Consulted with co-pastors on various administrative and COVID-19 related issues
- Helped plan Council meetings in April and served as facilitator for Mission Council meeting
- Served as resource to Elder Nominating Committee in July-October
- Served as liaison the coordinating council tasked with imagining congregational life under quarantine in the summer and fall as session adjusted to the realities of the pandemic.

Carol Morgan, Elder for Planning and Leader Support

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Property

Maintenance and improvement of the church buildings and the church grounds, including the two Blackmon houses, is the responsibility of the Property Committee. This responsibility includes a wide range of tasks ranging from replacing light bulbs to completely painting the exterior of the church buildings.

This year due to the COVID-19 virus we have used our church and Fellowship Hall very minimally. Therefore, the maintenance required for these buildings has also been minimal. So, we turned our attention to the Blackmon Houses which had fallen somewhat behind in upkeep. First, we had a big rat problem with which to deal. This included hauling off two large truckloads of junk which had been stored in the garage and the rear storehouse. An exterminator company then treated both houses. We completely refurbished the 2449 house inside and out. One house needed a new dishwasher, the other a new dryer. These appliances were replaced with new ones. In addition, we cut growth away from both houses.

We avoided insurance coverage problems by spreading wood chips on both playgrounds. We deep-cleaned the kitchen and performed touch up painting in church and Fellowship Hall. We are in the process of installing double doors at the entrance of the Fellowship Hall connecting to the hallway. One major task for 2021 is removal of trees around the Church and Blackmon houses as recommended by our arborist.

Our church grounds have been excellently maintained and improved by Diane Wilkes. The Property Committee extends to her our sincere thanks for her professional attention to our church grounds. It always looks first class. The congregation can still enjoy the seasonal plantings of our landscape through photos shared in the postlude of our recorded worship and in the monthly outdoor drop-in events.

Jarvis Ellis, Chair

COMMUNITY LIFE COUNCIL

Creation Care

The Creation Care Team spent 2020 contributing to the beautification and maintenance of the church grounds, both through financial support and volunteer work.

Under the leadership of Diane Wilkes, we installed new native plant materials in early 2020 facing the Medlock Road side of the church. Ongoing efforts to remove ivy and invasive species in the back wooded area of the church continued throughout the year. In the warmer months, volunteers gathered on Thursday mornings to nurture the perennial beds. Mary Anona Stoops created lovely bouquets from the church gardens that volunteers delivered to members. The perennial beds were expanded in late October to include the large bed by the parking lot. Members provided perennials from their own gardens and existing church perennials were divided! New daffodil beds were added in the pine straw areas below the large church sign on Medlock Road. Mary Nevil added bird houses and feeders to support the native habitat behind the church.

Kate Mosley, Chair

Community Fellowship

Fellowship started 2020 with new leadership, Claudia Brogan, in the Sunday Morning fellowship area. Claudia worked to build a team and reorganize the Sunday gatherings around community events and the monthly focus on different areas of NDPC service. The group also established a backup team when we needed volunteers for the help with Sunday fellowship or other special events in the fellowship hall, alleviating the stress on oft-tapped session members. This work was halted in March as all in-person gatherings were suspended. 2020 saw the women's retreat happen in February where about one sixth of our church community met for a weekend away. This was the last major gathering for Fellowship in 2020. The men's retreat, Fun on the Farm, Hunger Walk, NDPC at Atlanta United were all postponed. Plans to have a fall 2021 women's retreat have started. Parishes met for Epiphany this year and are planning to have alternative gatherings for 2021. We held Salt Shakers in person twice in 2020 and changed to virtual Salt Shakers for our March gathering. We held virtual Maundy Thursday worship in parishes as part of our Lenten practices.

Virtual gatherings for parishes were a mixed success. Parishes did not have a summer gathering but did participate in the fall kickoff virtual gathering. The overall feeling is that the community is eager to return to its typical events but are supportive of the church's actions to keep us safe during the pandemic.

Thom Schreck, Co-Chair

COMMUNITY LIFE COUNCIL

Congregational Care

The Congregational Care Committee's purpose is to identify and take action to support the care of the NDPC congregation. Working closely with the Pastor for Older Adult Formation, Congregational Care coordinates volunteers to connect with and support the NDPC community by providing meals, transportation, funeral receptions, caring calls, and tangible items of love and care.

In 2020 the Congregational Care Committee and NDPC pastors recognized the critical need for increased connection to one another during the COVID-19 pandemic and increased contacts in many different ways. We successfully maintained meaningful ministries such as Knit Wits shawls and the Visitation Ministry Team, as well as Circle of Care meetings and providing meals to families during particular times of need. We also facilitated a dramatic increase in tangible deliveries to people's homes, including but not limited to Easter lilies, Woody Hickcox's artwork, flowers from the bountiful NDPC garden all spring and summer, and good old-fashioned cards and notes. These acts of love and connection were carried out by over 100 volunteers. In 2020, staff and volunteers pivoted to virtual memorial services. The committee could not provide its usual service of assisting with receptions, but is grateful for the commitment of Jason Schoeneberg and Tim Merritt for their service in providing livestreamed funerals and a space for mourners to convene via Zoom.

Here is a summary:

Meals provided by Meal Team	51
Rides provided by Transportation Team	18
Knitted Goods provided by Knit Wits	80
Visitations	
Visits by Staff (includes virtual)	211
Contacts by Staff	654
Visits/Calls by Visitation Team	110+
Cards from Congregation	
Valentines	175
Caring Cards	65
Woody's Bird Cards	91
Advent (Woody's design)	100+
Flower deliveries	104
Funeral Receptions	3
Circle of Care participation	154

NOTES:

- Transportation and Funeral Receptions did not seek volunteers after early March.
- Knit Wits count is incomplete, likely 10-20 additional items were provided.
- Visits from Visitation Ministry Team likely underestimated; not all visits/calls recorded.

Mark Cochran, Chair

COMMUNITY LIFE COUNCIL

Engagement

The Engagement Committee is committed to fostering an inviting, welcoming, and growing NDPC community. We greet visitors in person and we follow up with a written welcome. At big events at church we help people locate parking safely. We manage the print materials in our pews, and we provide a welcome packet to new members. We host Inquirer's Classes for prospective members and introduce new members to our congregation. We match NDPC sponsors to new members to ease their journey into the life of the church. We show hospitality to our NDPC campus partners.

Our efforts were severely curtailed in 2020 due to the risks of COVID-19.

Highlights of 2020 include:

- We reached out to our virtual worship visitors.
- We welcomed five new NDPC members: Keith Beaver, Javier Barron. Laura and Matt Eby, and Christine Jolley.
- We wrote short biographies of each new member for In Touch.
- And — we launched “Get to Know Us”, a Zoom Inquirer's meeting with the co-pastors and a member of the Engagement Committee.

I am grateful for the Engagement Team's deep commitment to welcome and invitation at NDPC: Jan Cribbs, Heidi Gleason, Cindy Hays, Andrew Hill, Barbara Jung, Fran Mohr, Liz Monyelle, Rick Neale, Carl Parlato, Debra Robinson, Thom Schreck, Marie Schoeneberg, Sherrill Terry, Diane Wilkes, and so many others not listed here.

Ellen Herbert, Chair

EDUCATION COUNCIL

Adult Education

The 2020 year for Adult Education was dramatically impacted, as most activities were, due to the coronavirus. Our in-person experiences in the early part of the year were replaced with virtual classes from mid-March until the end of the year. Before the mid-March shutdown, we had been engaged with Holy Cross Episcopal Church in an inter-racial dialogue during Lent that was going very well, with a combined average attendance of 40 persons. We would like to continue the relationship in some form after the pandemic is over.

After the racial turmoil of summer, we had two sessions of 21-day Anti-Racism challenges (in July and August) that were well-attended with 37 participants in the first installment and 14 in the second. Those led to a year-long commitment to anti-racism classes for the Fall and Spring of 2020/2021.

Our parenting class thrived and during the pandemic has become a source of comfort and support for parents during these very trying times. It continues to operate year-round with invitations to all members, not just parents of young children.

Our committee looks forward to soliciting ideas for classes from all church members in late spring as we have done the past few years to ensure that our class offerings in 2021-2022 meet the spiritual formation needs of the entire congregation. If you'd like to participate on the committee, serve as a teacher or have any other feedback for us, please email adulted@ndpc.org.

David Wilkes, Chair

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

The purpose of our Christian Education program for children, youth and families is to teach the stories of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Church, and provide experiences that develop faith and engulf our children, youth and families in the beloved community while we show God's love to the world.

We are grateful for all of our volunteers and our staff who dedicated themselves toward these ends this year. Whether they were teaching in person until last spring or over Zoom since then, the love of God has been shared. Our staff, Rev. Erin Cooper and Ministry Fellow Rob Schoonover, have worked diligently with our youth, along with 3 or 4 volunteers. Youth Sunday last March introduced us to virtual worship. Five young people are about to complete a confirmation exploration. Adult mentors accompanied them throughout the fall. Middle school and high school groups are meeting separately in Zoom meetings on Sunday evenings.

We began 2020 with a lively, in-person Sunday School for children. In March, our children continued to hear stories of our faith and share their lives with Erin, Clint Miller, and their teachers over Zoom. A good group of children participated in Virtual Bible School this summer. Adults told stories, demonstrated crafts to do at home and led singing. We were saddened to have Clint leave at the end of the summer. We miss him and his music leadership.

EDUCATION COUNCIL

This fall, nine adults committed to shepherd our preschool and elementary children on Sunday mornings via Zoom. The preschool class is continuing with the HeartShaper curriculum. Other adults rotate monthly and join the elementary children as teachers, telling the Lectionary Bible story and relating the story to our common experience. We are using Sparkhouse's Whirl Lectionary Curriculum, which includes a video cartoon and at-home leaflets that volunteers have delivered to the children's homes. We welcomed Kendra Peebles, Ministry Fellow, and Kristen Vradenburgh, our new Music Intern, to our leadership for the 2021 spring semester.

The Parenting group continues to gather via Zoom for support and study each week. All parents and people who care for children are encouraged to visit the NDPC Family Facebook page and the Sunday morning Zoom gathering.

While meeting virtually is not ideal, it has provided a chance to see each other and have fun together as we engage in our beloved community. We are also meeting outdoors monthly! Our hope is that our youth will be able to participate in Montreat Youth conferences this summer: middle school youth at Maryville College and senior highs in Montreat NC, and that we will be back "in person" in the fall if not before.

Thank you to the many people who have told stories, played with, cared for, organized, made calls, made deliveries, Zoomed, and shared their faith with our children and youth during 2020.

Virginia Pribbenow, Chair

MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL

Community Ministries

The goal of NDPC's Community Ministries is to "Serve Christ through serving the community needs; Replacing hunger and homelessness with hope." By exemplifying Mathew 25, NDPC met this goal with over \$32,240 in donations to partners and by giving of our time and talents as we adapted and adjusted to the challenges of 2020. Here are few examples:

Feed the Hungry

- Provided dinners and lunch snacks at **Decatur Cooperative Ministries'** (DCM) Hagar's House.
- Provided cereal donations for the **Decatur Area Emergency Assistance Ministry** (DEAM) food pantry: Since the onset of the pandemic, DEAM has served groceries to over 1549 households and 2768 individuals.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Mathew 25:35-36 (NIV)

Invite the Stranger In

- Provided safe and warm shelter for families through DCM and a **Home for Everyone in DeKalb**.
- Donated food for families of **Inspire** and **Shalom International Ministry**. Tutored Inspire students via Zoom. Successful Virtual fundraiser for Shalom's Got Talent.
- Received over \$2,175 in donations and 50 Christmas Angel Tree gifts for children whose families live in housing provided by the **Initiative for Affordable Housing** (IAH).
- Prevented the loss of utility services: DEAM has helped over 552 households avoid disconnection of utility service (they have spent a total of \$116,597.50 on utility bills).

Provide Clothing

- Provided school supplies for 35 children living in IAH housing.
- Support to **Mercy Community** shifted from clean clothes to the meal ministry - cleaning kitchen laundry and weekly recycling.

Befriend the Prisoner

- Supported asylum seekers through **New Sanctuary Movement of Atlanta** (NSMA); NSMA current asylee has secured employment and a car.
- Through **El Refugio**, eight detainees were released from Stewart Detention Center and three received much-needed surgeries. Offered direct assistance to 14 families impacted by detention and the pandemic. Paired 80 people at Stewart with pen-pals and made commissary deposits so detainees can buy hand sanitizer, food, and other necessities and deposits on phone accounts to call their loved ones. And more.
- Delivered 100 Christmas goodie bags to those in 4 wards at Phillips State Prison (joint effort with Peace and Justice).

MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL

Much gratitude to the NDPC community for a year of giving and to the dedicated Community Ministry committee: Susan Cornutt, Ashley Kane, Dee Raeside, Jason Schoeneberg, and Charlotte Stone-Black.

Nancy Gathany, Chair

Global Mission

While COVID-19 shut down many of our normal activities here, the pandemic also affected our mission partnerships. The Global Missions Committee kept in contact with our partners to understand how we can support and work with them as they continue their operations despite hardships caused by injustice, inequality, political pressures and the pandemic.

In **Haiti**, political unrest at the beginning of the year cancelled the planned trip of the Atlanta EcoVillage School Partnership. Facing a drought and lack of funds, the NDPC and the Partnership raised money that provided emergency food and seeds in the spring, helping the EcoVillage people to have sufficient nutrition until the fall harvest. As the pandemic and political unrest continued, the school shut down temporarily. It reopened this fall, which allowed the school to complete its journey toward offering all the levels of a Fundamental School by adding the 9th grade. Instead of hosting an in-person fundraiser, an end-of-year appeal raised enough funds to fulfill our commitment and allowed them to operate the school through the 2020-21 school term. Our support keeps the school open and hope alive for the 287 students who attend.

We continue to support CEDEPCA (The Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America) in **Guatemala**, as it strives to provide Biblical and Theological education programs, support women and girls experiencing violence, and provide humanitarian aid for women during the COVID-19 crisis. CEDEPCA has stepped up its emergency response to areas hit hardest by two devastating hurricanes this year. While its intercultural visits have been put on hold, online events have continued to offer glimpses into what is happening and has actually allowed more people to participate. We have initiated support for PCUSA Mission Co-Worker Betsey Moe who will be moving there when it is safe. We are actively praying for CEDEPCA's Regional Coordinator for the Women's Ministry, Pastor Delia Leal, who was unjustly arrested in Coban, Guatemala, for trying to protect 8 and 10-year-old sisters from familial violence. Charges against her were dropped on January 11, 2021. Delia has been a longtime respected champion of women and children's rights in her community.

The Board of the **Casa Materna Ana Sayre** made the hard decision to disband and disperse its funds of the non-profit corporation for disaster relief in Guatemala through our partners at CEDPCA. Although the board hoped to resume services in Cahabon, the pandemic and recent severe damage by two hurricanes made that impossible.

MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL

The **Alternative Gift Market** was virtual this year. Led by Rebecca Watts-Hull, Annie Godfrey, Dee Raeside, and Jacqueline Gullede, “12 Days of Gifting” promoted 12 charities and missions and 12 vendors who have historically participated in this event. The market was promoted via Facebook and NDPC’s webpage.

Our support of Doug Dicks as PCUSA Mission Co-Worker to **Palestine/Israel** continues through our financial support and prayers. Our invitation for him to visit was cancelled due to the pandemic lockdown.

Our Global Missions team mourns the loss of member Ginnie Stevens, advocate for missions throughout many years. Many thanks to our members: Judy Moore, Gordon French, Lee Nichols, David Evans, Becky Evans, Bailey Green, Mary Elizabeth Etheridge, Bob Leslie, Theresa Johnson and Fran Adams.

Deedee Murphy, Chair

Affordable Housing Workgroup

In 2019 the Affordable Housing Workgroup merged with two outside groups, Coalition for a Diverse Decatur and Coalition for a Diverse DeKalb, in order to be more efficient. NDPC has The Affordable Housing Working Group (AHWG) educates the congregation about affordable housing issues and advocates in Decatur and DeKalb County for solutions. This year the AHWG partnered with the Coalition for a Diverse DeKalb/Decatur to advocate for a mandatory inclusionary zoning ordinance and for affordable housing at Legacy Park in the City of Decatur. The Coalition also engaged the services of Emory fellows to update the Kensington Livable Communities Initiative plan to incorporate affordable housing.

Toward the end of the year the AHWG regrouped separately from the Coalition to look at more direct actions. We are preparing a four-week church school class on affordable housing to offer to other congregations. We are also investigating options for providing or supporting housing for a homeless individual.

In 2021 we will continue our partnership with the Coalition. We welcome NDPC members to join us in our monthly meetings. We will complete preparation of the church school class and look for opportunities to present this class to other congregations. We would love to have help in the preparation and presentation. If we are successful in providing or supporting housing for an individual, we will have opportunities to support this individual.

Annie Godfrey, Chair

MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL

Peace and Justice

The Peace & Justice Committee continued to investigate new ways to work toward a decrease in gun violence in our state and nation. The Craftivism Group is exploring new ways of The Peace and Justice Committee serves Christ by leading education and advocacy to transform structural forces towards peace, justice, and a respect for human rights. This year's work has been focused on finding new and creative ways to continue advocacy efforts in the midst of COVID-19.

We have continued to financially support organizations that work on the following issues: sex trafficking, gun violence, human rights / LGBTQ, immigration and refugees / Sanctuary movement, mental health, nuclear weapons, torture, peacemaking and reconciliation / interfaith dialogue around criminal justice reform and racial justice. Last summer we called upon you the congregation to reach out to your local, state and federal representatives to advocate for the release of relief funds for COVID. In the fall, we kicked off the anti-racism Sunday school track through our course on violence, non-violence and peacemaking. In the last few months, we have been making Soul Boxes in memory of those who have died by gun violence in the state of Georgia. These origami boxes adorned with names and sometimes faces raise awareness in coordination with the national Soul Box Project to advocate for sensible regulations to eliminate gun violence.

This year, we will again be supporting Presbyterians for a Better Georgia through promoting education on how to contact your elected representatives and be a voice for affordable housing, health care for all, and criminal justice reform. The legislative session for Georgia begins in January, so let us know if you need to be added to the Action Updates list. Come join us and learn how you can work to stand with our brothers and sisters in Christ, to follow in the way and spirit of John Lewis who encouraged us to "Make good trouble."

Many thanks to Tim Merritt, Ellen Gadberry, Chet McQuaide, and Kathleen Allen for their hard work making the above projects happen!

Audra Grace, Chair

WORSHIP COUNCIL

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee works to facilitate and enhance the congregation's worship of God. Each week, we recruit about 15 volunteers to assist with Sunday worship. We can always use more, so if you're interested in helping out, please contact worship@ndpc.org.

Highlights of the Committee's activities in 2019 include:

- Organized ushers for 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services and special services.
- Recruited liturgists and Word in Worship leaders for 11:00 a.m. services.
- Coordinated communion stewards and servers for approved communion dates.
- Scheduled acolytes and order supplies.
- With Liturgical Arts, decorated sanctuary for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, World Communion Sunday and the theme of Covenant.
- Participated in organizing special services during Lent and Advent.
- Secured volunteers to provide flowers for Sunday morning worship.
- Encouraged variety in worship through services led by youth and lay leaders.
- Continued our Change for Change offering. Half of the loose change offering is donated to a specified mission each month.
- NDPC received a Vital Worship grant by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship with funds provided by the Lilly Endowment, Inc. This has enabled our "God's Creative Story" project. This is creating opportunities for members, through the Liturgical Arts Group, to develop their artistic expression in worship.

Great appreciation goes to those who participated in the work of the committee this year: Ellyn Cochran, Susan Diffenderfer, Ellen Gadberry, Cindy Hays, Alice Hickcox, Marcia Morley, The Worship Committee works to facilitate and enhance the congregation's worship of God. Each week during normal times, we recruit about 15 volunteers to assist with Sunday worship. In this pandemic-defined year, we looked for different ways to support the worship of our congregation.

In response to the congregation-wide music survey, we supported the start of a Taizé midweek worship designed as a contemplative experience offered especially during the quarantine. We have an average of 15 people join us on Tuesday evenings at 7:30pm for this time of contemplative prayer. The recorded service gains another 75 views over the course of the week. We've made adjustments to the service so that it is under 15 minutes and therefore easily shared on Instagram via our account: [northdecaturnpresbyterian](https://www.instagram.com/northdecaturnpresbyterian).

We supplied funds for equipment and editing required for online worship. We decorated the pulpit area seasonally to provide a liturgical backdrop for our pastors as they record worship. We organized reservations, set up lanterns, supplied candles, and recruited ushers for three socially-distanced, COVID-safe outdoor Christmas Eve services (held on December 23rd due to projected adverse weather conditions on the 24th).

WORSHIP COUNCIL

Liturgical Arts continued to make paper blooms for the sanctuary and delivered them to members along with cookies and NDPC bookmarks.

Great appreciation goes to those who participated in the work of this committee: Ellyn Cochran, Susan Diffenderfer, Karen Fletcher, Ellen Gadberry, Cindy Hays, Alice Hickcox, Marcia Morley, Cheryl Parlato, Ashley Pieper, Marie Schoeneberg, and Martha Shepherd.

We are especially grateful for the technological assistance of Jason Schoeneberg and Tim Merritt in helping us pivot to online worship services and funerals and for Rick Neale, who stepped in to assure that the choir kept meeting and producing songs for worship after the departure of our Director of Music, Clint Miller, in early September.

Janet Jasper, Chair

Music Committee

A new entity called “NDPC Zoom Choir” came into being this year. As all the ministries of our congregation have been affected by the pandemic, so has our music-making. Clint Miller kept the choir together via Zoom, and he helped us learn new ways to harmonize and lead all of you in song.

We were all taken aback by Clint’s departure, and yet we have stuck together and we keep on singing. We are deeply grateful for the energetic leadership of Gillian Hollis (Rick Neale’s daughter) who led our rehearsals and our singing through the fall and the Christmas season. We also are thankful for the artistry of Michael Morgan, who anchored our choral soundtracks on piano and organ and provided beautiful recordings for our worship services.

Not only was the choir able to meet, discuss, and rehearse – we were able to break free of our geographic confines to include participants from as far away as California. We also found innovative ways to involve instrumentalists from our congregation playing guitar, banjo, piano, flute – even a cello!

Our Handbell Choir has not had an opportunity to come together – yet! We’ll see how things develop in the coming months.

We are very excited about the arrival (virtual arrival, that is) of Paul Vasile, our interim Music Director. He began working with us at the beginning of January, bringing with him loads of talent and new ideas.

A major accomplishment, begun early in the year with the congregation-wide survey and completed by your intrepid Music Committee over the summer is our new **Strategic Plan for A Ministry of Music at NDPC**. “The language of music invites all ages to learn, deepen and share the gift of faith. ... We seek to be known in the community as a place where music is woven throughout the fabric of our church.” The plan provides opportunities for everyone in our

WORSHIP COUNCIL

congregation to make music. As the song goes, “All God’s critters got a place in the choir!” Here is a brief intro on our website: <http://ndpc.org/ndpc-music-ministry-strategic-plan/>

Thank you to all who have contributed to the work of our Music Committee: Janet Jasper, Fran Mohr, Marion Reeves, Marie Hodgman-Schoeneberg, Woody Hickcox, David Leonard, Pam Joyce, Karen Fletcher, Ellyn Peterson Cochran, Audrey Markham, Ellen Gadberry, Clint Miller, and David Lewicki.

Rick Neale, Chair

FINANCE COUNCIL

Stewardship

Our theme for the 2020 stewardship season was “In This Time and Always, We Covenant with God”, reminding us that, even with the uncertainties and fears of the world surrounding us, our covenant with God does not falter. God’s manna continues to pour over us. And with the manna God so freely gives, NDPC continues to give that manna away generously. Pledges fulfilled in 2020 exceeded pledges made (\$712k vs \$700k budget), and we received more pledges for 2021 than requested (as of 1/4/21, we have received 156 pledges totaling \$725k, which is above our \$700k goal). That is an increase of 3.5% year-over-year!

Our Time and Talent submissions also increased this year from 73 to 88, which will help provide more bodies, energy, and talents to do all we want to do.

Your giving has an amazing multiplier effect. Our church provides us all with Christian education, a safe and brave community to gather and support each other, challenging and nourishing worship to inspire us, music that heals us and moves us, and opportunities to help us engage in ministries to serve others. What we do at church is mission – it feeds us, energizes us, and helps us discern how to be God’s hands and feet in this world. Your gifts enable all of this to happen.

Thank you for your support of NDPC and all that it does to be Jesus’ hands and feet in the world.

Jill Jacques, Chair

Finance Committee

COVID-19 moved us to online operations and many councils had to adjust to a new environment, which resulted in deviations in our traditional budget management. It will take a while to reconcile accounts, so this financial report is limited and based not in final 2020 numbers but all indicators suggest a strong finish.

According to the information currently available, NDPC will end the year with pledge receipts 1.6% above budget and non-pledge receipts 23% above budget. Rent is down by 45% due to the rent waivers provided to Hess and Science of Fun because of COVID-19 precautions. Nonetheless, the resulting combined revenue is only 2.32% below the 2020 budget.

Overall, our expenses have come in under our budgeted expenses by 10.10%. At the moment, there are several items that still need to be reconciled and settled, so we plan to provide adjusted December financial reports by February.

FINANCE COUNCIL

For 2021, pledges increased by 3.5% to \$725,340 and the budgeted revenues increased by 5.16% to \$871,610. Other receipts reflect an use of \$20,000 from COVID-reserve that will be used to cover COVID-related extra expenditures mostly reflected in the worship council increase. Budgeted benevolences stayed at the same level as in 2020, and as a percentage of total budget it decreased from 10.4% to 10.18%.

Many thanks to the 2020 finance committee: David Evans, Anna Kershaw, Jack Kittle, Roberta Goldbaugh, JW Balsley, Virginia Legener, Wendy Cromwell, Rick Neale, Jarvis Ellis, Sallie Owens, Fran Mohr, Mike Johnson, and Louis Gay. Please see our proposed 2021 Budget on the next page.

Gabriel Ramirez, Chair

2021 PROPOSED BUDGET

	2020 Annual Budget	2021 Annual Budget	Variance vs. 2020 Budget	Percent Variance vs. 2020 Budget
REVENUES				
PLEGGED OFFERINGS	\$700,585	\$725,340	\$24,755	3.5%
NON-PLEGGED OFFERINGS	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$0	0.0%
RENT	\$85,270	\$83,270	-\$2,000	-2.3%
OTHER RECEIPTS	\$3,000	\$23,000	\$20,000	666.7%
TOTAL REVENUES	\$828,855	\$871,610	\$42,755	5.2%
EXPENSES				
PROPERTY COUNCIL	\$215,070	\$218,075	\$3,005	1.4%
PERSONNEL	\$453,272	\$470,645	\$17,373	3.8%
GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE	\$28,980	\$33,902	\$4,922	17.0%
EDUCATION COUNCIL	\$14,195	\$11,400	-\$2,795	-19.7%
WORSHIP COUNCIL	\$23,790	\$41,300	\$17,510	73.6%
COMMUNITY LIFE COUNCIL	\$7,180	\$7,120	-\$60	-0.8%
STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL	\$400	\$400	\$0	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$742,887	\$782,842	\$39,955	5.4%
MISSION & SOCIAL CONCERNS				
COMMUNITY MINISTRY	\$22,650	\$25,450	\$2,800	12.4%
PEACE & JUSTICE	\$9,550	\$9,550	\$0	0.0%
GLOBAL MISSION	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	0.0%
CREATION CARE	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	0.0%
BLACKMON AFF HOUSING INT EXP	\$3,144	\$3,144	\$0	0.0%
TOTAL MISSION & SOCIAL CONCERNS	\$51,844	\$54,644	\$2,800	5.4%
DENOMINATION BENEVOLENCES				
005260 - PER CAPITA APPORTIONMENT	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$0	0.0%
005701 - DENOMINATIONAL	\$19,624	\$19,624	\$0	0.0%
005702 - THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	0.0%
TOTAL DENOMINATION BENEVOLENCES	\$34,124	\$34,124	\$0	0.0%
TOTAL BENEVOLENCES	\$85,968	\$88,768	\$2,800	3.3%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$828,855	\$871,610	\$42,755	5.2%
BUDGETED BENEVOLENCE/TOTAL REVENUES	10.4%	10.18%		-0.2%
BLACKMON HOUSE DEPRECIATION	\$5,592	\$5,592	\$0	0.0%

GOD IS CALLING US TO NEW PLACES

Our Vision Poem

God gathered a community of the faithful
From the neighborhood
And planted a church at the intersection of life and faith.

Inspired by the worship of God,
Rooted in Christian Education,
Shaped by reaching out in ministry and mission,

We followed God's lead to form a church:

- a Sanctuary where we praise God in wonder, awe and love,
- a home where we are nurtured by the word,
- a haven where music lifts our souls and renews our spirits,
- a safe space for all God's children to learn, to question and to grow
- a place to rest, to be comforted, and to celebrate
- a community striving to discern and respond to God's call for our lives.

God calls us

- to welcome all who would join our journey of faith and service,
- to keep the promises we make at baptism,
- to share our blessings in joyful communion,
- to reach out to those among us and to those we do not know,
- to be unafraid to go to risky places in love, with hope,
- to witness to the love of Christ by serving our neighbors in need,
- to work for justice and be peacemakers in a chaotic world.

God is calling us to new places in faith and mission,
And to ministries not yet imagined.

We seek to follow Jesus Christ, Empowered by the Holy Spirit,
Emboldened by the love of God.

NDPC CHURCH STAFF

David Lewicki, Co-pastor (Worship and Mission)
Beth Waltemath, Co-Pastor (Leadership and Education, Head of Staff)
Mary Anona Stoops, Contract Call Pastor for Older Adult Formation
Erin Reed Cooper, Director of Children, Youth and Families
Rob Schoonover, Ministry Fellow (Fall 2019/Spring 2021)
Kendra Peebles, Ministry Fellow (Fall 2020/Spring 2021)
Paul Vasile, Interim Music Director
Kristen Vradenburgh Intern for Children, Youth, and Families Music (Spring
2021)
Iyabo Onipede, Communications Coordinator
Nancy Weitnauer, Operations Coordinator

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