



Annual Report 2022

Beloveds of NDPC,

On the first Sunday of Advent in 2022, the Rev. Beth Waltemath led worship at NDPC for the last time as our co-pastor. Beth and I began co-pastoring in 2010, when we arrived in Decatur from New York City, with a 3 year-old boy and an almost 1 year-old girl who would be coming home from the hospital for the first time to our new home. For the last 12 years, our family has grown, changed, and flourished as Beth and I served the church together. This congregation has grown, changed, and flourished, over that time, too.

We will miss Beth's gifts. Over the last several years, she has been the head of staff, and she has created many behind-the-scenes systems and processes that have made NDPC a healthier church. In worship, she blessed us with gorgeous prayers; she is a trusted friend to many in the congregation, and her wisdom and feminist perspective will be missed. Serving as co-pastors has been a great gift for both of us. We are grateful to NDPC for taking a chance to bring us both in to share this call.

As we close NDPC's 67th year in 2022, we have much for which to be grateful. The church is healthy financially and in the number of people who participate. We added a great new director of music this year, Huu Mai. We continue to be a beacon of grace through the ATLFreeFridge and through countless initiatives to love and serve our neighbors. Our members are learning, laughing, worshipping, and serving together. Most of all, there continues to be in this community a sincere hunger and thirst to live as the Body of Christ in the world. May the Spirit continue to provoke us in that direction.

Grace and peace,
Rev. David Lewicki
Pastor

Serve

Connect

Worship

Learn

CONTENTS

Serve

Administrative Council Page 3
Elder Nominating Committee
Administration Committee
Communications Committee
Personnel Committee
Planning and Leader Support
Property Committee

Community Life Council..... Page 6
Community Fellowship Committee
Congregational Care Committee
Engagement Committee

Education Council..... Page 8
Adult Education Committee
Children, Youth and Family Ministry Committee

Mission and Social Concerns Council Page 9
Community Ministry Committee
Global Mission Committee
Affordable Housing Workgroup
Peace and Justice Committee

Worship Council..... Page 12
Worship Committee
Music Committee

Finance Council..... Page 13
Mini Grants
Finance Committee
2023 Proposed Budget

NDPC Vision Poem Page 18

NDPC Staff..... Page 19

Connect

Worship

Learn

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Elder Nominating

We nominated eight people as the Elder Class of 2024. They were unanimously elected by a vote of the congregation on October 30, 2022 in a called congregational meeting.

Susan Castle
Kip Duchon
David Evans
Janelle Moore
Anne Topple
John Sandifer

Youth Elders:

Henry Cayce
James Waltemath-Lewicki

Sincere thanks to all who served on this ENC: Jill Jacques (ex-officio), Nancy Meinersmann, Lee Nichols, Lin Wormley, Charles Bonner, Tim Merritt, Carol Tveit.

Sallie Owens, Chair

Administration Committee

The NDPC Administrative Chair focuses on the oversight of the duties and tasks regarding the church and those community partners with which we have leases, contracts, and agreements in our mission to promote healthy stewardship through God and Community. Our responsibilities include Risk Management of our properties and sitting on the Personnel Committee supporting staff management. 2022 has been a full year with the addition of Solar Panels installed on the Fellowship Hall, prompting the need for evaluating and updating our current insurance policies. As our relationship with Hess Academy grows, there is needed collaboration between the Administrative Chair and The Property Council to ensure NDPC remains a good steward as an evolving Hess Academy's needs are addressed. The Administrative Chair facilitates lease negotiations with both Hess Academy and Science of Fun Summer Program to find fair terms to all involved parties. Working as a member of the Personnel Committee has included hiring our new Music Director, Huu Mai, while accepting the resignation of Co-Pastor Beth Waltemath. Both of these changes included big transitions for NDPC this year.

The beginning of 2023 brings a change with the Free99Fridge organization closing, leaving NDPC to determine how to go forward in continuing to serve the food insecure population in our area. The Administrative Chair will participate in assisting with any contracts or necessary agreements needed in this process.

Rusty Godwin, Chair

Communications

Communications had a busy and productive 2022!

Website – *Volunteers needed!*

We continued updating and tweaking our new(ish) website, beginning with a major tweak at the beginning of 2022 that allowed for easier viewing of online worship. We need members to check the website once a month with an eye for workability. Are the links working? Are the dates listed on the events page correct? Is there info listed on the website that is no longer relevant?

Banners

Communications continues to make use of the “ad” space at the busy intersection of North Decatur and Scott Boulevards. “We Are a Matthew 25 church” is currently up, coordinating with our all-church study of the gospel of Matthew. Thanks to Sam Reid for expert “banner-hanging.” With respect to sustainability and banners, we continue to try to create banners that are “evergreen” rather than date specific, so we can re-use them season-after-season. That said, we had nearly a dozen banners that were not reusable, so we hired social enterprise Mile High Workshop in Denver to create over 50 totes out of our old banners. The congregation will soon have the opportunity to buy these totes, created by people who are rebuilding their lives after incarceration or homelessness.

Blog/Communicator Cover Letter

During the summer, Communications recruited a series of guest writers for our blog, highlighting some of the voices and passions of our congregation. Special thanks to Charles Bonner for faithfully uploading each week’s sermon to NDPC’s podcast.

Alternative Gift Market

Communications worked with the Alternative Gift Market crew in late 2022 to facilitate AGM’s online promotion of the market.

Susan White, Chair

Planning and Leader Support

The Planning Committee was formed in 2022 with members Ariel Hart, Andrew Godfrey Kittle, Ashley Pieper, and Deedee Murphy. We embraced NDPC’s participation in the 2-year Vital Congregations Initiative process as preparation for the development of a 3 year plan. We launched the process in February 2022 during worship, and looked at the 7 marks of vital congregations during a 7-week preaching series in Eastertide, 2022. A team consisting of Cindy Hays, Deb Robinson, and Fran Mohr worked to organize NDPC’s archival material and presented documents from NDPC’s 7 decades in two interactive post-worship events in 2022. The committee is continuing to work on the Vital Congregations Initiative in 2023, including a number of storytelling projects exploring the identity of NDPC: an oral history project using video interviews with NDPC members to capture stories, recollections, and anecdotes about our congregation’s history and a neighborhood mapping project.

Ariel Hart, Chair

Property

The property committee is the one that hopefully no one is aware of, but whose work everyone enjoys!

We work to provide facilities that are a comfortable and easy place to gather, worship and enjoy fellowship. The Property Committee is tasked with maintaining and improving our campus so that the ministries of North Decatur Presbyterian Church can do their important work.

In addition to our congregation’s use we also provide space to Alcoholics Anonymous and the Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra as well as others that meet regularly. We are always happy when the community holds meetings and gatherings. Hess Academy and The Science of Fun rent portions of the property and buildings when we are not using it for ministries. We want our campus to be used and enjoyed by many.

The great news is we now have an array of solar panels! Last year we installed them on the roof of the Fellowship Hall. They will replace a significant portion of our electrical draw from the Georgia Power electrical grid. We are working diligently toward reducing our carbon footprint. David Wilkes is leading an audit of our energy consumption. Additionally, we are replacing all lighting with LED bulbs and fixtures and installing smart switches which will greatly reduce our electrical consumption.

In the last year we have installed a new roof on the sanctuary, protecting our valued worship space. Our new fire monitoring and burglar alarm systems will keep us and our space safe. We have added sidewalks, changed signs, painted classroom spaces, Installed air purification filters, cleared and cleaned landscaping areas, planted new flowers and bushes, striped parking spaces, installed a gate, cleaned carpet, changed locks – the list goes on...

Our campus includes two houses that we provide to Decatur Cooperative Ministries which they use for transitional housing. Did you know that our houses are their most successful transitional homes? In the last year we have painted, installed new appliances and fixtures, and cleaned. We providing homes for people who have none!

Our landscape is under the loving care of Diane Wilkes and her talented team. The beauty they create endows us with God's natural beauty every day!

Through the joint effort of many partners we hope to kick off the renovation of our playgrounds. It will be exciting to have a bright new places for our little ones to play. Our hope is that the neighborhood and many others will enjoy the beautiful new spaces.

We are thankful for the past and current members that have brought us this wonderful place. With the help of many we will be able to pass it along to all that follow.

Brock Savage, 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 advancement of North Decatur Presbyterian Church with adequate compensation, recognition, and encouragement.

To that end, in 2022, we continued to help our staff pivot in and out of virtual platforms and in-person worship and education to meet the needs of a changing world and congregation. In collaboration with the Music Search Committee, we hired Huu Mai first as our Interim Music Director, then as full-time Music Director at the end of March. We affirmed and supported the decision of Rev. Beth Waltemath to dissolve her 12-year ministry with NDPC as Co-Pastor as she accepted God's new call for her gifts in the broader PC(USA). Because of Beth's transition, the congregation increased Rev. David Lewicki's Terms of Call from part-time (29 hr/wk) to full-time (37.5 hr/wk) in November. The Personnel Committee worked diligently with the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, NDPC Session and staff to ensure roles and responsibilities were appropriately transitioned with Beth's departure. The Committee worked with the Finance Committee to ensure we could respond to the increased costs of living by budgeting a 6.5% increase in base salaries for our staff in 2023 while also providing individual merit bonuses. We also ensured our staff was supported through healthcare, retirement, continuing education, and administrative benefits.

The committee was comprised of Corey Dunn, Steve Hendry, Wendy Cromwell, Joe Sandifer, Brian Cayce, Jill Jacques and Session members Rusty Godwin and Jack Kittle. In 2023, the committee will transition its leadership to John Sandifer, Elder, as Chair and will embark upon updating the church's strategic staffing plan.

Jill Jacques and Rusty Godwin, Co-Chairs

COMMUNITY LIFE COUNCIL

Community Fellowship

Community Fellowship and Special Events continued our efforts to create opportunities for fellowship at NDPC during the continued Covid pandemic. We have two Community Fellowship elders: Lin Wormley coordinates women's, men's, family fellowships and retreats as well as special events; Claudia Brogan coordinates Sunday Morning fellowship hours, kitchen management, and the new ad-hoc task force for NDPC "Drive-Through Events" during Covid. Together, Lin and Claudia coordinate parish communications and parish gatherings.

As 2022 began, almost all in-person gatherings were still suspended due to Covid restrictions. With great caution (and joy!) parish groups were invited to re-convene their gatherings by holding Maundy Thursday gatherings; in addition, a Maundy Thursday service was held at church for those who wished to attend there. One Covid takeaway is that virtual gatherings for parishes were a mixed success. Some people never took to it; parish participants are eager to re-ignite their fellowship and connection in person. We also brought back "Lemonade Hour" on Memorial Day weekend which gave us a great way to enjoy fellowship after church outdoors.

The jubilant highlight of 2022 was holding Family Fun on the Farm in August, hosted by Kent and Bob Leslie. As the first post-Covid social gathering of NDPC, a wide range of ages converged happily to enjoy each other's company, to savor time in the pool, to play in the sunshine, to fish at the pond, to enjoy good eats and drinks, and to appreciate the live music from Annie Godfrey's bluegrass group, Garden Fresh Pickers. Approximately 80 people attended this epic celebration of Community Fellowship.

When Covid restrictions eased later in 2022 and we returned to in-person worship, the church also adopted a new Sunday morning schedule. We now enjoy a shorter Coffee Time in Fellowship Hall: 10:45-11:00 am. As the new year gets underway, the Fellowship Committee members can re-visit this practice, to consider re-invigorating Fellowship Hour. The group will continue to sustain a backup team for fellowship hosts when we need help with Sunday fellowship or other special events in the Fellowship Hall, alleviating the stress on oft-tapped session members.

The brand new year of 2023 bodes well. Both the women's retreat and men's retreat are scheduled to re-convene. The overall feeling is that the congregation is eager to return to its typical community events, heeding public health guidelines with care and re-kindling our enjoyment in gathering together.

Claudia Brogan and Lin Wormley, Co-Chairs

Congregational Care

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

In 2022 the Congregational Care Committee and NDPC pastors supported the ongoing need for supportive and meaningful connection, adapting to waves of pandemic with both virtual offerings and in-person gatherings. One stand-out this year was the establishment of a midweek Zoom prayer gathering that centered on the In Touch prayer list and any others participants identify. Our "meal team" continued to provide over 150 meals to families in particular times of need. We continued and strengthened the sending of caring cards, Knit Wits shawls, Visitation Ministry Team, and Circle of Care meetings. These acts of love and connection were carried out by over 100 NDPC volunteers.

Mark Cochran, Cile Vardeman, Co-Chairs

Engagement

The Engagement Committee is committed to fostering an inviting, welcoming, and growing NDPC community. We greet visitors, both in person and online, and follow up with personal handwritten notes of welcome. We serve as hosts for community events at church and help people locate parking safely. We provide hospitality gifts to our partners and neighbors to demonstrate our love for them as members of our beloved community. In the sanctuary, we manage the print materials in our pews and actively reach out to prospective new members to explore their interest in joining the church. We host classes for prospective members to learn about the church and coordinate the process for them to join. We introduce new members to the congregation, provide a welcome packet of information about the church, and match them with NDPC sponsors to ease their entry into the life and ministry of the church.

Engagement Committee highlights of 2022 include:

- We launched an online greeter/host role to welcome visitors to our virtual worship services on Facebook and the website and created a path for online participants to become members.
- We hosted several Inquirer's Classes and welcomed ten wonderful, new NDPC members and their children: Susan and Josef Henschen, Cynthia Haley Dunn, Mary Todaro, Riley MacAulay, Shana Jones, Jessica Estep, Johann Weber, Alex and Carol Erwin.
- We introduced pronoun stickers for our name tags to show hospitality and inclusion for all our members and visitors and refreshed our literature and Welcome Pads.
- We provided hospitality poinsettias to 13 commercial neighbors; provided refreshments and parking assistance to help host the Alternative Gift Market; and helped host the inaugural community Veg Out event.

For 2023 we will continue exploring ideas to enhance inclusiveness and to engage with new members in person and online.

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

Nancy Meinersmann, Chair

EDUCATION COUNCIL

Adult Education

In 2022, Adult Education returned to in-person learning on Sunday mornings. We applied technology lessons learned during the Covid shutdown and provided hybrid classes through Zoom. Class offerings covered subjects important to NDPC, including music in the life of the church, refugee experiences, global missions, the Constitution & American religious life, reproductive justice, living with grief, social justice through art, Enneagram, and reflections on Advent. We welcomed several guest teachers, including Dr. Raj Nadella from Columbia Theological Seminary and David Roth from Memorial Drive Ministries. We, of course, greatly relied on the expertise and enthusiasm of our members, staff, and seminary interns who taught classes. A huge thanks to all our teachers!

Our parenting class continued to thrive. Parents worked to build a community of support and explore spiritual practices for children and themselves. They meet year-round, and invite all members to join in, not just parents of young children. A newly formed group engaged with Holy Cross Episcopal Church through the Education for Ministry (EfM) program which connects faith to their daily lives.

The committee also took steps to recognize that adult spiritual formation happens in many forms outside of Sunday morning. We spent 2022 identifying and considering the important role that weekly, bi-weekly and monthly small groups play in many peoples' lives. We identified at least 12 groups that meet throughout the year, many with a focus on formation and others which focus on fellowship or mission. In order to support and nurture small groups, we'll be working in 2023 to create a holistic approach to adult formation.

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 small groups and class offerings in 2023-2024 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.

Scott Pieper, Chair

Children, Youth and Family Ministry

We began 2022 by going back to virtual programming for a month, after a fall of classes in tents and large spaces. The key word was flexibility. Thankfully, we were able to come back to our tents for the spring. As we all returned to worship, the K-3rd graders enjoyed a special Worship and Wonder time.

We hired a second extended session/nursery worker to help with the decline in adult volunteers due to Covid concerns. Blair and Zaria continue to be a blessing to our families. Seven young people completed their Confirmation class in March.

We welcomed Reed to the world and Erin, our Director of CYF took some parental leave.

During the summer, our youth were able to participate in Montreat Youth Conferences. High schoolers went to the Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina and middle schoolers went to the conference at Maryville College in Tennessee. Our children and families gathered for service and fellowship projects.

In Fall 2022, we were all back to in-person gatherings at the church. Many volunteer hands have contributed to a caring, insightful, life-giving time on Sunday morning and Sunday evening with our children and youth. Infants to senior high students are meeting on Sunday mornings. The children have been learning our family stories of the Old Testament. Ask one of them about Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, Esau or Joseph and his brothers (and his sister Dina). Youth have participated in Our Whole Lives, a wonderful volunteer led sexuality education program that fosters informed, responsible, and values-based decisions about sexual health and behavior. A Youth Band has started, youth dinner is back, and of course youth group for middle and high schoolers. Acolytes are active once again. Children grades 2 - 5 are encouraged to be part of this ministry during worship. The Parenting Group meets on Sunday mornings and for fellowship and service projects throughout the year. We are grateful for all of the volunteers who give of their time, talent, care and faith.

Virginia Pribbenow, Chair

MISSION AND SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL

Community Ministries

The goal of NDPC's Community Ministries mission is to "Serve Christ through serving the community needs; Replacing hunger and homelessness with hope." By exemplifying Matthew 25, NDPC met this goal with nearly \$30,000 in donations to partners and by giving of our time and talents as we continued to navigate the pandemic. Here are a few examples:

Feed the Hungry

- Host the Atlanta Free Fridge and pantry (formerly the Free99Fridge), which is estimated to support 40 to 150 people daily with fresh food, pantry goods and a welcoming community -- available 24/7, 365. Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, June's Change for Change offering collected over \$2,000 to support the fridge. These funds were used to sponsor 14 trips to the grocery store and to give 40 holiday gift bags to adults and children during the Christmas holidays.
- Created the Campus Care Ministry to check on those in need of assistance who may be sheltering on the NDPC campus overnight and utilizing the fridge/pantry.
- Provided cereal donations to the Decatur Area Emergency Assistance Ministry (DEAM) pantry.

Invite the Stranger In

- Partnered with Decatur Cooperative Ministry in their mission to help families facing homelessness settle into safe, stable homes and build healthy lives filled with peace, hope and opportunity. Volunteer opportunities at Hagar's House are limited due to Covid. In 2022, NDPC focused efforts on transitional housing updates and preventive maintenance, as well as specific DCM/HH building improvements, through substantial mini-grants.
- Fulfilled all Christmas Angel Tree gift requests for children whose families live in housing provided by the Initiative for Affordable Housing (IAH).
- Provided \$5,000 in donations to DEAM, which was especially critical given that donations from non-church sources were down in 2022. In 2022, DEAM helped over 947 households avoid disconnection of utility service, distributed 3385 food orders to 5279 individuals, and paid for prescription medications for 251 individuals.

Memorial Drive Ministries (MDM)

Supported MDM operation costs and much needed capital improvements to provide a space of welcome – a safe space where disconnectedness can end and belonging can take its place for those whose lives and families have been torn apart by war and conflict. NDPC's members contributed to MDM's three donation drives making a difference in the lives of many individuals and families served by MDM's onsite partners.

- 275 kitchenware sets that totaled almost \$10,000 worth of items for newly arriving families fleeing persecution and war.
- More than 300 packages of diapers (an estimated 13,000 diapers!) for refugee families connected to Embrace Refugee Birth Support, Refugee Family Literacy: Mommy & Me, and Amani Women Center.
- 42 bags of bedding for newly resettled refugee families.

Provide Clothing

- Provided over \$5,900 to partners to support their Back-to-School needs including school supplies and uniforms. Partners supported included the Initiative for Affordable Housing, Memorial Drive Ministries and International Community School.
- Support to Mercy Community Laundry totaled \$377 in quarters. 25 meetings of our Mercy Laundry group yielded 120 loads of clean laundry, along with in-kind donations of warm and durable clothing delivered to the Mercy Community Church clothing closet.

We extend much gratitude to the NDPC community for another incredible year of giving and to the dedicated Community Ministry committee: Susan Cornutt, Ashley Kane, Dee Raeside, Cynthia Dunn, Nancy Gathany, Fran Mohr, and Charlotte Stone-Black.

Erika Meyer, Chair

Global Mission

The Global Mission Committee at NDPC celebrates and supports mission work in Palestine, Guatemala, Haiti, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. If you know the world, you see the common denominators in each of these places: strife, belligerence toward everyday people...and HOPE. We write small checks, but we give to the bigger mission of Hope in these places.

In Decatur, Global Missions hosted the leadership of Guatemala-based CEDEPCA, which is in touch regularly with our group. And we contributed to PCUSA in Guatemala. We contributed to a water tank effort in Congo because one of our members brought the issue to us. We helped fund the mission of Doug Dicks, who is working with the oppressed in Palestine. We also contributed to the PCUSA effort Joining Hands For Palestine.

Global Missions contributed \$2,000 to Memorial Drive Ministries, which sees to the needs of many people new to the U.S., a truly global community.

We have a significant presence in Haiti at the Eco-Village School. Violence in that country is 24/7 and it has threatened the school. Global Missions has stayed connected and kept up fund-raising. A musical plea for help was produced by the partnership of Atlanta churches supporting The Eco Village School. NDPC is a big part of that.

Our Global Mission budget for 2022 was \$17,000. Every penny went to someone in need, many of them clobbered by life.

Members: Becky Evans, David Evans, Gordon French, Linda Curry, Mary Elizabeth Ethridge, Bob Leslie, Judy Moore-Padgett, Bailey Green, Dee Dee Murphy, Ray Glier.

Ray Glier, Chair

Affordable Housing Work Group 2022

The NDPC Affordable Housing Workgroup now meets as part of the grassroots housing advocacy group **Coalition for a Diverse Decatur and DeKalb** (www.diversedekalb.org). We advocated for housing issues in the City of Decatur, especially for the construction of new affordable housing at Legacy Park and for the “missing middle” ordinance to expand the supply of smaller housing units.

Annie Godfrey

Peace and Justice

The Peace & Justice Committee faced a few challenges this year but we remain committed to one another and our advocacy work. Our dear member, Arnold (Chet) McQuaide, Jr., summed up our sentiments in his letter to the AJC prior to the November election writing, “Georgia’s ill-conceived abortion law endangers the health and well-being of pregnant women and puts women who experience miscarriages at risk of criminal prosecution. In the absence of concealed-carry permits, guns have proliferated, and shootings have escalated, endangering everyone. New Georgia voting laws have increased the difficulty of obtaining absentee ballots, limited early voting, and eliminated most drop boxes. We voters have the power to correct these problems. By electing candidates with the courage and strength of character to undo these errors, we can make Georgia healthier, safer, and more democratic for all our fellow citizens. Our vote has never been more important!”

The P & J Committee continues to mourn the loss of one of our most committed and beloved members, Kathleen Allen. Her spirit still inspires our commitment to honor the victims of gun violence in Georgia. Thanks to Audra Grace we continue to display the names in worship. In November our Music Director Huu sang the song “Speak Now” during the reading of the names. (It was an incredible tribute and we have it on video if any of you would like to hear it or mail it to Governor Kemp!). The committee continues to pray longer and louder for a decrease in gun violence.

Ellen Gadberry and the MANY HANDS group has transformed our space and emboldened our faith. In collaboration with the Worship Committee, this group created installations for Lent/Easter (Grace and Sin puppets), Pentecost (origami peace doves), and Advent/Christmas (paper lace banners). Working with the Engagement Committee to promote their Veg Out event, the MANY HANDS group made signs and giveaways that we carried and distributed at the Atlanta PRIDE Parade. Members also made field trips to the Carlos Museum and Atlanta Contemporary for creative inspiration and fellowship. In the fall, Ellen developed a 4-week adult education class on the life and work of artist and activist Corita Kent, with a series that culminated in the creation of social justice screen-print posters.

We are honored to be entrusted with a portion of your giving. Your generosity during 2022 supported to the following recipients: Moms Demand Action/Everytown (promoting gun safety), Lost-n-Found Youth (helping homeless LGBTQ youth), the PRIDE parade, the Southern Center for Human Rights (to bring justice to our inequitable prison system), the National Alliance On Mental Illness – NAMI, and WAND (still going strong advocating against Nuclear weapons and Plant Vogtle expansion). Lastly, we wish to thank Tim Merritt for representing us with Presbyterians for a Better Georgia, advocating for

better Healthcare and those who are unhoused.. The legislative session for Georgia begins in January, so let us know if you need to be added to the Action Updates list.

Join us and learn how you can stand with our brothers and sisters in Christ, following in the spirit of John Lewis who encouraged us to “Make good trouble.”

Audra Grace, Chair

WORSHIP COUNCIL

Worship Committee

Worship was online-only for the first two months of 2022 due to the spike in local Covid cases in late December 2021. The committee had a clean-up day on February 21, and the congregation returned in-person worship on February 27. We resumed two services in the fall. Live streaming of worship continues and is well attended.

The theme for lent was Lighten Up. During Lent, Ellen Gadberry and the MANY HANDS group transformed the sanctuary with installations of giant puppets representing Grace and Sin. More than 300 people attended worship on Easter. In keeping with the theme, the “holy shelf” was decorated with large arrangements that started out as barren and became increasingly green and flowering each week.

MANY HANDS created an art installation of origami peace doves for Pentecost.

We welcomed an amazingly talented Minister of Music, Huu Mai, this spring. He was awarded a mini grant to add new microphones in the sanctuary in October, which has enhanced the sound system. He directed the Christmas Concert in conjunction with the Atlanta Philharmonic Orchestra on December 12th.

Sadly, we said goodbye to our brilliant co-pastor Beth Waltemath in November after twelve years.

Jan Cribbs led a liturgists’ training session on 8/21. Cheryl Parlato held a training session for head ushers on 10/16. Cindy Hays wrote up new guidelines for ushers that reflect policy changes since Covid. Marion Reeves held a training session for 5 children who now serve as acolytes.

We developed a procedure for serving communion that minimized risk of disease transmission. We had a new hanging system installed on the granite columns for hanging art, posters and wreathes in the sanctuary. We purchased and assembled new shelving in the studio classroom to hold supplies for the liturgical arts group, renamed MANY HANDS.

Sanctified Art provided the theme and the devotional booklet for Advent, *Let There Be Light*. MANY HANDS created two white, 3x8 foot cut paper banners and hung them in the sanctuary. Carol Tveit directed the liturgies for Advent wreath candle lightings. We held a candlelight Longest Night service on December 17th. There were three Christmas Eve services that were all well attended, and a brief Christmas Day service that was moderately well attended.

The Worship committee is blessed to have several members who have served our church for more than twenty years including Cindy Hays, Alice Hickcox, Cheryl Parlato, and Martha Shepherd. These women, along with Ellen Gadberry, Janet Jasper, and Marion Reeves worked hard to enhance the congregation’s worship of God in 2022. I am honored to work with each one of them.

Lee Nichols, Chair

Music Committee

Our music program and our adult choir held together steadfastly during the challenges of Covid and the lack of a full-time Music Director during the past couple of years. We were delighted, therefore, when Huu Mai joined our staff as our new Music Director in April. He is full of energy and ideas, and he is breathing new life into our music-making at all levels: children, youth, and adult. He has brought on Emily Halbert as a Graduate Music Assistant to help direct the children's choir and lead the alto section of our adult choir, and David Champion as our Choral Scholar in the bass section.

Our Balcony Choir has been re-named the NDPC Community Choir, showcasing our efforts to involve our neighbors in the ministries of our church. YOU are invited to join! We meet Wednesday evenings at 7:30. Additionally, we are making a special effort – and you can help out here – to invite neighbors and friends to participate in the performance of Mozart's *Requiem* on May 14th.

We are advancing several new initiatives, and we invite you to participate:

- Song leaders in worship
- A Concert Series showcasing musical groups from our community
- A Drumming Circle
- An NDPC Songbook: a collection of favorites that we can use regularly (got suggestions?)

Contact me: rick@ndpc.org

Rick Neale, Chair

FINANCE COUNCIL

Mini Grants

North Decatur Mini-Grant program provides financial support for special initiatives and projects of NDPC's Councils and Committees. The initiatives and projects should:

- address a special capital need that is outside normal operating expenses;
- support the goals of NDPC's Councils and Committees; and
- advance the church's mission and vision as outlined in the long-term strategic plan.

In 2022, the NDPC Mini-Grant Program granted six awards totaling \$13,013.44 exemplifying North Decatur Presbyterian's faith in action:

Water Heater for the Bulape Community \$3,000

This mini-grant was used to purchase and install a new water tank for the Bulape community in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The water tank is vital to a larger "Water ATM" initiative. The water will be pumped from the ground to this tank and villagers will have ATM-like cards to get their ration of water. Some of the water is free. The rest of the water the residents will acquire at a low cost. This project is part of an initiative of IMA World Health (Interchurch Medical Assistance, Inc.), which has been around 60 years helping the world's poorest communities. IMA will contract with Congo Helping Hands (CHH), an NGO with years of experience in doing water projects in Congo, to repair the existing systems, install the water ATMs, train the sellers and community in how to use the system.

Decatur Cooperative Ministries Security Upgrade \$3,000

DCM’s offices and the Hagar’s House (HH) shelter needed a security upgrade. DCM’s cameras were more than 20 years old; unable to work in the dark, and two cameras were no longer functional. In an emergency, DCM staff need to be able to locate all clients (and children) immediately. Staff need to be able to watch children in the courtyard and watch clients in the computer room. In the evenings, there is only one staff member working. They must be able to see who approaches sleeping areas, and who may be approaching HH’s back doors. With the help of NDPC’s mini-grant, DCM was able to upgrade both exterior and interior cameras, as well as upgrade the fire and burglar systems.
decaturcooperativeministry.org

SisterSong Support \$3,000

In response to the Supreme Court’s ruling on Roe v Wade, a mini-grant donation was sent to SisterSong – the largest national multi-ethnic Reproductive Justice (RJ) collective. Their membership includes and represents Indigenous, African American, and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latina women and LGBTQ people. Membership also includes white, male, and pro-life allies who support women’s human right to lead fully self-determined lives. They are growing and supporting the RJ movement and uplifting the voices and building the capacity of their movement sisters to win access to abortion and all other reproductive rights. www.sistersong.net

Cold Weather Shelter \$3,000

The mini-grant helped re-establish the cold weather shelter organized by A Home for Everyone in DeKalb. This shelter was housed at NDPC in 2018 – 2019 and moved to Decatur First Methodist in 2019 - 2020. For the last two years, the shelter did not open because of Covid. The mini-grant helped pay for a shelter manager and supplies. ahomeforeveryoneindecakalb.org

Sanctuary Microphones \$1,013.44

Because of NDPC’s acoustical environment, audio feedback is a major impediment to our ability to adequately amplify our community and children’s choirs in the sanctuary. This amplification especially is important as we continue to offer online worship. These microphones are the most affordable and effective solution available and will be useful for decades to come, even if we renovate and implement additional acoustical and audio improvements.

Finance Committee

Preliminary financial results for 2022 show NDPC returning to normal with regard to programming. Pledge income ended the year at 739K (97.7% of what was budgeted). This is about normal. Unfortunately, non-pledged giving was only 25K for the year (60% of what we expected)! Other income was slightly ahead of budget due to increased rent from Hess and better money market interest rates offsetting a shortfall related to Science of Fun. Annual expenses for the year exceed income by about 13K. Some budgeted transfers (43K YTD) from reserves have been posted. Other transfers have not been posted (31K) as the planned projects have not started.

On the expense side, our big departments (Personnel, Property, and Administration) ran close to budget for the year. Education, Worship (excluding Visual Arts Special Projects), and Community Life programs are also close to budget as we get back to normal operations. Mission is running a bit under budget for the year.

Please see our Session-approved 2023 Budget on page 17. Our 2023 budget anticipates a return to normal operations with an understanding that unforeseen events may still occur. Our budgeted routine

receipts and expenditures are in balance. One highlight of this budget is an increase in the fraction of the budget going to our mission partners and denomination (benevolences) from 10.1% to 10.7%. Change for change giving should add an additional 22K to benevolences. Supplementing the program budget, a number of special projects have been identified and funded through the use of grants and reserve funds.

On the income side of the budget, our major source of funds is pledged giving. In 2023, 152 pledging units have committed to giving \$785K. This is 3.7% more than in 2022. Other income includes non-pledged offerings (42K, flat), rent from groups using the church (83K, up 22%), and miscellaneous income including investment income (20K, up 700%). Total budgeted income is 930K (up 7%).

Budgeted Expenses are also 930K. Our biggest expense is personnel at 482K. Expenses for our buildings and grounds are our second largest expense (233K, up 2.4%). Other program expenses include administration (33K, up 11.3%), worship and music (43K, up 45% - partially due to the end of some grant funding), education (23K, up 19%) and community life (12K, up 31%). Other smaller programs bring the total operating budget to 830K (up 3.3%).

Benevolent giving to our mission partners and denomination is budgeted at just under 100K (10.7% of budget, up 10.2% from last year's 90K). Community ministry is slated to receive 30K (up 16.4%), global mission is budgeted at 20K (up 17.6%), peace and justice gets 12K (up 20.2%), denominational giving is 35K (up 1.5%).

Many thanks to the 2022 Finance Committee: JW Balsley, David Evans, Roberta Goldbaugh, Jill Jacques, Anna Kershaw, Virginia Legener, Fran Mohr, Sallie Owens, Gabriel Ramirez, and Brock Savage along with our Treasurer, Cathy Fincher.

Jack Kittle, Chair

2023 PROPOSED BUDGET

	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	2023 Percentages	Change
Revenue				
Pledged Offerings	\$756,764	\$785,000	84.4%	3.7%
Non-Pledged Offerings	\$42,000	\$42,000	4.5%	0.0%
Rent	\$67,840	\$83,051	8.9%	22.4%
Other Receipts	\$2,500	\$20,000	2.2%	700.0%
Total Revenues	\$869,104	\$930,051	100.0%	7.0%
Expenses				
Operating				
Property	\$227,100	\$232,573	25.0%	2.4%
Personnel	\$482,203	\$482,339	51.9%	0.0%
General Administrative	\$29,450	\$32,789	3.5%	11.3%
Session	\$700	\$1,700	0.2%	142.9%
Communication	\$6,500	\$3,000	0.3%	-53.8%
Education	\$19,150	\$22,793	2.5%	19.0%
Worship and Music	\$29,500	\$42,850	4.6%	45.3%
Community Life	\$9,175	\$12,010	1.3%	30.9%
Stewardship	\$400	\$400	0.0%	0.0%
Total Operating	\$804,178	\$830,454	89.3%	3.3%

(Continued on next page)

Benevolences				
Unallocated			0.0%	
Community Ministry	\$25,950	\$30,200	3.2%	16.4%
Peace & Justice	\$10,150	\$12,200	1.3%	20.2%
Global Mission	\$17,000	\$20,000	2.2%	17.6%
Creation Care	\$1,500	\$1,500	0.2%	0.0%
Blackmon Interest	\$1,800	\$1,200	0.1%	-33.3%
Denominational	\$33,984	\$34,497	3.7%	1.5%
Total Benevolences	\$90,384	\$99,597	10.7%	10.2%
Total Expenses	\$894,562	\$930,051	100.0%	4.0%
Transfer from Accumulated Surplus	\$25,458	\$0		
Special Projects (Grants & Reserves)				
Liturgical Arts	\$15,000	\$15,000		carry over 2022
Communication Special Projects	\$5,000	\$5,000		carry over 2022
Property		\$15,000		
Creation Care Projects		\$2,500		
Total Special Projects	\$20,000	\$37,500		
Benevolence %	10.1%	10.7%		
Change for Change	\$22,000	\$22,000		

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, Pastor
Mary Anona Stoops, Pastor for Senior Formation
Erin Reed Cooper, Director of Children, Youth and Families
Zeena Regis, Ministry Fellow
Victoria Robinson, Ministry Fellow
Huu Mai, Music Director
Emily Halbert, Graduate Music Assistant
Mahsheed Khawary, Administration & Communications
Javier Sanchez, Custodian

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