

Session Meeting Agenda, February 18, 2018

Excused:

1. Opening prayer – Dave Coleman
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of minutes from January 21 meeting
4. Moderator's Report – *see accompanying report*
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Clerk's Report
7. Baptism request – reauthorize Eliza Bell for some Sunday in March TBA
8. Committee Reports -- *Oral reports should be limited to items for action only.*

Building & History – *see accompanying report*

Finance, Administration & Personnel – *see accompanying report*

Hospitality –

Worship & Art – *see accompanying report*

Outreach –

Christian Education –

9. 2018 budget – review, revise, adopt
10. Conversation around committee structure, assignments & leadership for 2018
11. Conversation around Mike's 2018 Goals – *see accompanying document*
12. Next Meetings
 - Session: March 18, 2018 (need opening prayer volunteer)
 - Presbytery: Thursday, May 3 @ First PC Tullahoma
13. Closing Prayer

Downtown Presbyterian Church Regular Session Meeting

January 21st, 2018

Present: Elders Vickie Coffin, Debra Gentry, Dave Coleman, Michael Korak, Jack Henderson
Justin Near, Jim Dickson, Chuck Cardona, Rev. Mike Wilson - Moderator, Treasurer Jeff Koontz

Also Present: Dena Swoner, Tom Byl

Excused: Elder Cary Gibson

Clerk: Jack Henderson

- 1) **Opening prayer** – Justin Near at 1:05pm
- 2) **Approval of Agenda** - Approved with voice vote unanimously
- 3) **Approval of minutes from December 17, 2017 meeting** - Approved with voice vote unanimously
- 4) **Moderator's Report** – see accompanying report. No action items from report.
- 5) **Election of Clerk of Session for 2018** – Jack Henderson nominated for Clerk and elected by unanimous voice vote.
- 6) **Election of Treasurer for 2018** - Jeff Koontz nominated and elected by unanimous voice vote.
- 7) **Treasurer's Report** – Benevolence checks from 2017 will be sent out shortly. Differences in budgeted and actual benefits expenses were discussed. DPC was the recipient of bequest from estate of Virginia Craighead Tipton. Exact amount of donation is still unclear.
- 8) **Clerk's Report** – Approval of minutes prior to the next session meeting was discussed. Protocol for approval via email discussed. Posting of session agenda prior to meetings was also discussed. Set time during worship for session's verbal announcement of agenda and decisions was discussed.
- 9) **Baptism request** – Eliza Bell on January 28, Matthew Abfelter on February 18. Motion to approve made and seconded.

10) **Committee Reports** -- Oral reports should be limited to items for action only.

Building & History – Report sent in. No items for action

Finance, Administration & Personnel – Report sent in. Items for pay/ call will be discussed in 2018 budget item review.

Hospitality – No report

Worship & Art – No report

Outreach – No report

Christian Education – No report

11) **2018 budget** – Jeff Koontz presented 2018 draft budget. Pledge numbers compared to last year discussed. Session had a detailed item by item discussion of 2017 budgeted, actual and 2018 budgeted revenues and expenses. Corporation board will meet on 1/22 to discuss possible increases in draw to cover expenses.

12) **Conversation around committee structure, assignments & leadership for 2018** – Tentative Committee Assignments for 2018 with fuller conversation in February meeting:

Cary Gibson – W&A

Chuck Cardona – F&A

Dave Coleman - Hospitality

Michael Korak – Building and History

Jack Henderson – Clerk and Outreach

Debra Gentry - Personnel

Jim Dickson – Christian Education

Justin Near – W&A

Vicki Coffin - Outreach

- 13) **Conversation around Mike's 2018 Goals** – see accompanying document, recommending a personnel committee. Greater discussion will be at session retreat and next session meeting.
- 14) **Next Meetings** Session: February 18, 2018, Jim Dickson will lead Prayer; Presbytery: Saturday, February 3 in Columbia – Dave Coleman and Michael Korak; Session Retreat will be held on tentatively on 2/10/18 at 9am at a location TBD.
- 15) **Closing Prayer and adjournment at 4:26pm**

Pastor's Report (Mike Wilson)
January 22, 2018 – February 18, 2018

Sermons: 4

Visits, including hospital, coffee, breakfasts and lunches: 5

Tuesday Bible Study: 3

Saturday breakfast: 1

Ash Wednesday Service

Meetings/Events:

- Presbytery Meeting
- Session retreat
- FA&P/B&H meeting
- CPM
- Worship & Arts
- Downtown Partnership

Pastoral expenses – approx. < \$200

Community Assistance Fund:

See accompanying report

Vacation & Study Leave:

Vacation after Easter: April 2 – 8 – Guest preacher Stacy Rector

Study Leave: General Assembly in St. Louis, June 16 – 23. I'll be attending as an official assembly aid.

Joint Meeting: Finance, Administration and Personnel Committee
with the Building and History Committee
February 13, 2018

The Cookery; 1827 12th Avenue South, Suite A; Nashville, TN 37203

I. Building and History

- a. The Contributor **They are leaving DPC and combining their McKendree offices and going to Room at the Inn. We wish them well as they face their new opportunities and challenges.**
- b. The Fence **The repair is completed from the Impalement of 2017 and a few other minor repairs. \$1,400.**
- c. The Alleyway **The closure (which is budgeted from the Pickett fund, approved last year) is being thought out for the ingress and egress patterns that will make sense for congregants, visitors and friends. \$4,000**
- d. The Café **There is an idea to open a luncheonette in our Fellowship Hall. Limited menu, reasonable prices. It would be another avenue to promote our church. It would be run by Lambcroft as an extension of the good work they do with the Cookery. We are in preliminary discussions and research.**
- e. The Paulino II **The time to act is getting closer. We are spending money on outside contractors to pay for the jobs that Paulino can't physically do. If we hire a "new" Paulino, he'll need to shadow him for roughly a year to learn the building. So, what will this mean for DPC from a personnel and financial standpoint.**
- f. Miscellaneous
 - i. **Premier Parking is leaving current offices. We'll see how this impacts us and our parking situation.**

II. Finance and Administration

- a. Finance update
 - i. Current operating account balance as of 2/13/18: unknown! I have been locked out of the account. It looks like someone tried to access it too many times and I have to change the password. (No, that someone was not me.) **But I called and we have a little over 34K. We will also move to a different type of checking account. We are paying for a business account that really doesn't suit our needs. A switch to Total Business Banking will save us money and time. Thanks to Mike Korak for his efforts in changing us over.**
 - ii. Treasurer's Report **Closing out 2017. Jeff is really working above and beyond. I'll owe him a bottle of his favorite moonshine.**
 - iii. Staff pay adjustments (salary & benefits - see attachment included with the spreadsheet)
 - iv. William's increase for Hand Bells **We will finalize this in Session.**
 - v. Mike's insurance - Member+Spouse **It's a Board of Pension thing. And you wouldn't understand. (Song lyric!) It may be possible to drop Mary Louise from our coverage since she's covered by Second Pres. Jeff will check!**
 - vi. Budget deficit recommendation (currently \$30,500) **This is doable and a good conversation piece about the importance of giving.**
 - vii. Recommendation for Corporation Draw
 - viii. Board of Pension FY17 underpayment **We think that Reggie forgot to update the salaries for FY17. We'll probably make a one-time payment to cover the amount. It shouldn't be huge, but we want to make sure that our employees are covered.**
 - ix. Emailing tally on Sundays **Still working on this issue. Will need tech support.**
 - x. ACS tech support for 2017 Year End Closures **Will do with Jeff and Dena.**
 - xi. The Stewardship Campaign nouveau dénouement. **40 people for \$231,110.**

- xii. The budget process **We talked!**
- xiii. Craig Estate update! Just plain wow. And thanks!**It was over \$300,000**
- b. Miscellaneous
- c. Realm/ACS Videos. **Didn't get to! Come on, our meeting was over 2 hours.!**

III. Personnel

- a. Personnel Reviews **We'll get it next time!**
- b. Miscellaneous

IV. Next meeting? March 13, 2018

In attendance: Chuck Cardona, Debra Gentry, Dena Swoner, Mike Korak, Mike Wilson, Denny Harris, Jeff Koontz, Mary Turner

No session action items.

Next meeting Monday, Feb 19, 6pm.

A discussion is underway by the artists exploring the potential for DPC to host events for Nashville's citywide Artober festival in October 2018.

The Browsing Room Gallery is booked for exhibitions through end Jan 2019.

Nashville School of the Arts Class of 2018 finals art show will be in the Fellowship Hall for the May 2018 art crawl with agreement from Sarah Shearer who will be exhibiting in the gallery that month.

Liturgist sign up sheet for liturgists is now online - thanks to Erin Bell.

Stations of the Cross 2018 is up-and-running and features similar stations as last year with updates and changes as needed. We will try to do some social media work with this throughout Lent.

March 18: Taize-style service

March 30: one of the cottage dinners will be hosted at DPC for those downtown or those who might not be comfortable going to someone's home.

Report on The Community Assistance Fund

It has been several months since the CAF has been active. The reason is simple: lack of funds. In December we had an infusion of about \$4000 from Tuba Christmas. We intended to restart distributions once we established a new CAF account at a different bank and instituted better accounting procedures. Dena Swoner has been invaluable in helping to get a handle on all things CAF. And based on her experience and research, I'd like to make some recommendations.

First, just a bit of history. When I started at DPC I followed the procedures for distributions that Ken Locke had in place. Without going into detail, the whole process – from greeting people at the door to writing out the check – was handled by the pastor and involved what I think was unnecessary record keeping and research. The process was inefficient and required me to be in the office and available during the hours of distribution (Mon. – Wed., 9:00 – 11:30) and stop whatever I was doing whenever there was a knock on the door. Reggie Hughes and I eventually streamlined the process to the point where I would simply sign a bunch of checks and he would handle the rest. We eliminated the unnecessary record keeping and dramatically decreased the amount of time either of us spent with any one petitioner. Still, a lot of time, his or mine, was spent on the distributions.

The transition from Reggie to Dena coincided with an increase in the number of requests we were receiving. She discovered that places like Room in the Inn and the Rescue Mission were sending people to DPC for help without really assessing need. And some people were even under the impression that we were a kind of state agency and you *had* to come through us to get an ID. There has also been an increase in the number of homeless people coming to Nashville and we saw an increase in requests for out-of-state birth certificates. All of this strained our funds and time, especially since many petitioners simply disregarded our posted hours and came whenever they wanted. Dena was spending more and more time doing social service work, helping someone fill out an out-of-state birth certificate application or telling them how to get an ID, and less time on her other duties as office manager. And because the birth certificate requirements and costs are so different state-to-state, we were seeing checks cashed but applications denied.

The bottom line is that what started out years ago as a small-scale assistance effort grew to a something much larger and more time consuming. We went from 30 or 40 checks a month to 30 or 40 checks *a week*.

My recommendation is that DPC discontinue the CAF as an on-site effort and instead pool our existing resources – right now, a little more than \$4000 – with another social service provider who is already doing this kind of assistance as part of their core mission. Room in the Inn, for instance, has a process for IDs and birth certificates that, while requiring a bit more from the applicant, has the same result. Dena and I can also look for other possibilities.

Even if we were to tighten our requirements for assistance – means testing, for instance – we'd still find ourselves dealing with a lot of petitioners every week, all week. And we'd still run out of money quickly. And if there are organizations already doing this work as part of their core mission, it makes sense for us *and the homeless community* to let them do that work and let us focus on our core mission and ministry. It makes sense for us to participate in the on-going consolidation of homeless ministries in Nashville rather than hold on to a narrow niche.

Mike's Goals for Session and the Church – 2018

Form a standing Personnel Committee

Right now DPC staff are evaluated by the pastor and a committee chair from B&H (for the building manager), CE (for children's ministries director) and FA&P (for the office manager). The pastor is evaluated by the chairs of the Worship committee. While there are certain advantages to this approach – e.g. committee chairs only evaluate one person – it is inconsistent and, in the case of the pastor, incomplete.

There are significant advantages to a single group of people evaluating all staff members and using a common evaluation instrument. Those advantages can be seen by reviewing the PC(USA) Guidelines for Session Personnel Committees.

I would suggest a four-person committee chaired by a session member with two other members from the congregation, plus the pastor serving ex-officio. The session member may be the chair of FA&P or it could be another. It may even be advisable to separate personnel from finance & administration.

The PC(USA) Guidelines or the personnel committee list the following as primary responsibilities:

- Review and recommend to session compensation packages for all staff.
- Recommend personnel policies to the session.
- Encourage professional growth and development for all staff.
- Recommend to the session ways to manage risk exposures.
- Implement a plan of equal employment opportunities, developed in consultation with the presbytery and approved by the session.
- Provide for a review process to assist in work planning.
- Act as a support group for the pastor and other members of the staff.
- Confer with the pastor on any important issues of concern.

It is implied in the responsibilities that the personnel committee conduct all annual reviews and the Guidelines give examples of how the committee might go about that.

I would imagine the committee meeting quarterly and scheduling evaluations in November. Throughout the year and especially near annual reviews, the committee would talk to key people and members of the congregation to help in their evaluations.

Develop a formal and comprehensive Stewardship Campaign

Successful stewardship campaigns have a few things in common:

- They start early, often in the summer

- The initial focus is *not* on money or giving
- They have theme, slogan or easily stated goal
- Church members and friends are contacted and met with individually by members of a stewardship committee or the session
- Those making contact are trained
- A proven, off the shelf, stewardship program is often used

Responsibility for the campaign would remain with FA&P (or F&A, should the personnel committee be split off). There are *lots* of resources available and people in the presbytery who could assist in putting together a good program.

Outreach to Downtown Nashville and New Member Assimilation

For the church to grow, we have to commit to a program of outreach and promotion to those most likely to affiliate with a church like DPC and those living close to us. I'll refer you to the demographic information in the New Beginnings report to see who they are.

Such a program might include:

- Evening meet-and-greet events at the church
- Classes, programs or speakers designed to appeal to the target demographic
- Postal mail to residents and new movers
- Advertising
- Better on-line presence
- Developing a clear articulation of our identity
- More service opportunities
- Evaluating the effectiveness of our worship
- More effective follow-up with visitors
- Nurturing and guiding new members into the community

At one time DPC had two committees, Congregational Life and New Member Development. The former concentrated on fellowship events (Christmas breakfast, chili cookoff, Waffle Shop, narthex snacks, etc.) while the latter was tasked with reaching out to visitors and developing ways to attract new members. Those two committee were merged into the Hospitality Committee after it appeared that their missions were overlapping. Unfortunately the focus on new members decreased because of the pressures to maintain community activities.

It may be necessary to reestablish two separate committees with distinct mandates.

Earlier Budget Process

A budget process that starts in October (or even September) and allows the session to adopt a budget in December would be preferable to our current process. The biggest advantage to

earlier adoption is that the session that has guided the church in the previous 12 months is the one that is voting, rather than new ruling elders who may not have been part of in-depth conversations and work.

In one church I served, the previous pastor wrongly allowed the congregation to vote on the budget; the budget is voted on by the session (see BOO G-3.0205). While I couldn't allow that to continue, I also recognized the benefits of allowing the congregation to have input on the process. So we agreed to have a congregational meeting no less than one month prior to session vote at which a *preliminary* budget was presented to the congregation. That turned out to be a very helpful addition to the process. Usually that meeting was in early December and the session adopted the budget later that month.

We could try something similar at DPC. It would certainly go a long way to greater communication and transparency.

Better Communication

Our new website is a huge improvement over the old one and has even more potential for being a gateway into DPC. In 2018 I hope we can develop it even further to help newcomers discover who we are and to help members and friends stay connected and informed.

We also need to examine our social media and improve and streamline. For instance, our Facebook presence is poorly executed. There are multiple pages and groups – including one just for the *organ* – that should be consolidated into a single, comprehensive and public page.

Communication from the session to the congregation needs to be expanded, including the availability of session meeting minutes and summaries, committee reports and more.

Our DPC directory needs to be updated and made available to all members and friends. We then need to create procedures for continual updating.

The on-going maintenance of the directory should be the responsibility of the office manager.