

The Downtown Presbyterian Church
Session Meeting of May 17, 2020
Minutes

A virtual (Zoom) meeting of the Session of The Downtown Presbyterian Church (DPC) was held on Sunday, May 17, 2020.

In Attendance: Jim Hoobler, Jake Byl, Dave Coleman, Mary Turner, Holly Kellar, Erin Bell, David Maddox, Treasurer Rachel Hayes, Moderator Rev. Mike Wilson, and Clerk of Session Vickie Coffin

An opening prayer was given by Mr. Byl at 3:03 PM.

Approval of Agenda

Motion from Ms. Coffin, second from Ms. Kellar to approve the agenda; motion carried.

Approval of April 19, 2020, Minutes

Motion from Mr. Hoobler, second from Mr. Maddox to approve the minutes from the April meeting of the Session with amendments; motion carried.

Moderator's Report – see posted report

Rev. Wilson has attended many webinars for information about proceeding during pandemic

Treasurer's Report - see posted report

April's finances were improved over March. One single pledged donation was quite large. DPC operations checking account has a healthy balance.

COVID-19 Planning

Rachel Hayes tells the Session that the phased reopening of Davidson County businesses is going well. Churches are approved to reopen in Mayer Cooper's proposed Phase III. At-risk citizens are approved to worship in person during Phase IV.

Maybe DPC will define reopening phases, beginning by not welcoming those over 65 years old or children during early phases.

Services from the sanctuary could be Facebook Live streamed for those who don't attend in person. A 6-foot physical distance and the use of face masks should be demonstrated. We have concerns about the virus spread risk from singing. So we might decide not to sing, or only some choir musicians. Concerns about collecting (or not) donations. Fever may not be an accurate test for virus detection.

Motion from Ms. Coffin to continue online worship as opposed to in-person worship through the month of June, second from Ms. Turner; motion carried.

Bathroom fixtures will be replaced with touchless ones.

Should church offices be opened regularly? What regulations apply to this employment issue? Install protective plexiglass around Dena's workspace? Maybe stagger presence in the church office?

Committee Reports

Building & History – met online May 13, see posted report

Dave Coleman has followed up on the suggestion to film the DPC building space with Jim Hoobler presenting its history.

Finance - met online May 13, see posted report

Outreach –

Have paused giving to Local Benevolences, but it's possible exceptions will be made. Consensus among elders is that giving should be resumed as soon as possible. Is it appropriate to halt Local Benevolences when we have declined the PPP loan based on the size of the endowment?

Saturday Breakfast Coordinators –

Meeting planned for May 20th.

Nominating Committee –

Pastor Mike will convene the 2020 NomComm before end of month

Congregational Care and Life issues

Zoom chats, inviting all who receive weekly eVotions, will become more focused, possibly on Bible study, Christian Ed, music concerts.

Next Meetings

Session: June 21 at 3:00 PM

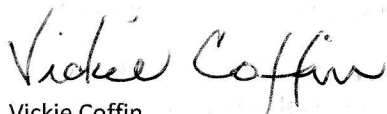
Presbytery: Thursday, May 21 – cancelled

PCUSA General Assembly – Online June 19, 26, 27

Next month's opening prayer to be given by Dave Coleman.

Following a **motion** from Mr. Maddox, the meeting was closed at 4:54 PM.

Rev. Mike Wilson
Moderator, DPC Session



Vickie Coffin
Clerk of DPC Session

The Downtown Presbyterian Church
Virtual Session Meetings of May, 2020
Minutes

Informal meetings of the Downtown Presbyterian Church (DPC) Session were held via web conferencing during May, 2020. Discussions focused on operations during the coronavirus epidemic.

Monday, May 4, 2020:

In Attendance: Jake Byl, Jim Hoobler, Debra Gentry, Mary Turner, Dave Coleman, Erin Bell, Holly Kellar, David Maddox, Moderator Rev. Mike Wilson, and Clerk of Session Vickie Coffin

Rev. Wilson offered words of prayer at 7:03 PM.

Finances:

CARES Paycheck Protection Plan (PPP) loan via SunTrust is still up in the air. The Small Business Administration (SBA) has created new guidelines, hoping to block publicly traded companies. DPC must certify that the loan is needed for ongoing operations, and there is no source of liquidity. Bellevue and Second Pres. have applied for the loan. Neither has an endowment such as DPC has. What we refer to as an endowment is not restricted in the way many endowments are. It is invested funds belonging to the DPC Corporation.

Action Item: Would Rev. Wilson find out if other churches with endowments have applied for the PPP loan? First Pres. Franklin and Westminster Nashville may be good sources.

Saturday Breakfast:

Many COVID-19 confirmed cases at the Nashville Rescue Mission. Saturday Breakfast guests have not been talking about it. This past Saturday, only 100 guests were served. Ms. Gentry expressed concern for the Saturday volunteers. Betsy Bahn feels that the process is safe, and volunteers are well protected. Many guests take more than one bag of food, suggesting they are taking it to someone else.

Return to Normalcy Planning:

Ms. Turner mentioned that PC(USA) has suggestions for returning to worship in the sanctuary. The building is unable to create social distance in bathrooms. It may be a good idea to block off the 5th Ave. entrance. Think about cleaning/disinfecting. Singing creates droplets, which may be dangerous. No hymnals at the pews?

The meeting was ended at 8:00 PM.

Monday, May 11, 2020:

In Attendance: Mary Turner, Jake Byl, Debra Gentry, Jim Hoobler, Erin Bell, David Maddox, Holly Kellar, Moderator Rev. Mike Wilson, and Clerk of Session Vickie Coffin

Rev. Wilson offered words of prayer at 7:09 PM.

Discussion Keywords:

Cleaning Fellowship Hall for Friday food bagging, videos about gathering and singing during a pandemic, replace “social distancing” with “physical distancing,”

Finances:

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan from the Small Business Administration (SBA): Everything is lined up, and SunTrust is waiting for DPC Finance action.

Motion to accept the PPP loan from the Finance and Administration Committee.

Reasons to accept - Non-pledge donations are well below budget. The loan is forgivable, so more like a grant than a loan. Lots of churches (around 43%) of Protestant churches have applied and been approved. Protect endowment. We are not hesitant to request grants to save the DPC building. The grant would be used in the correct intent of the SBA.

Reasons to decline - Our endowment provides liquidity. Separation of Church and State. Image projected to outside DPC. Pledged giving is not significantly below budget. PPP is a political move to “buy” votes.

The motion failed, so the loan will not be accepted.

Saturday Breakfast:

125 bags were distributed this past Saturday morning. The number of guests is declining.

Miscellaneous Issues of Interest:

Scott and David McGinniss would like to reaffirm their marital vows in the DPC sanctuary. This is a question about use of building in time of upheaval. The Session supports Scott’s request, but is unable to commit to a date at this time.

Mike and Mary Louise received a suggestion from Dixie about a joint worship service for congregants from DPC and Second Pres. The Session is definitely interested.

Tri-weekly Zoom chats have lost their luster. Fresh ideas for bringing the congregation together are wanted. A music concert? Christian education sessions? Virtual coffee hour after a worship service? Story-telling time?

Next meeting: Sunday, May 17, “formal” meeting at 3:00 PM.

The meeting was ended at 7:56 PM.

Monday, June 1, 2020:

In Attendance: Debra Gentry, Jake Byl, Dave Coleman, Jim Hoobler, Erin Bell, Holly Kellar, David Maddox, Moderator Rev. Mike Wilson, and Clerk of Session Vickie Coffin

Rev. Wilson offered words of prayer at 7:07 PM.

COVID-19 Planning:

Should the DPC soft opening involve a short recorded service for those who can't attend in person? Reconvene at the end of June to set a reopening date?

Chuck Beard ("East Side Story Telling") is eager to start his streaming/recorded events. Session agreed that no events should take place before worship resumes.

As Rachel Hayes explained in her email of 06/01, surface virus transmissions aren't as frequent as airborne person-to-person spread.

Saturday Breakfast:

Bag assembly details for June 5 were ironed out. Dave Coleman will purchase supplies and deliver to the church building on Thursday evening. Debra Gentry will head up Friday bag assembly.

Miscellaneous:

A water leak has been discovered in the DPC building over the History Room (maybe the air conditioner). This will be monitored closely. It may be a good time to get that repaired. The ceiling must be patched, but only if we're certain the leak won't pop up again.

Dave Coleman expressed interest in filming an historical tour of the DPC building with Jim Hoobler leading. Some expense will make for a better quality video.

Westminster Presbyterian Church is collecting items for Room in the Inn. Should our Clothing Closet surplus be donated? The items can be replaced when needed. Maybe donate summer clothing only, since we're not going to be handing it out this summer. New t-shirts, underwear, ponchos are requested. Erin will contact Room in the Inn to see what we can do to help.

Note: The socks from Bombas haven't yet been shipped to DPC.

June 14 joint service with Second Presbyterian Church is being planned. The entire service will be prerecorded and dropped on Saturday evening for 2PC. And then the video will be screened on Sunday at 11:00 AM on the DPC Facebook page.

Next meeting: Sunday, June 21, "formal" meeting at 3:00.

The meeting was ended at 8:02.