



New Member Guide

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WELCOME LETTER FROM REVEREND JAMES LAMKIN AND REVEREND DANIEL HEADRICK

Welcome to Northside Drive Baptist Church! You may be wondering “what does it mean to be a member at NDBC?” In this guide, we hope to begin answering that question by orienting you to our faith community through a brief history, the sharing of our Church Covenant and Vision, a practical explanation of how decisions are made and money is spent, and most importantly, an invitation for you to become more connected and involved.

Joining a shared community. Being a member unites you with others who are trying to follow the teachings of Christ in a complex world. You will also have a say on the direction and future of our shared life together. You get a vote and an opportunity to speak your mind at church conferences, council meetings, and through the various committees and teams which make up the church.

Receiving care. You will be assigned a deacon. Deacons have been ordained to provide care to members. Additionally, Senior Pastor James Lamkin and Associate Pastor Daniel Headrick are available to provide pastoral care to you and your family.

Serving. From Atlanta Habitat for Humanity builds, to volunteering at Urban Recipe, Buckhead Christian Ministry and more, there are many ways to connect your gifts with the needs of the community. An overview of our ministry partners and service opportunities are included in this Guide. Additionally, there are numerous service and leadership opportunities each year on our Ministry Teams.

Giving. Members of NDBC are expected to make annual promises of financial support called “pledges” which help us formulate our budget and maintain the operation of the church and its ministries. You may pledge by contacting our Business Manager Rose Hidlay at rose@northsidedrive.org.

Polity. NDBC is not governed by any outside organization or denominational body. As a Baptist community of faith, it decides for itself how it will be governed and what policies it will adopt.

Welcome to NDBC!

Rev. James Lamkin
Senior Pastor

Rev. Daniel Headrick
Associate Pastor

What is the soul of NDBC?

For over 65 years we have been trying to faithfully live out our calling to be followers of Jesus. Over the years we have been led to give common voice to our shared vision and values...our “soul” which is always being tended to in relationship with God and each other. Our Church Covenant and Vision are our attempt to give voice to the vibrant and dynamic soul of Northside Drive Baptist Church. These are words we’ve tried to live by since 1993.

Church Covenant

United in the faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, revealed in history, disclosed in the Scriptures, and experienced in human life, we do solemnly make this covenant together:

We will proclaim the Good news of Jesus Christ and God's call to all people to repentance and faith, to reconciliation and hope, to social and economic justice;

We affirm God's call to laity and clergy to be servant ministers following the model of our Servant Lord and to the full partnership of all Christians in the mission and ministry of God's church;

We will accept responsibility under the authority and guidance of Jesus Christ to

(1) shape our church's life and mission,

(2) call our own leadership, and

(3) ordain any Christian whom we perceive as gifted for ministry;

We will respect the freedom of individuals to read and interpret the Scriptures as they are led by the Holy Spirit within the family of faith;

We will offer and promote Christian education for all ages, characterized by reverence for biblical authority and respect for open inquiry, with our goal being the development of a mature and thoughtful faith in the hearts and minds of God's people;

We will be a church of missions, recognizing the infinite worth of every person and believing that Christ has called us to active involvement on behalf of God's creation;

We acknowledge that we are part of the universal church of Jesus Christ and affirm professions of faith made in other Christian traditions by those seeking to join our congregation;

We pray, through God's grace, to be a church where all God's children will experience their inalienable rights given by God: To be loved, to know they are loved, and to learn to love others as God has loved them.

May our lives be filled with God's hope and presence as we affirm this covenant through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

OUR VISION

We believe God calls us into Christian community with the challenge to discern and act upon the ongoing revelation of God in our time and place.

We live out this vision by

- ❖ being a church rooted deeply in liturgical traditions,
- ❖ where intergenerational friendships are valued,
- ❖ all members can be known by name,
- ❖ open-mindedness is the basis of spiritual formation,
- ❖ resources are shared generously, and
- ❖ where hands-on service is crucial to our own discipleship and the mission of Christ in the world.

We celebrate this vision through

- ❖ the intimacy of a loving congregation,
- ❖ the strength of Baptist freedoms, and
- ❖ the reach of an ecumenical and inclusive spirit.



Atlanta Habitat for Humanity



Missions in Taliaferro County



A Greater Inclusivity

Where do we come from?

Our church started as a gathering of families in the Wildwood section of Northwest Atlanta in 1951. In 1952, 100 charter members formed Northside Drive Baptist Church, so named for its location on Northside Drive. NDBC was originally a church plant of First Baptist Church of Atlanta and had traditional Southern Baptist roots, polity, and direction.

Like most mainstream Protestant churches who were experiencing rapid growth in the 1950s and 60s, NDBC soon outgrew its original sanctuary which we now call the “Chapel.” We still gather for worship there several months during the summer and for other events. Our much larger octagonal sanctuary was built in 1974.

In the late 70s the church moved towards a more formal and liturgical worship style, with clergy donning robes, adopting the Lectionary (a three-year rotation through Christian scriptures), and embracing a more ecumenical style.

Over the years, NDBC also moved in more missional and progressive directions. For example, in 1967 we supported a Cuban family seeking to flee Communist oppression. In 1999 we sponsored the Shabani family from Kosovo.



And in 2017, we sponsored a family seeking refuge from violence in Afghanistan. We have supported Medical missions to impoverished international areas, weeklong Bible camps to Taliaferro County, Georgia, and have maintained a strong connection to Atlanta Habitat for Humanity.

An inclusive spirit has long been a NDBC value. Our church was one of the earliest churches in Georgia to ordain a female deacon, Ruby Brown, in 1972.



We have ordained several women to the ministry, actively supported Baptist Women in Ministry, and have called and employed female clergy.

The church voted to sever its ties with both the Georgia Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention in 2001, recognizing that while we had always embraced the priesthood of all believers, a greater inclusivity, and local church autonomy, these organizations had ceased to do so.

Church drops affiliation

In the changing checkerboard of Baptist affiliation in Atlanta, Northside Drive Baptist Church in Buckhead has made the latest move. The 560-member congregation voted Sunday to drop its affiliation with the Georgia Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. Church leaders cited specifically the "Baptist Faith and Message," a statement of belief adopted by the Southern Baptists in 2000 and endorsed by Georgia Baptists, that limits the office of pastor to men. Northside Drive has ordained several women to the ministry since the 1980s. The church will continue to identify itself as Baptist and is affiliated with other Baptist organizations.

The Northside Drive vote comes at a time when other congregations are shuffling allegiances because of a recent decision in the Atlanta Baptist Association to keep as members two churches open to gay men and lesbians in leadership positions. The Georgia Baptist Convention and the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention subsequently voted to cut off funds to the Atlanta association, and efforts are under way to form an alternative association.

TUESDAY,
MARCH 27, 2001 — Gayle White
THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION

This 2001 news article in the AJC gives a snapshot of our process almost two decades ago.

In 2016, NDBC passed a non-discrimination policy which formalized what was already the spiritual direction of the church with respect to members of the LGBTQ community.

LGBTQ persons are treated no differently than any other person, allowed to participate in every facet of community life, and serve in every position of employment. NDBC performed its first same-sex wedding ceremony in the Fall of 2016, when long-time deacon and NDBC member Ken Brant married his partner Andy.

The diaconate drafted and signed the "Statement of Self-Expression" which spurred this vote and is included in the appendix of this Guide.



Marriage ceremony of Ken Brant and his partner Andy.

We are affiliated with two Baptist denominational bodies: the Alliance of Baptists and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (“CBF”). The Alliance self-describes this way: “The Alliance of Baptists began in 1987 as a prophetic voice in Baptist life. Today, we are a faith community comprised of male and female laity and clergy, people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, theological beliefs, and ministry practices. We are about 4,500 individual members and roughly 140 congregations knit together by love for one another and God, combining progressive inquiry, contemplative prayer and prophetic action to bring about justice and healing in a changing world.”

The CBF ordains women to ministry, does not exclude congregations which have a welcoming and affirming theology, and provides avenues for missions.

So, what makes us Baptist in the 21st century? We often say that we are “not that kind of Baptist.” You know, the kind that preaches about hellfire and damnation all the time and is more about judgment than grace. We try to be a grace-filled community, rather than a judgment prone community. We try to be inclusive rather than exclusive. We value religious liberty, a strong Baptist value, through our support of and work with the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty. We honor the mature commitment of Christians to enter baptismal waters when they experience God’s call and claim on their life. And we are fully autonomous.

As we continue to discern the “ongoing revelation of God in our time and place” our history continues to be written. We are excited to be in community with you. May God bless your journey, strengthen your faith, and enrich our community with your presence.

How do I get involved?

There are many ways to get involved in service and leadership at NDBC.

- (1) **Sign up for a Ministry Team.** Think about your gifts and passion, and see if those intersect with our teamwork model of lay leadership. Which team would you like to join? Simply contact our ministry staff to let us know and we'll help connect you. (daniel@northsidedrive.org; james@northsidedrive.org).
- (2) **Get involved with Missions.** The Missions Team plans and coordinates several mission events that take place at NDBC and can connect you to service opportunities outside the church with our ministry partners.
 - a) **Taliaferro County.** For a week in June of each year, a group of NDBCers travel to Taliaferro County, Georgia to run a Vacation Bible Camp for elementary school aged children. All are welcome to join upon completion of a background check. You can come for all or part of our time there. Lodging and dinner are provided.
 - b) **Atlanta Habitat for Humanity.** In the Fall of each year, NDBC helps host an interfaith build on a Saturday morning. Then there will be several subsequent volunteer days until that home is completed. A ceremony dedicating the home is held early the next year. Contact Barbara Atchley (atchley2005@gmail.com) or Dave Wooten (dgw0421@bellsouth.net) for more information.
 - c) **Souper Bowl.** As part of a national focus on hunger, NDBC chefs prepare their best chili and soup and members enjoy a church-wide lunch while raising money for our Hunger Fund. These funds are donated to various agencies which address food insecurity. This event is typically scheduled around the time of the NFL Super Bowl in late January or early February.
 - d) **Creation Care Team.** Started in 2018, this group is devoted to helping the church think through more environmentally sustainable practices. They also participate in an annual "Sweep the Hootch" event, which is a cleaning day for the Chattahoochee River. Contact Chair Will Bell for more information: wb00038@georgiasouthern.edu.

- e) Volunteer at one of our ministry partners (contact Daniel Headrick for information— daniel@northsidedrive.org)
 - ❖ Andrew P. Stewart Center
 - ❖ Urban Recipe—sign up to help with their food co-op
 - ❖ Buckhead Christian Ministry
 - ❖ Lost-n-Found Youth

(3) **Get involved with our Music Ministry.**

- a) *The Sanctuary Choir.* The Sanctuary Choir, rehearsing weekly on Thursday evenings in the Choir Room, and singing weekly in Sunday morning worship, is Northside Drive's primary choral group. This is a volunteer group of male and female singers who love making a contribution through music.

Song is the common voice of praise in the Christian church. While the Sanctuary Choir sings anthems in worship on behalf of the congregation, its major role is to enable the great choir—the congregation—to lift up its voice in praise of God. We invite you to join us in this ministry as we pursue the call in Psalm 150 "To make a joyful noise unto the Lord." You will not only be sharing your talent, but also enjoying the fellowship and care of this community as you grow both in your faith and musical experience. If you have had choral experience in your past or simply have the desire to participate in this ministry, we will help you gain the skills to excel. Come join us! For more information, contact Keith Walker at keith@northsidedrive.org.

Rehearsals are held on Thursdays (September through May) at 7:30 PM in the Undercroft Choir Room.

- b) *Northside Drive Ringers* is Northside Drive's adult handbell ensemble, ringing three octaves of Schulmerich handbells. This group rehearses weekly and plays in Sunday morning worship several times throughout the year. All are invited to join, but basic music reading skills are required. Rehearsals are Sunday mornings at 8:30 AM. For more information, contact Keith Walker at keith@northsidedrive.org.

c) Children's Choirs

Cherub Choir: (Room 103)

The Cherub Choir is for children ages 2 through Kindergarten and meets weekly on Sunday mornings after the children are dismissed from the worship service. This choir introduces Bible songs and simple hymns. The children will also learn to play musical instruments. This choir sings in worship approximately five times between the months of September and May. For more information, contact Mary Lou Swann at marylou@northsidedrive.org
Director: Mary Lou Swann

Celestial Choir: (Room 116)

The Celestial Choir is divided into two sections: (1) children in Grades 1-3 will meet weekly on Sunday mornings from 10:25-10:50 AM; and (2) children in Grades 4-6 will meet weekly on Sunday mornings from 9:45-10:10. This choir introduces children to elements of worship, liturgical seasons, and familiar hymns. The Celestial Choir sings in worship approximately six times per year between the months of September and May. The music is sometimes enhanced with hand chimes and other instruments. For more information, contact Mary Lou Swann at marylou@northsidedrive.org.
Director: Mary Lou Swann
Accompanist: Joel Stouffer



Who is the NDBC staff and how do I reach them?



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Kids Ministry @ NDBC

The Kids Ministry @ NDBC is an energetic place in our church's ministry where you can come to find learning, laughter, fun, and fellowship for your entire family!

Each Sunday morning at 9:30 AM, our Kids Ministry offers Sunday School classes for children of all ages to learn about the love of God & holy Scripture. All classes are taught by experienced adult teachers who are also members of Northside Drive Baptist Church. Our church is committed to the safety of all children & adults; therefore, all classes are taught by two teachers, and all teachers have successfully passed a background check.

Here are our Sunday School Classes by age:

Kinder Class (Ages 3, 4, & 5 yrs. old): Our Sunday school class for our youngest children is offered in our Nursery, located in the PreK room. Children in this class participate in crafts, Bible stories, songs, videos and interactive lessons with teachers & peers to learn about God's love & holy Scripture.

Middler's Class (1st-3rd grades): Our Sunday school class for our children in 1st-3rd grades offers craft time, as well as a scripture story & study time. In this class, our children begin to deepen their faith in God, to build their relationship with Jesus Christ, to widen their understanding of Scripture, and grow their relationship with their peers through fun and fellowship.

Berean's Class (4th-6th grades): Our Sunday school class for our children in 4th-6th grades is called our Berean's class. In this class, pre-teen aged youth are given a place to delve into their faith and to grow by exploring Scripture and discussing with their peers & teachers. Bereans participate in Bible Drills each Sunday to have fun while building their familiarity with the Bible. Bereans also learn & grow their personal Christian faith each week through their own, unique curriculum: "*A Baptist Catechism*", written by NDBC Associate Pastor, Daniel Headrick.

During Worship at Northside Drive Baptist Church, a staffed nursery is provided to offer love and care for all children 3 and under. All Nursery rooms are always staffed with two trained staff members, who have also passed background checks. The NDBC Nursery is located on the ground level of our building, and is directly on your right, as you enter the church through the Port-a-co-chere entrance.

With each church season, our Kids Ministry puts on special events for families & children, each with its own special focus: mission, worship, fellowship & fun!

Take a look at some of the fun events we put on every year:

Family Mission Luncheons, benefitting our Missions Partners, like BCM (Buckhead Christian Ministry):



NDBC Trunk or Treat:



NDBC Annual Christmas Cookie Decorating Luncheon for Homebound members:



Christmas Eve Family Vespers Worship Service:



Fat Tuesday Family Luncheon & Ash
Wednesday Worship:



“The Great Feast”-Experiential Holy
Week Worship for Children & Youth:



NDBC Annual Easter Sunday Egg
Hunt-



Youth Lock-In & Fellowship Events-



NDBC Spring Fling & Kickball game: An Annual, Intergenerational Fellowship event-

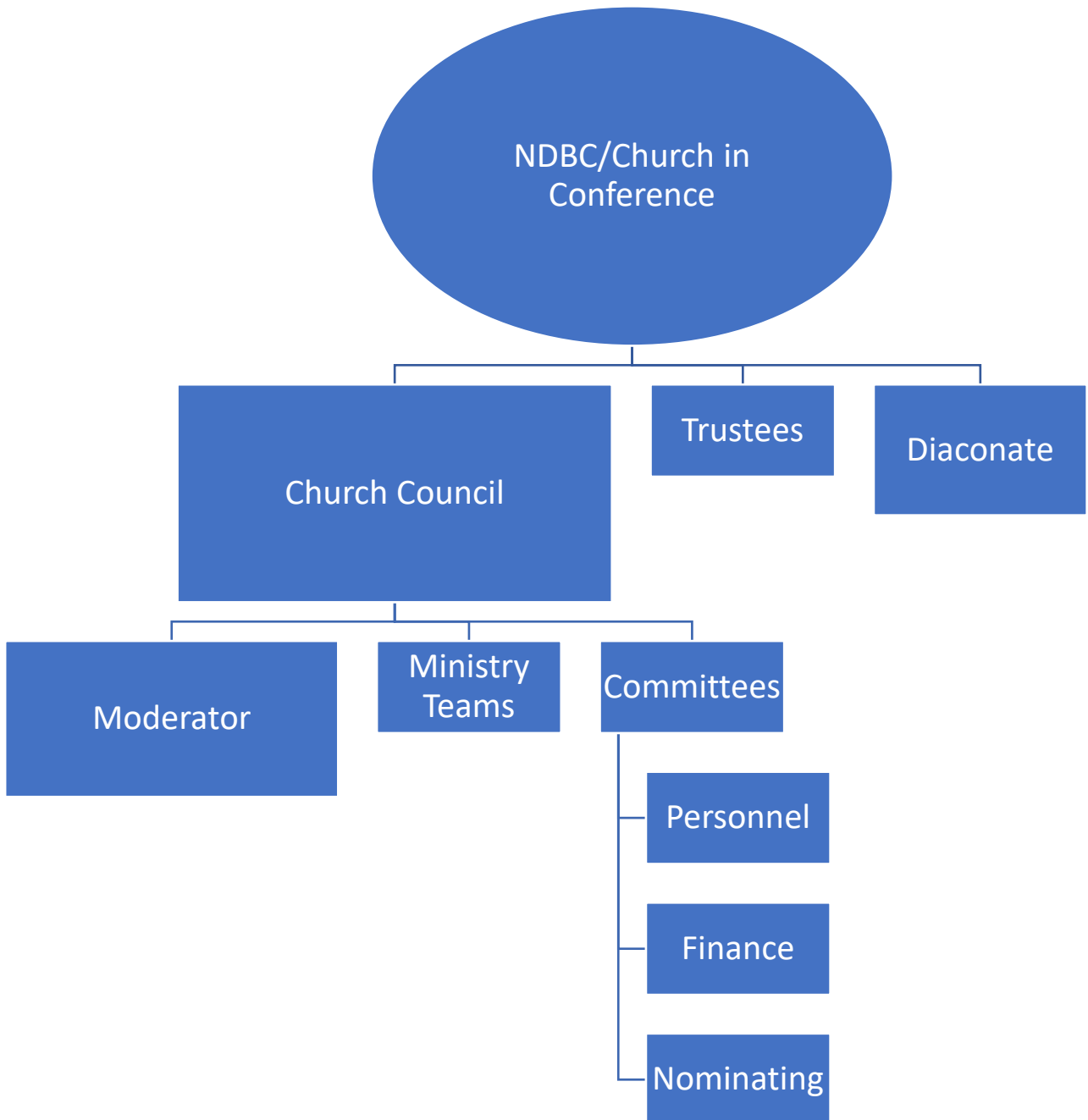


We hope that you and your family will join us for all the love, learning, fun and fellowship in the Northside Drive Baptist Kids Ministry!

For more information, please contact Andrea Johnson, Director of Children's Ministries: andrea@northsidedrive.org, or via phone at 404.237.8621.

How do we make decisions?

This organizational chart is an oversimplification of the various groups and entities that make decisions at NDBC, but is a good start for orientation.



You might be wondering: who makes the decisions around here, and how are they made? Baptists value local church autonomy which means *we*, the local church,

decide how we are going to govern ourselves. That means *you*, as a member, have a voice. Our Committee and Ministry Team structure is an attempt to give freedom to our members to serve in areas where they have gifts and interests.

Whenever the entire church is involved in making decisions at different levels, as opposed to a top-down hierarchy where a few make all the decisions, decision making is varied and complex. A quick explanation is that most decisions are made by the various Committees and Ministry Teams staffed by NDBC members with the assistance of clergy as liaisons.

In general, there are three administrative leadership Committees: (1) Personnel, (2) Finance, and (3) Nominating. Serving on the Personnel and Finance committees is a three-year commitment. Nominating Committee members, representing by-laws outlined areas of Church life, serve for a calendar year. Personnel handles all employment matters, performs employee reviews, and makes recommendations regarding personnel matters. Finance develops the annual budget, monitors financial health with the Treasurer, and solicits pledges. Nominating handles the nominations process for church officers, Finance and Personnel Committee members, and deacons for election by the Church-in-Conference at the church's annual meeting.

Each year, the Nominating Committee issues a report that lists all the Church Officers, the deacon body, Finance and Personnel Committee members, and our several Ministry Teams. This year's report is included in the Appendix. In short, decisions that relate to the areas covered by the Committees and Teams are made by those groups.

The Teams have budgets and make their own decisions regarding how to spend their budgets. They submit requests to the Finance Committee each year for budget amounts. And as you might imagine, decisions which impact the entire church body or are significant enough to warrant a larger discussion routinely go to the entire congregation for deliberation and a vote.

The Moderator leads meetings of the Church Council, a body which is composed of the Chairs of the various Committees and Teams. Church Council meetings are open and all are invited to attend. Three times a year (January, May, and October) there is a congregation wide meeting called the "Church in Conference." This is for matters like approving the budget, updating the church on the work and needs of staff and Ministry Teams, and special issues which require further deliberation.

Ministry Teams. Members at NDBC have a say in everything from the maintenance of the facilities, to the flowers during service, to our mission partners. Ministry Teams are voluntary groups that engage in the day-to-day tasks of the church's ongoing ministry in missions, outreach, hospitality and fellowship, worship, education, and management of church facilities to fulfill the vision of the church.

In the Spring of each year, the Nominating Committee begins seeking lay volunteers to staff these ministry teams. It is up to each team how often they will meet, what they want to accomplish, and how they will communicate. They elect a chair by May of each year.

- (1) **Adult Education.** Plans and evaluates the adult church school programs.
- (2) **Audio.** Runs the audio booth and videotapes the sermons during the morning worship service. Also covers weddings, funerals, and other special events.
- (3) **Care.** Provides and delivers meals that are coordinated through emails to the church families in times of joy (new babies) and challenge (extended illness).
- (4) **Children's & Youth.** Plans and evaluates the children's church school program and plans on-going activities for fellowship, education, and missions.
- (5) **Facilities.** Evaluates the overall maintenance of the church facilities.
- (6) **Flowers.** Plans and provides floral arrangements for worship and special services.
- (7) **Hospitality.** Coordinates and consults on church-wide meals and receptions.
- (8) **Landscape.** Oversees all the landscaping on the property.
- (9) **Marketing.** Develops and implements print, video, and website materials within an overall plan for advertising the church's programs and ministries.
- (10) **Membership Development.** Contacts visitors, cultivates prospects, and recruits new members, as well as coordinates activities to orient and integrate new members.
- (11) **Memorial Gifts.** Monitors funds given as memorials and ensures the donor's wishes are followed.
- (12) **Missions.** Studies, explores, coordinates, and publicizes all mission activities of the church.

- (13) **Paraments.** Changes the paraments to match the season of the church year and displays the appropriate paraments for weddings, funerals, memorial services, and ordinations.
- (14) **Triple E.** Plans senior adult activities and programs.
- (15) **Ushers.** Provides a spirit of hospitality at all worship services.
- (16) **Wedding.** Consults and supervises the wedding activities of members and non-members.
- (17) **Weekday Preschool.** Serves as a bridge between the Weekday Preschool and the church, discussing issues and concerns of both.
- (18) **Worship & Music.** Assists the staff in planning and evaluating new and existing worship services and music programs, as well as oversees the maintenance of the musical equipment.

How do we spend money?

How do we spend money at NDBC and where does our money originate? The majority of church revenue comes from the yearly contributions of members. We also receive funds from memorial gifts made by the estates, family members, and friends of a loved one. There are also endowment funds and trustee funds which are generally reserved for major capital expenditures on the facility and grounds.

Our budget is based on the pledges of members and supplemental sources of income like parking lot rentals, baseball field lease, the preschool, and endowed funds. When members pledge they are promising to contribute a specific amount on an annual basis to NDBC. Those promises are then factored into the numbers which generate our annual budget.

The budget is published each year for public review, and after it is approved by the Church Council, it then goes for a vote to the entire congregation in a called Church in Conference meeting the first quarter of each year. The approved budget for 2019 is included below.

What opportunities for spiritual formation are there?

Small Groups. Associate Pastor Daniel Headrick helps to lead two Young Adult small groups. One is a book study and is typically attended by young singles or couples in their 20s and early 30s. We gather once a month, rotating the location. We are reading Brian Zahnd's *Sinners in the Hands of a Loving God* in the first half of 2019 and will be reading a second book later in the year.

The second small group is typically attended by young adults in their 30s and 40s, rotates among members' homes, and will typically involve fellowship and food for an hour, and then a guided discussion on a spiritual formation topic for the second hour.

Contact daniel@northsidedrive.org if you are interested in joining either of these groups, or just want more information.

Church School Options on Sunday Morning. We meet for Church School from 9:30 to around 10:40 on Sunday mornings. Here are the current options for adults:

Allen-Davis Class (Room 203)

Our format is simple and delightfully scattered: We talk about anything we want to talk about, with as much participation as is possible. We talk about esoteric religious topics, new findings in biblical archaeology, old findings in Biblical archaeology, the art of pile-driving, books that were left out of the Bible, theoretical physics, Biblical modifications and translations of the Greek, geology, art, Old Atlanta, and absolutely anything else. Please join us, and bring your stories, your questions, your interests, and your controversies.

Teacher: Dr. Jim Mahaffey

Art & Soul Class (Room 202)

This class of mixed ages and stages emphasizes Bible study through resources rich in art, cultural history, and literature. Recent studies have included the role of water in the stories of Scripture, Reformation history and art, and a Bible study of how one is “Living the Questions” of faith in a fractured contemporary world.

Teachers: Rotating Teachers

Community: A Place to Connect (Room 201)

This Young Adult class asks how we, as Christians, live in the modern world? How do we, as a church, respond to current events happening in our surrounding community? Although there are many possible answers to these questions, this young adult community seeks to engage in conversation about being a Christian in the modern world. We live in a society where news is at our fingertips, but we don't always have a place to process events. Join us on Sunday mornings to process current events as they relate to scripture and our call to live out our faith in our daily lives.

Teacher: Dr. Karen Massey

Friendship Class: (Room 205)

A welcoming, close-knit community of senior women, this class studies scripture's application to living a Christ-centered life with particular emphasis on the seasons and lessons of the liturgical Church year.

Teacher: Mary Ann Hickman

Tired Parents Class (Room 207)

While open to all, this community consists mainly of tired parents who long for an hour of adult conversation about how to live out their faith as a partner, parent, and progressive Baptist in a busy and changing world. This year we ponder many questions. How do we interpret the Bible and live with integrity in the context of today's challenges? Who is Jesus? What is interfaith dialogue? How do we talk with each other about the hard issues? How can we better understand ourselves for growth in relationships and faith? How do we discover rest?

Teachers: Tim Getsay & David Bell