



DRUID
HILLS
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear wonderful friends and beloved community,

It is fair to say that 2021 was another year of topsy-turviness with unexpected challenges and surprising moments of joy and delight for our world, our nation and, of course, our lovely little congregation. We started the year still practicing strict Covid precautions and worshipping from home, unsure of when we would be able to return to in-person worship. Mid-winter Pastor Shelli headed out for her sabbatical, leaving the church in the hands of an extremely talented Session and a moderately nervous associate pastor. However, with your great support and boundless patience, we did just fine!

Over the first half of the year we continued at-home worship, had three very fun services on the lawn, and prepared ourselves for the return to the sanctuary on June 20. On that day we celebrated not only Pastor Shelli's return from her sabbatical, but also the congregation's return to our beautiful sanctuary for the first time in 15 months! While masking, distancing, and humming were unprecedented worship practices, you took it in stride and did all that was asked of you to keep one another safe. (Thank you, dear ones, for that!)

In late summer we welcomed our church fish, Fred Rogers, and he journeyed along with us through a marvelous worship series inspired by the teachings of Mr. Rogers. Covid proved to be fairly unshakeable as the Delta variant emerged, but it was no obstacle to God's amazing grace, which was on full display during the August baptisms of Grayson and Kai Merceron and Amelia Escobar's November baptism.

As the year went on we said goodbye to staff members Brian Adams, Danielle Wilson, and Dee Williams, but we kept on plugging and received a wonderful gift when the tremendous Mike Williams joined Team DHPC as our new Facilities Director. The biggest staffing change, of course, was Pastor Shelli's departure on December 5. Shelli's ministry at DHPC was full of beauty, creativity, and big dreams; she will surely be missed!

Shelli's move to Nebraska left me once again captaining the S.S. Druid Hills. And, despite having the Omicron variant nipping at our heels, together we celebrated a beautiful Advent and Christmas Eve and finished the year grateful for the gifts of wonder and joy found in the manger and full of hope and anticipation for future encounters with God in this special place.

I am so thankful for the amazing support you have given me, the overflowing grace with which you have responded to my missteps, and the laughter, tears, and hugs/elbow bumps you have shared with me. I am grateful for our shared journey together. I can't wait for the next chapter!

-Pastor Elizabeth



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Education is called to serve members and friends of Druid Hills Presbyterian Church of all ages. As the PC(USA)'s website eloquently states, we strive to "help individuals know what it means to be a Christian, guide people to tell God's story in relation to their own story, and prepare members to hear God's call to go and serve."



The Christian Education Team is pleased to have had another successful year. The ministry team, composed of Nicole Escobar, Lauren Merceron, Pete McGuire, and Gigi Muirheid, worked diligently and prayerfully to provide thoughtful and meaningful opportunities to all ages of the Druid Hills community. Mainstays of the CE program at DHPC, such as the Roundtable class, the Easter Egg Hunt, and Advent festivities, were well-received. The team has continued to work creatively to find the right design for our children and youth classes. The current design of first and third Sunday gatherings, Covid permitting, has worked well for families. Our 6th-8th graders continued to meet online on alternate Wednesdays and they look forward to continuing this in 2022. The team hopes that the youth will be able to attend a conference together this summer. The CE team strives to think creatively and act faithfully in how to serve the congregation. They are always open to new team members and new ideas!

BIG 3



- The CE Team organized a storytelling session and egg hunt for children on Easter Sunday. Margaret Ross read an Easter story and gobs of candy were hunted down. Fifteen children attended, from babies to middle schoolers, and participants of all ages had a wonderful time.
- Two online book groups were well attended and generated thoughtful conversation. They were the Lenten study of *The Cross and the Lynching Tree* and the summer study *Celebrating Black Joy* (with Mission Team)
- DHPC partnered with the Church at Ponce and Highland for a super fun creation themed Vacation Bible School. The children and education ministers from the two churches gathered for Bible stories, crafts, and fellowship for three Saturdays this summer.

Thank you to the adults who assisted with DHPC's in-person youth gatherings: Neely Simpson, who chaperoned a masked movie night; Bob Beard, who joined our young people for an outdoors game night; Anne Soileau, who helped solve the mysteries at the Stranger Things Escape Room; and Beth Thorn, oversaw the chaos while the youth served at the Pantry.



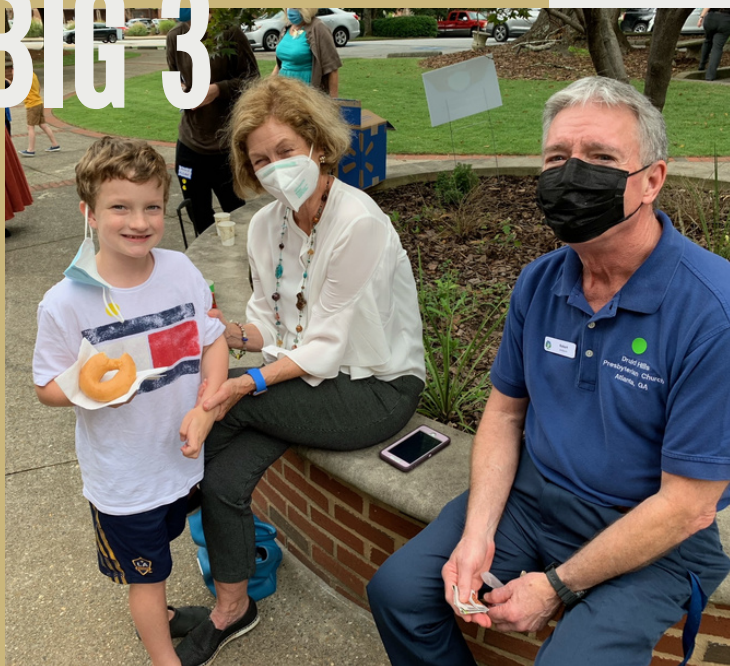
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

Congregational Life works to bring together the diverse members of Druid Hills Presbyterian Church in fellowship and community. CL also seeks to enrich the relationships among the members of the DHPC community by providing opportunities for laughter, listening, and love.



The Congregational Life Team's work to provide meaningful programming for DHPC members and friends continued to face significant pandemic related challenges. In addition, Congregational Life, in recent years, had difficulty successfully executing its ministry due to the large and varied number of programs CL oversaw. The pandemic exacerbated that challenge. Thus, the Session decided that it would be a better use of resources to dissolve Congregational Life into other ministry teams, including a newly established Board of Deacons. Going forward the ministry of the Congregational Life Team will be carried out by the Christian Education and Property and Administration Teams, as well as the deacons. The Congregational Life team has served the church well over the years and the church is grateful for their faithful ministry.

BIG 3



- In August several teams, including CL, worked together to create a Covid-safe Kickoff Sunday. Part of this was offering snow cones on the lawn. A perfect treat for a Georgia summer afternoon!
- The Congregational Life team assisted the CE and Worship teams in hosting and funding the Advent event. This year's event included a Christmas pageant, that was particularly exciting as it featured DHPC's four newest members: Grayson and Kai Merceron, Lily Simpson, and Amelia Escobar.
- Over the year members of the DHPC community were in need of care and CL made sure they received it! For example, Kirk, Anna, and Lily Simpson had a rough month of sickness after sickness, including Covid for all 3 of them. The congregation sent meals and cards and even made socially distanced visits all the way to Gwinnett County!

Thank you to the many members, past and present, who have supported the work of the Congregational Life Team. To all those who have made punch, delivered meals to the sick, prepared funeral receptions, organized retreats, sent cards, and a million other acts of hospitality and fellowship, thank you!



FINANCE

The Finance Team is called to be good stewards of the financial resources of Druid Hills Presbyterian Church. As the Book of Order denotes, the Finance Team prepares, with input from each team, the annual budget which determines the distribution of the congregation's benevolences and other revenue derived from church assets. The Finance Team also accounts for the proceeds of the revenue and the disbursements.

The Finance Team is composed of Linda Davis, (Treasurer), Donna Durden, Alma McFarland, Bob Beard and Betty McIntosh (Chair). The Team developed and refined the FY 2022 budget balancing pledges and other known revenue sources with the ministry needs of each of the ministry teams. Also, the Team closely monitored both income and expenses to ensure all ministry teams received financial information in a timely manner. Additionally, the Finance Team was actively involved in the successful 2022 stewardship campaign, which included mailing Christmas ornaments featuring the sanctuary's rose window to our members. Finance team members also worked together to count weekly contributions and prepare the bank deposits. Finally, per the Session's request, the Finance Team formed an investment subcommittee made up of Eric Dusenbury, (Chair), Rene Weese, and Betty McIntosh. This subcommittee researched and developed recommendations for investing and managing the bequest from the Charles Knox Estate.



- The Finance Team faced a major challenge during the last quarter of the year due to bookkeeper Joann Kearns incapacitating fall that kept her out of commission for several months. Joann's absence shifted a significant amount of work to church Treasurer Linda Davis. Thankfully, Linda's hard work allowed everything to stay on track!
- The Investment Committee developed and implemented a plan of action for investing and managing the significant bequest from the Charles Knox Estate. They reached out to BOA and to the Presbyterian Foundation for guidance on investment vehicles meeting DHPC's preferred standards, for historical data on expected returns, and other asset management information. After much due diligence, New Covenant, the investment management arm of the Presbyterian Foundation, was recommended by the Investment Committee and approved by the Session to invest and manage our funds.
- The Finance Team cheered on the amazing work of the Organ Restoration Task Force and they continued to raise considerable funds for the organ refurbishment. In June, the Finance elder, on behalf of the ORTF, signed the contract with A.E. Schlueter Pipe Organ, which allowed the ball to begin rolling for the actual work to begin.



Thank you to church Treasurer, Linda Davis, for all her hard work and the coaching she provided as Betty McIntosh grew in her role as Team Chair. Bob Beard, previous Team Chair, also gets a big thanks for his guidance. Additional thanks goes to Alma McFarland for her faithful work counting the church's weekly receipts.

MISSION



The work of the Mission Team team is to turn the church's eyes to the needs of the community, nation, and world that God is calling DHPC to address; to then prayerfully discern how to best use the gifts of the DHPC community to respond to that call; and, finally, to offer opportunities for the congregation to stay informed about and directly respond to those needs.

The Mission Team responded to God's call with both hands-on and financial support of partner organizations. Among the activities coordinated by the Mission Team were feeding ministries, such as preparing sandwiches monthly for the food insecure and preparing (monthly) and serving (bimonthly) meals for Mercy Community Church. Also, the Mission Team continued to expand the church's commitment to Earth care. This work was evident in the weekly environmental tip in the church bulletin; the online discussion of an environment-focused documentary; and the maintaining the on-site recycling station. The Mission Team also furthered the church's commitment to racial justice by continuing to place a monthly statement in the bulletin encouraging church members to take steps for equity for all and offering opportunities to partner with Emory Presbyterian in racial justice protests. In addition to these activities, the Mission Team oversaw the congregation's financial support of many organizations whose missions aligned with the values expressed in DHPC's advocacy statements on gun violence, homelessness, creation care, and racism. Using these positions for guidance, the team made financial gifts to nearly 20 different non-profits. This support, which was funded by the Mission Team's designated funds, was done in response to a call the Team felt to address unprecedented impacts of the pandemic. To learn more about the organizations that received gifts, contact Mission Elder Eric Dusenbury or Pastor Elizabeth.



- The Mission Team organized two mission opportunities supporting Memorial Drive Ministries. Before worship on Pentecost Sunday, church members supported our refugee neighbors by packing twenty backpacks with pens, pencils, paper, and other supplies to assist children with their back to school needs. On Kickoff Sunday, church members created "Laundry and Loo" boxes to provide supplies not covered by food stamps (laundry detergent, and baby wipes).
- The Mission Team continues to lead the charge to ensure Druid Hills Presbyterian Church is a certified Earth Care Congregation. This requires support from all of the ministry teams but the Mission Team oversees the effort. As part of this effort, the Mission Team expanded its recycling efforts by hosting Church Recycle Days where the congregation was able to bring in paint, chemicals, styrofoam, political signs, and small electronics. The Mission Team then made these items safely and properly recycled.
- As part of Faith Climate Action Week, the Mission team led a group that watched and discussed the movie *Kiss the Ground*. The movie focused on regenerative agriculture and its potential to address climate change while at the same time improving farming outcomes. The team reached out to neighborhood churches and, happily, a handful of folks outside of the DHPC community joined in the discussion.

When the Mission Team decided to prepare and serve meals for Mercy Community Church they were worried that a monthly commitment would be too much. Boy were they wrong! Thus, the Mission Team would like to thank all of the volunteers, members and non-members, who have made this program such a success!

PERSONNEL

The Personnel team is called to support the Druid Hills staff ensuring that each member feels they are a valued part of the DHPC ministry and to provide encouragement of the full use of the unique gifts and talents of each staff member. As the Personnel team completes its tasks they remain open-minded, fair handed, reasonable, and well balanced to broaden regular open communication between staff members, church leaders, and members. The team also works with the Session to build a healthy, just work environment.



Over the past year the work of the Personnel was full of ups and downs. The Team started the year off joyfully as they organized a socially distanced sanctuary staff appreciation event where staff received generous love offering gifts from the congregation. The Team also navigated the waters of several staff transitions, including the departure of DHPC Head of Staff Rev. Shelli Latham. While the transitions were challenging, the Team worked hard to continue to offer thoughtful care of the staff in all its many different configurations over the year. This included formulating a vaccination policy that decreased staff members' threat of exposure to Covid-19 at work; allowing adjusted schedules to help staff balance unprecedented family and work demands; and communicating in a timely and thorough manner the benefit options available through the PC(USA)'s Board of Pensions. In addition, two Personnel Team members, Letia Henson and Chris Escobar, served on the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee and worked diligently to find the right person for the next phase of the story of DHPC.

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- In accordance with Druid Hills Presbyterian Church's duty to provide and maintain a workplace that is free of known hazards, the Personnel team submitted to the Session a vaccination policy designed to safeguard the health of our employees and their families, our parishioners, visitors, and the community at large from infectious diseases such as COVID-19. The vaccination policy, which was passed unanimously by the Session, was shared with each staff member and contract employee, along with information about an option to request accommodation for religious or medical reasons.
- The Personnel Team responded to staff transitions and changing staff needs by restructuring positions where needed to better serve the church community, writing new detailed job descriptions, and ensuring that new hires received encouragement as they joined the DHPC community. Specifically, over the year, the new hires the Personnel Team welcomed were an Artist-in-Residence, an Interim Hand Bell Choir Director, a Communications and Hospitality Manager, and a Facilities Manager. The team also retooled the Associate Pastor's job description.
- Recognizing the increased cost of living brought on Covid-19, the Personnel Team submitted significant pay raises for the pastoral staff and increased the salaries/stipend for the Facilities Manager, the Communications and Hospitality Manager, and paid musicians. These increases made the compensation Druid Hills offers comparable to other area churches and communicated to the staff how valued they are by the church.

Thank you to our tremendous staff, which, at the close of 2021 consisted of Rev. Elizabeth Soileau Acton, Associate Pastor; Cliff Frierson, Organist; Dr. Tony McNeil, Artist-in-Residence; Mike Williams, Facilities Manager; and Denise Huewitt, Interim Hand Bell Choir Director. This wonderful group, along with staff members who have now moved on to new adventures, ushered DHPC through yet another pandemic year with flexibility, fortitude, and good humor.



PROPERTY & ADMINISTRATION

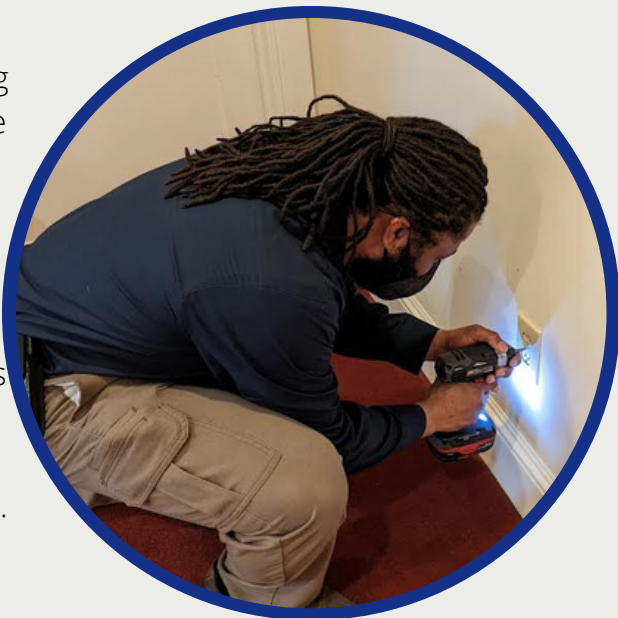
The Property and Administration team is tasked with maintaining the church's buildings and property, and providing the administrative office support to ensure that things run smoothly. The Team also seeks to share our bounty of resources with like minded groups that seek to fulfill the common goals and missions of the church.



The P&A Team, as always, faced both joys and challenges. In the joy category, the Team welcomed Mike Williams as Facilities Manager, who worked with the P&A Team, to keep the church building thriving. On the flip side, was the challenge of the mid year elevator breakdown. With the help of a great deal of expertise shared by Bruce Grawert, the P&A Team ended the year ready to choose a vendor and sign a repair and renewal contract, which will happen in early 2022. In addition to the regular work of the P&A Team, team members also assisted teams working on solar panel research and organ restoration work. Finally, the Team worked to assure that all tenants maintenance issues and hospitality requests were responded to in a skilled and timely manner, while also prioritizing the safety and cleanliness of the building.

BIG 3

- With significant assistance from Bruce Grawert, the team signed a contract to fix and update the church elevator, which broke in mid-September. This modernization will bring the building into the 21st century and allow the church to be accessible to all those who enter.
- The P&A Team, along with the church staff, oversaw the work of several film crews that used the DHPC campus for filming and/or logistics. This worked brought in over \$80,000.
- The Team completed an AV upgrade begun in response to Covid-19 in 2020. Cameras, funded by a member's generous gift, were utilized to offer high quality visuals to those worshipping at home. Similarly, a new soundboard that communicated better with the new AV system was installed. These wonderful new sanctuary accessories allowed people from across the world (literally!) or just down the street to join DHPC in worship each week via Facebook and Vimeo.



A big shoutout goes to Bill Armstrong whose tireless work on many of P&A's projects has been invaluable. In addition to his work at the church, Bill spent hours at home completing grant applications which brought in significant funding for improvement of the DHPC campus.

WORSHIP

The Worship Team partners with the pastors, music director, and organist to nurture the corporate worship life of DHPC, providing vibrant worship opportunities that are inspiring, celebratory, and centered on the Word of God.



The Worship Team continued to adapt worship to the ever changing COVID landscape throughout 2021. The church started the year with Zoom and recorded worship services only. As the weather warmed up DHPC held three in person worship services on the lawn to celebrate the ordination of elders, Easter, and Pentecost. In late June, the congregation returned to the sanctuary for in person worship with a livestream feed of the service available for those worshipping from home. Some of DHPC's normal practices, such as weekly communion, congregational singing, and music leadership from the choir, were modified to keep everyone safe as the COVID numbers fluctuated throughout the year. Through it all, the Worship Team strove to create meaningful worship experiences for every member of the congregation by providing different formats of worship that met individual comfort levels with in person contact.

BIG 3

- Throughout Lent DHPC explored how individuals come to God “again & again” with their prayers, dreams, hopes, and doubts. We worshiped together for Holy Week with a Drive Thru Palm Sunday parade and provided Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Zoom worship services in partnership with Emory Presbyterian Church. Easter was celebrated with a beautiful in person worship service on the lawn that included a live butterfly release.
- The new program year kicked off with a fall worship series called “Won’t You Be My Neighbor,” which explored the teachings of Mr. Rogers. As part of that series, the congregation welcomed a new member: Fred Rogers, an incredibly special betta fish.
- During Advent DHPC explored the theme “Close to Home” as we anticipated the birth of Jesus. Advent kicked off with a family luncheon, petting zoo, crafts, and the hanging of the greens.



Thank you to our faithful sound crew made up of Bob Beard, Ken Wideman, John Stewart, and Jane Weir. The sound crew faced the added challenge this year of learning a new sound system at the same time we moved back to in-person worship service with a livestream.

CLERK'S REPORT

Church membership

Members on the roll January 1, 2021 125

New members +2

Bob and Joan Battaglin

Deaths -3

Mary Cooper

Martha Moore

Steve Thaxton

Other -1

Neal Manners

Members on the roll December 31, 2021 -123

45% male, 55% female

Average worship attendance 40

Baptisms 3

Marriages 0

The Session (with classes) and its ministry teams, as of December 31

Rev. Elizabeth Soileau Acton, Moderator

Vivian Hodo (2021), clerk

Vacant- Property & Administration

Betty McIntosh (2022) - Finance

Eric Dusenbury (2022) - Mission

Missie Grawert (2021) - Personnel

Gigi Muirheid (2021) - Christian Education

Kirk Simpson (2021) - Congregational Life



Elders Emeriti

Cecile McRae Hooks

Belle Miller McMaster

PC(USA) Clergy who Worship with Us

The Rev. Tina McCormick -

Westminster School,

Chaplain and Teacher of Religion

The Rev. Peter Hausmann -

New Hope Presbytery (NC), member at large

Community Members Serving the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

Vivian Hodo

Nominating Committee,

Presbyterians for a Better Georgia

Elizabeth Soileau Acton

Dismantling Racism Committee, Class of 2024

Druid Hills Presbyterian Church, Inc.

President, Betty McIntosh

Vice President, Vacant

Secretary, Vivian Hodo

Treasurer, Linda Davis

Druid Hills Presbyterian Church 2021 Financial Review Summary Actual Performance

Revenues:

- \$ 281,915 Stewardship Pledges
- \$ 328,828 Tenant Rent/Utilities Reimbursement
- \$ 86,243 Facility Use - movie revenue
- \$ 36,000 Investment income
- \$ 21,659 Miscellaneous other
- **\$ 754,645 Total Revenues**

Expenses:

- \$ 2,419 **Congregational Life**
- \$ 4,594 **Christian Education**
- \$ 5,395 **Finance**
- \$ 27,929 **Worship**
- \$ 311,887 **Personnel**
 - \$ 242,029 Salaries
 - \$ 43,974 Benefits
 - \$ 13,316 Taxes
 - \$ 12,568 Expenses
- \$ 35,555 **Mission**
 - \$ 13,157 ICM
 - - Mercy
 - \$ 11,464 Local Mission Support
 - \$ 4,500 Presbytery and General Assembly
 - \$ 6,434 All other Mission support
- \$ 267,816 **Property and Administration**
 - \$ 35,334 Insurance
 - \$ 77,689 Maintenance and Operations
 - \$ 32,931 Office and Administrative
 - \$ 22,752 Security
 - \$ 70,630 Utilities
 - \$ 25,000 Capital Reserve
 - \$ 3,480 Presbytery Per Capita
- \$ - **NCT Church Development**

\$ 655,595 Total Expenses

\$ 99,050 Revenue over Expenses



**Druid Hills Presbyterian Church
2022 Budget Summary
Adopted by the Session January 19,2022**

Revenues:

- \$ 275,000 Stewardship Pledges
- \$ 341,301 Tenant Rent/Utilities Reimbursement
- \$ 120,000 Investment income
- \$ 66,500 Miscellaneous other
- **\$ 802,801 Total Revenues**

Expenses:

- \$ 2,350 **Deacons**
- \$ 7,525 **Christian Ed**
- \$ 5,500 **Finance**
- \$ 34,000 **Worship**
- \$ 363,096 **Personnel**
 - \$ 273,841 Salaries
 - \$ 48,490 Benefits
 - \$ 20,735 Taxes
 - \$ 20,030 Expenses
- \$ 40,770 **Mission**
 - \$ 6,600 ICM
 - \$ 6,000 Mercy
 - \$ 15,300 Local Mission Support TBD
 - \$ 4,500 Presbytery and General Assembly
 - \$ 8,370 All other Mission support
- \$ 265,198 **Property and Administration**
 - \$ 36,136 Insurance
 - \$ 64,040 Maintenance and Operations
 - \$ 30,650 Office and Administrative
 - \$ 24,000 Security
 - \$ 82,000 Utilities
 - \$ 25,000 Capital Reserve
 - \$ 3,372 Presbytery Per Capita
- \$ 84,000 **NCT Church Development**



\$ 802,439 Total Expenses

\$ 362 Revenue over Expenses