

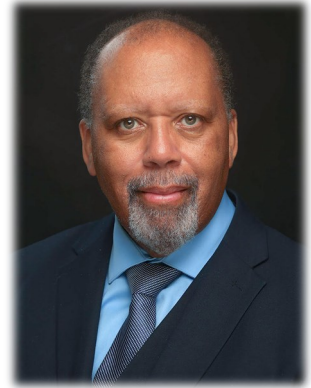
March 5, 2024



Dear Members and Friends of DUPC,

Hurray! We have some very exciting good news to share with you!

The Rev. Phil Davis has been approved by the Downtown Church Session and our Presbytery's Committee on Ministry as a stated supply pastor for DUPC! A stated supply pastor comes to assist with specific goals defined by Session, revisited annually, which at this time are to:



- Clearly understand who we now are as a church and congregation and define our mission – our reasons for being here.
- Identify how our current physical buildings contribute to and/or detract from our mission as we come to define it.
- Clarify options on what to do with our buildings, including the option of a possible sale.
- Determine the role that our endowment should have, given that we are drawing it down each year beyond its sustainability as a major revenue source.
- Repair and strengthen relationships throughout the DUPC community which includes staff and congregants, and more clearly define our relationships with building tenants.

Rev. Davis impressed us with, and his references confirmed, the simplicity of his message: the Christian mission is to glorify God and to be led by the Holy Spirit; churches should be in "the grace business." When making decisions on all matters and relationships, he asks important testing questions such as: "Is this love?" and "Does this cause suffering?"

From our interviews, it seems he will be a good listener and healer of relationships. He is bringing invaluable previous experiences as he has shepherded churches that were facing divisions and declining resources. His references testified to his warmth and pastoral presence, his grounding in spiritual beliefs, and his "strong ethical center." His sermons that we heard were inclusive and well-referenced; they incorporated current events without being political. As a leader he was "not top down" or "hard-charging" – he led through relationship-building and consensus-building. His references (several of whom know us well as a congregation) felt he skillfully reframes issues after listening and always strives to keep communications open.

We are very excited and thankful to have Phil Davis joining us in working through the challenges facing us internally and externally. As he said, "Our worship will affect how we go into the world." He begins officially on April 1, and plans to start meeting the staff beginning on March 25; he will preach his first service on April 7. Please join us on that spring Sunday to welcome him!

Your Session,

Sally Allison, Raina Boupavong, Nancy Brown, Sam King,
David Lee, Mary Rees, Bob Richane, Pat Tweet, Jim Vesper