

April 5, 1963

The Official Board of Duke Memorial Church had a called meeting on April 5, at 7:30 p.m., with Dr. John Glasson presiding. After prayer by the Pastor, the minutes of the last regular meeting were read and approved.

Dr. Glasson stated that the meeting had been requested by a number of church members to consider the problem posed by non-members who had been attending services in recent weeks. The congregation, as represented by the Board, it was felt, should be heard and should determine what action, if any, should be taken.

Mr. Bradshaw expressed the hope that any action would be in the best spirit and thinking possible and that the will of God would be done. His deep concern was reiterated when he repeated a statement made at the February Board meeting at which time he said he believed in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man and that anyone coming to the Church to worship should have that privilege. While he was not sure those persons attending services were coming for that purpose, he felt we were unable to pass judgment.

Until two weeks ago, according to Mr. Bradshaw, the visitors were sponsored by a group at North Carolina College; since then they had been sponsored by persons connected with Duke University, headed by Waldo Mead. Their continuing presence in the Church was creating tension, which many members felt should be relieved. He suggested three alternatives: (1) let things go as they are, but do it, not by doing nothing, but by making a decision that, even though many do not like the situation, we will live with it and rise above the deep feelings because it is the will of God; (2) express our disapproval of the way this particular situation has been handled and take what steps can be taken in the right way to bring an end to it; or (3) set up a committee of responsible persons, with power to act in case situations develop to make further difficulty in the life of the Church.

The meeting was then opened for remarks from the members who expressed a variety of feelings. The first motion was made by Mr. Alley and seconded by Mr. Umstead, as follows:

In regard to the weekly attendance of certain visitors at worship services of the Duke Memorial Methodist Church, two of your commissions have been making a study of the situation in an effort to decide what the Christian approach to the difficult problem confronting our church should be. We do not wish to turn anyone away from our church who truly comes to worship God. On the other hand, we do not feel that we should stand passively by while a few persons with avowed purposes other than those of prayerful worship, disrupt our church.

Attendance at church and membership in a church is, even though <sup>(a)</sup> very essential part of one's life, a voluntary activity and one which is not brought about by government control or by government direction. It is one area where the influence of God and Christ can be brought into our lives in an atmosphere of prayerful worship, and we the people of Duke Memorial Church maintain our right to continue with this pattern of church life unobstructed. It is therefore our contention in instances where either members within our church or others from without the church attempt to change this pattern, we will take necessary measures to discontinue these practices.

We should like to maintain the privilege of inviting anyone regardless of race, creed, or background to worship in our church, but we shall endeavor to resist attendance at this church by those who would do it in the interest of

The official basis of this Memorial... with Mr. Mason... the names of the last regular meeting were...

In January... the names of the last regular meeting were... should be taken.

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changing the patterns of life which we now follow in Durham, North Carolina, in the year 1963. Such attendance at church services by these individuals constitutes a constant disturbance of, and distraction in the worship service. Since these individuals have not seen fit to discontinue such attendance voluntarily, it is now resolved that they be met at such time as they may attempt to attend our church services, and informed that they are not welcome to attend these services, and that continued attempts to attend the services shall constitute a serious interference with the privilege of church worship by the other members of the congregation.

I move that the Chairman of the Official Board be empowered to appoint a committee with power to act carrying out the spirit and intents of the opinion expressed in this statement."

A substitute motion by Mr. Dunham, seconded by Mr. Highsmith, that the chairman and the Pastor appoint a committee of responsible persons from the Board to contact those people at Duke University promoting the visits and ask them to cease their activities, but at the same time to tell them that persons of any race or color would be permitted to worship in our church, was subsequently withdrawn.

Mr. Marshall spears, Jr., made the following second substitute motion: that the Board takes note of the discontent of some members of the congregation concerning the visits made at our Church services, but that the Board feels Duke Memorial Church is larger and stronger than any discordant group and, therefore, it should proceed to operate and maintain its activities in the same manner as in the past. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dozier and passed by a secret ballot 39 to 22.

Following an expression of appreciation by Mr. Bradshaw and the singing of one verse of "Bless Be the Tie that Binds," the meeting was dismissed with prayer by the Pastor.

Respectfully submitted,

*Charlotte Corbin*

Charlotte Corbin, Secretary.

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the progress of the work done during the year. It also mentions the various committees and their work.

The second part of the report deals with the financial position of the organization and the various sources of income.

The third part of the report deals with the work done by the various committees and their reports.

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