

**Yates Baptist Church  
Called Business Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, February 19, 9:35 am, Tabernacle  
Submitted by Laura Trout, Church Clerk**

**Call to Order:** Linda Mercer, Deacon Chair, at 9:35am

**Motions**

1) FADIC Financial Team – Mike English

The Facilities Development and Implementation Ad Hoc Committee (FADIC) Financial Team makes a motion that Yates Baptist Church accept the financing commitment for a Construction Permanent Loan from the North Carolina Baptist Foundation Financial Services Group dated January 9, 2017. This loan will be for a maximum of \$2,800,000 for 25 years at an interest rate of 4.9 percent adjustable every five years. The maximum adjustment in each five-year period is 5 percent with a maximum of 5 percent increase in the first ten years. This motion is intended to authorize the chairperson of the deacons to sign all documentation in order to secure this financing and legally bind Yates Baptist Church.

- The advantage of the NC Baptist loan is that they allow for longer loans
- There will be reassessments of the interest rate every 5 years
- The FADIC Financial Team is also evaluating a bond loan that might be possible, but not right now

Questions asked:

- Could interest go up to 9.9%? - Yes.
- Is the increase in the interest only on interest or on loan total? - On loan total remaining.
- Do we know how much we (the church) will owe per payment (monthly/weekly)? - Loan amount will likely not be as much as 2.8 Million, so we won't know the payment until we know the exact amount of the loan.
- Can we afford this? - This is the best financing option we can get to pay what the church has already approved to spend on the construction.
- Why not a fixed rate? - No one offered us a fixed rate and fixed rate loans take longer. Again, bond financing may be helpful. FADIC Financial Team is evaluating.
- Is there a penalty for pre-payment? - No.

Vote called: Approximately 100 people voted for the motion while 2 opposed.

**Motion carries.**

## 2) Deacons – Anita Miller, Deacon Secretary

Acknowledging that the unity of Yates Baptist Church is of utmost priority, the deacon body, with the support of the Senior Pastor and ministerial staff, recommends the church approve the following –

- 1) That the early (8:30am) service be continued and the Senior Pastor and ministerial staff be given the leeway to modify the format and/or worship style of the service in a way that considers the resources needed, and maintains the energetic and vital worship experience that meets the high standards the Yates Baptist Church congregation has come to expect; and
- 2) That the deacons be authorized to develop and implement an intentional growth strategy for the church with emphasis on outreach, evangelism, spiritual formation, and missional involvement.

In accordance with the By-Laws, the Deacon Secretary, Anita Miller, presented the motion above.

Because the motion was coming from a committee, no second was required.

Linda Mercer, the Deacon Chair, stated the Deacon body goal is Unity of the Congregation and to act in the best interest of the congregation. The survey responses were evaluated and a summary provided as an overview of the survey results. Specific responses to the survey were not going to be released as the data is considered confidential. Overall, the survey showed that a significant number of families do support the early service and a greater number, most of whom are not regular early service attenders, don't see a need for it. Mrs. Mercer further stated that the wisdom of the deacons is that continuing with the early service, with changes that take into account the resources needed to do it, and structuring it to accomplish outreach goals, is the course the church should pursue at this time.

Questions asked/Statements given:

- Was there a question on the survey on Yes or No to the 8:30 service? - There was a question with multiple answers.
- Wasn't Outreach a primary goal of the original plan for the early service - Yes, but not much has been done in actions on this goal. No goals established for re-evaluation. Need benchmark data.
- Do we have statistics on attendance? - About 18% of total worship attendance in 2016.
- How many volunteers have to attend in order to support the early service? - 15 in the full orchestra, 2 child care workers plus others as needed, and 3 ushers
- Don't believe separate worship styles supports unity - don't like this idea.

- Prefer motion not be vague on ministerial staff leeway to change service style and outreach portion seems no different.
- Does attendance numbers include staff, family, children, etc.? - Cannot determine through current data.
- Population desires new styles of worship - need to move forward.
- Early service supports family desires, possibly use lay leaders. Two services give new possibilities, others could sing/play instruments.
- Per 2010, we stated that the new service should be more successful, but seems like it is less successful - should reduce necessary volunteers.
- Has attendance been increasing or static? - Linda read the average numbers for the months of 2016 - static
- Motion is not specific enough.
- Shannon Read motioned that the motion be tabled. Seconded by Richard Pickett.
  - 33 people voted to table
  - 39 people voted not to table
  - **Motion to table the original motion did not carry**
- There is a lot of dedication from those who attend the early service. Trust deacons and staff to do the right thing.
- How do people at different services get to know each other?
- Today was a great day of worship at the 8:30 led by lay leaders.
- Early service can provide First Fruits of the day for some people.
- Some people can't attend the 11am service and can get to know people in Sunday school.
- Is vote only to change style or end 8:30 service? - Motion is to continue service but allow ministers to change style of service. If voted down, 8:30 service will continue as it is now.
- There is a different feel in the 2 services...feel more like a family in the early service.
- Motion doesn't end 8:30 service, just to change style.
- Ministers/staff/deacons should be able to change style.
- Emphasis on outreach should be a priority.
- If we vote no, are we voting to stop 8:30 service? - No.

Church Parliamentarian (Doug Wheeler) and Linda Mercer had private discussion.

**Linda Mercer on behalf of the deacons withdrew the motion.**

Adjournment by Linda Mercer

Yates Baptist Church Called Business Meeting  
Sunday, February 19, 2017, 9:35am, Yates Tabernacle

February 6, 2017

Dear Yates Family:

Subject: Deacon Early Service Evaluation and Recommendation

First, the deacons would like to thank you for your patience as we have prayerfully and very deliberately evaluated the effectiveness of the Yates early service and future options. Over this time, we have relied on the words of James in chapter 1, verse 5: "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

Attached are two documents -

1. A chronology of actions taken concerning the early service beginning with the Team 24/7 study in 2008 and ending with a summary of the deacon evaluation completed in January 2017
2. A motion that will be presented to the church for approval at a Called Business Meeting on Sunday, February 19, 2017, at 9:35am.

Thank you for your prayerful attention to this recommendation as Yates continues to seek to fulfill its vision to "bring people into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and encourage each other toward spiritual maturity."

Believing and Trusting HIM,  
Linda Mercer, Deacon Chair

## **CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIONS PERTAINING TO EARLY SERVICE**

### **2008 – Deacons sponsored a Team 24/7 Study**

Purpose was to “examine the ministries of the church to more effectively reach and disciple people for the sake of the Gospel.” One area examined was Worship. One recommendation was for deacons to establish a Worship Services Team to “explore an alternative number and schedule of worship services with the intent of providing a choice of service times with approximately the same blended-style worship service and the same sermon at each service.”

**November 2008** - The church accepted the Team 24/7 recommendations

### **April 2010 – Deacons established a Worship Study Team**

The study team concluded that –

- There is sufficient evidence based on the experience of other churches to conclude that adding a second service results in overall growth in attendance, giving and missional involvement.
- The two primary reasons that are applicable to Yates for adding a second service are: 1. Outreach 2. Space [Note: While “Convenience” was not listed as a primary reason, it is mentioned in the report as a reason given in church interviews performed during the study.]
- Churches who make a full commitment to “equal” worship services are more successful
- Establishing two services will require a strong commitment from key individuals (e.g., musicians, childcare workers, etc.) to be successful
- Churches with second services have not experienced significant issues with church unity or community because of proactive measures taken to enhance joint fellowship and worship

The study team made the following recommendations:

1. Establish a second Sunday morning worship service beginning in the fall of 2010
2. The Sunday morning schedule would be: 8:30-9:30 Worship Service, 9:45-10:45 Sunday School, 11:00-12:00 Worship Service
3. Both worship services should be as similar in content and style as possible allowing for some variation depending upon the desires of the congregation and the capabilities of the staff and support groups
4. A Worship Team should be established to recruit necessary workers to support the second service, create a communication plan to publicize the new service to the community, create a plan to manage parking, and to plan the logistics of the new service
5. Input should be gathered through a church-wide family meeting and/or survey prior to a church vote on the second service proposal
6. Enlist commitment from current church members to attend the early service on a regular basis as a missional opportunity
7. Actions should be planned to ensure that unity and community between worship service attendees is maintained and enhanced

**June 2010** – The church approved a recommendation from the deacons to begin a second worship service. “The service will be at 8:30 am starting this fall.”

**September 2011** - Staff report to Deacons by then Senior Pastor, Don Gordon, regarding feedback about the early service. Overall impression was that “the addition of the second service has met its objective with minimal disruption or negative implications.” The report addressed the following areas –

1. Attendance – “about a 5 percent increase in attendance on average per Sunday.”
2. Sunday School – enables “a strong nucleus of church members to be present and early in their Sunday school classes” and “a higher level of energy” exists during Sunday school.
3. Parking – “problems have been diminished”
4. Music – “The orchestra has demonstrated a high level of commitment by playing at both services. This has helped us maintain a high level of quality at both services.”
5. Ushers – “The ushers are growing into their role . . . Our ushers are working in teams and sometimes they are willing to stay for both services.”
6. Childcare - Our people are to be commended for their commitment to provide high levels of childcare at both services.
7. Tardiness – identified as an area to be strengthened, “to encourage people who attend the early service to be there on time.”
8. Fellowship – “Fellowship has been strengthened in small groups because of earlier and more enthusiastic Sunday school attendance. There is more inter-classroom communication on the third floor of the educational building . . . “ In order to address concern of feeling of an “empty sanctuary” because attendance was split, balcony was closed off and areas of pews were “roped off.”

**2015** – Staff requested deacons conduct evaluation. Evaluation was not done due to emphasis on construction/renovation project.

**February 2016** – Staff requested deacons perform evaluation.

**March 2016** – Deacons decided to delay evaluation until after Growing God’s House capital campaign

**July 2016** – Deacons established Early Service Evaluation Team. The team was tasked with -

1. Determining the effectiveness of the early service to achieve the goals stated when the service was established, and
2. Considering options regarding changing, improving, retaining or decommissioning the early service.

**October - November 2016** – Early Service Survey of church congregation

**November 2016** – Early Service Survey results to deacons

## January 2017 – Deacon Evaluation Summary

In performing the evaluation, the deacons reviewed the previous actions described in this document, the early service survey results, as well as other areas relevant to the early service.

### Observations from historical documentation:

- The requirement for “equal” services with the same “blended style” and similarity in content was confirmed.
- The primary goals of “Outreach and Space” were confirmed while noting that the Team 24/7 study also mentioned goal of “providing choice of service times.”
- No one participating in the evaluation was aware of a communication plan to publicize the new service to the community.
- The commitment of those in the orchestra, ushers, and child-care workers was commended in the September 2011 staff evaluation.
- Maintaining church unity and community has remained a challenge, although in the past couple of years there has been more intentional emphasis on church-wide fellowship.

### Analyses of Early Service Survey:

- Yates places a high importance and priority on worship as reflected in the number (142) of survey responses received.
  - About a third of respondents identified themselves as early service attenders with a slight majority of these being in the 40-59 age demographic
  - About two-thirds identified themselves as 11:00am service attenders with about three-fourths of these being in the 60+ age demographic
- Early Service
  - There is strong support for the early service among those who attend it. It has become an important worship opportunity for a number of Yates members and attenders.
  - Early service respondents supported continuing it, either as is, or with changes.
  - A strong number feel the service has provided families with flexibility and choice, which is especially beneficial to young families.
  - Some attenders describe the early service as a more relaxed and intimate worship experience, which are desirable qualities for them.
  - A significant number indicated eliminating the early service would impact their Yates attendance, participation, and/or stewardship.
- Goals
  - Outreach - Respondents did not feel this goal was achieved.
  - Space and Parking Issues - Respondents did feel this goal was met.
  - Convenience/family schedules – Even though this was not one of the initial stated goals, it is clearly the strongest goal being met.
- Continuation of early service
  - A majority of respondents indicated the early service should be discontinued, either temporarily or completely. However, there were only a few who felt passionately or strongly about this, in comparison to those who want it continued.
  - Resources Required – Respondents felt this should be a consideration in maintaining the early service.
  - Unity – It was not felt unity had been enhanced. Some felt it had not been harmed.

- Volunteers
  - An equal number of volunteers stated the early service is and is not a positive use of their gifts.
  - Some volunteers' needs to serve in both services had become burdensome and stressful on their family.
- Overall Comments
  - The comments submitted expressed passionate, strong, pointed, and eloquent opinions about many issues, both relevant and not relevant to the early service.
  - Many comments were obviously well thought out and visionary, and some reflected the emotion with which this evaluation was viewed.

Other Considerations:

1. Church unity of purpose and harmony are a priority in any decision.
2. The church is in the midst of a major construction/renovation/capital campaign project, which will culminate in transition and change.
3. Church has not placed emphasis on "outreach" as recommended by original Worship Study Team.

Conclusions:

One of the roles of Yates Deacons as described in the Deacon Handbook is that we are to be "unifiers." It is with the ultimate goal of unity in mind, that we, with the support of the staff, prayerfully offer the recommendations below. The deacons view this as a reasonable opportunity at this time and feel it will enhance church unity of purpose and commitment to Yates. The early service, though not resulting in more effective outreach to date, has given options to families and those needing flexible worship times for personal and work schedule reasons. In its current format, it has, however, put an extra burden on the volunteers who serve. The intention is that by removing the requirement for the early service to replicate the 11 o'clock service, some of this burden will be relieved.

While the emphasis of this evaluation has been on the effectiveness of the early service, the tone as well as the content of the comments received on the survey have clearly exposed an overall need to work through a visioning process with an accompanying intentional emphasis on outreach. It is also recognized that a major element of outreach is evangelism and spiritual growth.

Recommendation:

1. That the early (8:30am) service be continued, and the Senior Pastor and ministerial staff be given the leeway to modify the format and/or worship style of the service in a way that considers the resources needed, and maintains the energetic and vital worship experience that meets the high standards the Yates Baptist Church congregation has come to expect; and
2. That the deacons be authorized to develop and implement an intentional growth strategy for the church with emphasis on outreach, evangelism, spiritual formation, and missional involvement.

Early Service Evaluation Recommendation  
January 2017

Acknowledging that the unity of Yates Baptist Church is of utmost priority, the deacon body, with the support of the Senior Pastor and ministerial staff, recommends the church approve the following -

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- 2.) That the deacons be authorized to develop and implement an intentional growth strategy for the church with emphasis on outreach, evangelism, spiritual formation, and missional involvement.

Comments:

The above recommendation is viewed as a reasonable opportunity at this time. It is believed it will enhance church unity and commitment to Yates. The early service, though not resulting in more effective outreach to date, has given options to families and those needing flexible worship times for personal and work schedule reasons. In its current format, it has, however, put an extra burden on the volunteers who serve. The intention is that by removing the requirement for the early service to replicate the 11 o'clock service, that some of this burden will be relieved.

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Yates Baptist Church Called Business Meeting

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