

2009
Senior Pastor
Nominating Committee

personal biographies

Prepared for:
Annual Congregational Meeting
March 29, 2009

The National Presbyterian Church
4101 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

www.NationalPres.org



Margery S. Bernbaum

I was born and grew up in Northern New Jersey. I lived in the same house from birth until I left for college. I married shortly after college, and my husband, John, and I had three children “from scratch” and raised my sister’s six children after her and her husband’s untimely deaths. We have lived in the DC area since 1965; we joined the church in 1995. Our children have blessed us with 13 grandchildren.

I was truly blessed to be raised in a family where Christ reigned. I was the youngest of three children and we were very active in the Christian Reformed denomination. The church in which I grew up was doctrinally sound and filled with people who loved Christ and also loved me—I knew that! There was never a time in my life when I didn’t know Christ loved me, but there have been and continue to be special times (a Billy Graham crusade attended when I was 13, reading Keith Miller’s *A Taste of New Wine*, Bible study with Christian friends in Vienna, and others) when my understanding and commitment have grown substantially and the way I lead my life has changed. I love NPC because it is strong in the essentials of the faith and, like my childhood church, it is filled with people who love the Lord and show their love for each other.

During my time at NPC, I’ve been active in a number of Sunday School classes, including Wrestlers and the women’s Bible study class. I was also an usher for several years, worked on the annual retreat committee several times, served as a deacon for six years (secretary for two years, and thus on the leadership committee), and a member of the Nominating Committee on three separate occasions. In January, I began a third term as deacon.

My undergraduate degree (history/political science) is from Calvin College. Most of my professional life was spent managing international student programs for the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities (CCCU). I retired in 2007, but continue to be active in international Christian ministries.



John Gordon

I was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and moved to the Washington, D.C. area in 1999. My wife, Allison, and I have four children ranging in age from five to 17. All our children are being raised in the church. We have been members of NPC since 2000. I was raised in a secular Jewish household before becoming a Christian in 2000. My wife was raised Southern Baptist.

The blissful state of agnosticism during my early career changed with a dream I had in 1999. In the dream, I was in a small boat on a storm-tossed sea, and was panicked. My sole companion on the boat placed his hand on my shoulder and told me not to worry and that everything would work out. I knew that man was Jesus. Not long after that, my son, Seth, became acutely ill. Although, as a physician, I knew Seth would recover, I found myself emotionally and spiritually bankrupt. As I spent several sleepless nights on the floor of the ICU waiting room, I prayed for strength and listened to God’s message. It was clear that I needed to follow the path to where my Savior was waiting.

We began attending NPC, and Dr. Barnes helped me explore aspects of Judaism and Christianity for over a year. After being baptized, Dr. Barnes introduced me to the congregation as a “Jewish Presbyterian.” Our three children were soon baptized and we were blessed with a fourth child in 2003. This spiritual journey has been profoundly personal. While life continues to have stress and disappointment, I know that I am not alone; Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, is with me.

While professional and family requirements are demanding, we have steadfastly supported NPC. I have helped teach third, fourth and fifth grade Sunday School, served as a host family for a Summer Program for Kurdish teenagers, and served as a marriage mentor.

I earned a BA in biology from Princeton University in 1985, and an MD from Duke University Medical School in 1989. Currently, I am Co-Director of Dominion Fertility, and a Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at The George Washington University.



Carrie Ivey-Grossmann

I was born in Atlanta, Georgia and grew up in Marietta and Carrolton, Georgia. I started attending NPC when I moved to Washington, D.C. in 2002, and joined in 2003. I met my husband, Luke, at NPC.

I was raised in a Southern Baptist household where our weekly activities were centered on the church and our faith. As the youngest of three sisters, I watched as my mother shepherded our family and nurtured and guided our faith. She encouraged us to consider how our actions reflected our relationship with Jesus Christ and encouraged us to live out our faith in service. I joined First Presbyterian Church of Rome, Georgia during my freshman year of college while seeking a church which emphasized biblical teaching. After graduating from college and relocating to Tenleytown, I discovered NPC.

Luke and I attend the 11:00 worship service and participate in the Life Builders Sunday School class. I have led a college ministries class, am a Greeter, and have helped to plan and execute two NPC Romantic Dinners. Luke and I are chronologically reading through the Bible and studying John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

I earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Shorter College, Rome, Georgia, and a Master of Education degree in Student Affairs from Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia. I currently work as Coordinator of Marketing and Admissions Counselor for Regent University.



Alease Johnson

I was born in Tennessee and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. I have three grown sons, all of them Christians. I joined NPC in 1991, after moving here from Ohio.

I came from a Christian home; my mother was a Methodist, and my father was a Baptist. I have been a Christian since childhood, and renewed my relationship with Christ after some adult life struggles, including a divorce. I have always attended church and been active in various ministries. I attended Fairmount Presbyterian Church, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, prior to coming to National. I love that this church is a community of believers. I know I am living out what the Lord has called us to do in Scripture. I love ministry to others and sharing the Gospel.

I have served as a deacon (not at NPC), and an elder, and have participated in a number of pastoral nominating committees, including the one which nominated Doug Learned and Eunice McGarrahan. I have participated in adult education Sunday school (including Wrestler's for about 10 years), and am currently a fifth grade Sunday School teacher. I have served on the Middle East Committee and participated in marriage mentoring. As an elder, I chaired the Missions Council Care teams and the Congregational Care Council; I also served as the elder for Older Adult Ministry. I was a volunteer counselor in the NPC Counseling Center, and later served as interim director for three years. I have completed Stephen minister's training. I have served on various committees in the women's ministry and have been a group leader for women's and church-wide retreats. I am a past president of the Business and Professional Women's Guild. I have also been in the choir for five years, and sing for special events. Finally, I have been active in Wednesday Night Alive events.

I have a Master's Degree in Social Work from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. I am presently employed as the Assistant Director of Social Work, in the Outcomes Management Department, at Suburban Hospital.



Tom Morgan

I was born and grew up in Peoria, Illinois. My wife, Kathryn, and I have four children and eight grandchildren located all over the country. I first attended NPC as a student in 1963. Returning to Washington later in my career, I joined in 1989.

I grew up in the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Peoria and have been active in Presbyterian churches wherever I have lived. I served as an elder and Associate Pastor Nominating Committee member in the First Presbyterian Church in Urbana, IL, and the Central Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. Jesus Christ and His church provide a core for all my life and work.

At National, I have served as a trustee and member of the Personnel Committee. I participated in a regular discussion group with other lawyers and later taught a Sunday School class on how a lawyer can try to be an authentic Christian. Kathryn and I have served as marriage mentors and in the nursery.

I received my BA degree from Northwestern University and JD from the University of Chicago Law School. I have been a law professor for my entire career, first at the University of Illinois and then as dean of the law school at Emory University. My primary teaching and research focus have been antitrust law and lawyers' ethics. I have served as president of the Association of American Law Schools and currently hold the Oppenheim chair at the George Washington University Law School.



George R. Nethercutt, Jr.

I was born and raised in Spokane, Washington. My wife, Mary Beth, and I have two children, now in their 20's. Our son, Elliott, a recent college graduate, serves as an NPC usher. Mary Beth is a Stephen Minister. We joined NPC in 1996.

Raised by two loving parents in Spokane, my denomination of choice was the Congregational Church during my youth, including college and law school years. Following our marriage in 1977 and the birth of our children in Spokane, our young family affiliated with First Presbyterian Church there. After I was elected to Congress in 1994, we moved to the Washington, DC area and actively sought a church home. We were attracted to National by the pulpit message and congregational warmth. It has been a blessing in our lives to be part of a Christ-centered, grace-giving congregation, and a church home that encourages us to strengthen spiritual understanding and active commitment to God. Our church has been blessed by God with a spirit of opportunity to grow in a community of faith.

I have been proud to serve NPC as an elder, member of the Interim Search Committee which resulted in the current affiliation of Rev. Earl Palmer, a Strategic Planning Committee member, a regular greeter, a Marriage Mentor, and a committed parishioner.

I am an attorney, educated at Washington State University and Gonzaga University Law School. Since 2005, I have been part of a Spokane, WA law firm. I also have a consulting firm in Washington, DC, serve as a director on several corporate boards, and continue as United States Chairman, Permanent Joint Board on Defense-US/Canada. I am also Chairman of the George Nethercutt Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping college students obtain civics and leadership education and training.



Keith Patman

I was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up in Maryland. I am a divorced father of two: Lauren (25, married and living in Maryland), and Bret (21, living at home). My grandson, Aiden, is five years old. I joined NPC in 1998.

Early on, the Lord led me toward a career in education. From 1977-84, I taught English, art, and drama at the Ben Lippen School, a Christian college preparatory school in Columbia, South Carolina. The Lord redirected my educational focus to Bible translation, focusing on Africa. Since 1982, I have been a member of Wycliffe Bible Translators. From 1987-95, I worked on translating the Bible into the Nugunu language of Cameroon, West Africa. For many years, I have made regular trips to Central Africa to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ through various translation projects.

I have been honored to serve NPC. I served on the Missions Council and have made multiple mission trips to Africa. As an elder, I served as Communications Chair. I was also a member of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee that brought Pastors Learned and McGarahan to NPC.

I received a BA from Bryan College. Currently, I am working with Wycliffe to produce a *Translator Notes* series in French to assist mother-tongue Bible translators in many African languages.



Ann Reid

I was born and grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. My husband, Proctor, and I have been married for 26 years. We joined the church in 1992, and all three of our children have grown up in the church.

Both of my parents considered themselves refugees from rather severe Protestant upbringings, and made only half-hearted efforts to introduce my brother and me to church. As a result, I grew up with a negative attitude to religion, though my parents did instill a strong sense of responsibility to serve humanity generously. After years living happily as a secular humanist, no one could have been more surprised than me when one of Bryant Kirkland's sermons led me to explore Christianity. A few months later, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, and was baptized at NPC in 1992. The members of NPC have truly been the body of Christ for me; from them I have learned who Jesus is and all the different ways he loves and cares for us. At NPC, I have witnessed the fruits of the Spirit at work in His people and have been blessed time and again.

At National, I have taught high school Sunday school for 10 years. Proctor and I have been marriage mentors, on Care teams, and co-deans of the church retreat. I served on the Music Council. I have also participated in many musical activities at the church, including playing the piano and singing in the Crossroads band and at church retreats. I have provided musical support to children's worship, youth musicals and "Youth Sundays".

I earned a BA from Simon's Rock Early College in 1979 and an MA from Johns Hopkins University in 1981. As a molecular biologist, I have spent most of my career at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology deciphering the genetic sequence of the 1918 influenza virus. Currently, I work at the National Academy of Sciences (Board of Life Sciences) where I convene committees of experts to provide advice to the government on biological research issues.



Matthew Dow Teems

I was baptized and grew up in the Baptist Church near Annapolis, Maryland. In the mid-1990's, my wife, Kristianne, and I began looking for a place to worship. After our first Sunday at NPC, we knew we were home. Since then, we have had three children, Madeleine, Caleb, and Owen – all active in the children's ministry. I grew in my faith and walk with Christ in a small group Bible study at National and now study on Thursday mornings with the Georgetown Men's Bible study.

In 2002, I began a five year term on the NPC Board of Trustees. In that role, I served on the coordinating and nominating committees, and chaired the budget and finance, strategic planning, and executive committees. I was also President of the Board of Trustees. In 2008, I chaired the NPC Board Governance Implementation Committee that integrated the Trustees and Session into a unicameral board and drafted our current by-laws. Outside of NPC, I reach Washington's inner-city youth with the message of Christ through work as Chairman of the Board of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA).

Between Sundays, I run the Teems, Kokolakis Group, a wealth management advisory team for Merrill Lynch. Prior to moving my practice to Merrill, I studied business and economics at the University of Maryland and earned certification by the CFP Board of Standards.