

BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/11/2020

Submitted by: Sanjay Cherian

In Attendance (via Zoom videoconference):

Name	Role	Voting?
Catherine Merrill	Minister	N
Ann Desrochers	Moderator	Y
Carol Cherian	Fundraising	Y
Sanjay Cherian	Clerk	Y
Susan Haight	Trustees	Y
Amy Razzaboni	Outreach	Y
Bill Dunbar	Finance	Y
Rena Duncklee	Treasurer	Y
Candy Tiner	Publicity	Y
Jill Aitken	Deacons	Y

The meeting started at 8:03 am with a prayer from Rev Cath. We had a voting quorum.

Calendar Review

- Senior luncheon confirmed for Oct 17th
- THM is Oct 30th

Review of Prior minutes

- Candy moved to accept the minutes as written & revised, Bill seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Stewardship

- This year's stewardship cycle started last week. We will have a pledge form in the bulletin every week. Rev Cath is hoping to have special videos ready for online & in-person worship.

EasyTithe Integration

- Ann: noted there's a link to the online giving site in the bulletin. The site was a bit weird on sign-in page: it looked like there should have been buttons but there weren't. Bill: You need to sign in as a donor, then the buttons will be there. Ann: when she hit *give*, there was nothing that happened but this could have been because it was from a small screen device.
- Amy signed up for a recurring pledge starting next year so it worked for her.
- Rena gets an email once the pledge payment actually transfers, not when you set it up. Bill: thinks finance can get data about pledges from a report. Rena: givers should fill out the actual pledge form.
- Ann: what about the links? Bill: they were sent to Sanjay & Candy. Candy: hasn't put on the web site thinking we needed to vote on it. Ann: since it's announced in our emails (bulletins), we should put it on the web site now. Bill: prayer requests go straight to Cath.

- Ann: asks if Candy has all approved minutes to post on web site. Candy: yes. Ann: we should post them dating back to January 2020.

Thoughts on Reopening the Church / Guidelines

- The company sent Bill a second UV light that's currently sitting in the mailroom, probably because of the hassle with the first one.
- We confirmed that people other than Bill and Susan have used the light.
- Ann: are there any modifications to the written guidelines? Cath: we should be aware that we can fit 2-3 households in the balcony and one more household in the regular sanctuary so we're almost at capacity based on the last two services.
- Ann: since we're using the big TV, we can't have overflow seating downstairs. Cath: talked to the Deacons, thinks people would rather leave than be the only person downstairs.
- Cath: tape was added to the backs of pews so people can see where empty pews are if they arrive late.
- Ann volunteered to give up her seat to late attendees. Sanjay: noted it would be a COVID propagation risk if she'd already sat there. Amy: as a single pew occupant, volunteers to wait in the back and go to the balcony if the pews are full.

Outside groups:

- AA told Cath they didn't need to figure out their plans until we did, we told them likewise so there's a circular dependency. They are interested in coming back to in-person meetings. Cath told them it was pending today's Cabinet meeting. There is a difference to her between adult and kid presence. She feels like telling adults that we don't have the staff to keep the church as clean as their workplace would convey enough information to affect their behavior. She doesn't feel it would be the same with kids.
 - Susan: Trustees feel okay about AA coming back in now that we have the UV lights.
 - Carol: is concerned about AA coming back because of the number of attendees. Susan: wouldn't they limit the number attending? Carol: doubts they would honor the limit if some extra people came. The room is usually packed. She would hate to be the church that causes a large AA outbreak.
 - Cath: they had 2 meetings a week. Monday used to be women-only but has gone coed. She thinks Carol has a good point. We could consider offering them more times to meet or set a maximum capacity.
 - Amy: thinks we should figure out a way for them to meet. The virus is scary and risky but what they're going through is also. She hopes they would honor the capacity.
 - Sanjay: feels like it's not our responsibility to be enforcers. Isn't it enough to provide the guidelines and let them police themselves?
- Ann: if we open the building to one group, how do we not open it to others?
 - Bill: what are the other groups? Gardening club, breakfast with Santa, Girl Scouts & Boy Scouts.
 - Jill: one way to draw the line is to explain is that AA is a dire community need in terms of consequences to individuals due to missed meetings. She also thinks that if we do open up church for AA, it is fair to specify the maximum capacity of the room and ask them to respect that capacity, to request a 6 foot spacing, and to offer additional nights for people to sign up.
 - Amy: agrees with Jill and thinks we can make a good argument for letting AA use the building. We can describe it as a pilot program. She agrees with Cath that kids will be impossible to monitor.

- Susan: with the 2nd UV light, it might be easier to offer multiple nights. Ann: recalled the Trustees recommended that the UV light be operated by a church person so if AA meets multiple nights, we would need church people to support it.
 - Bill: won't be responsible for operating the light.
 - Trustees said they would do it. Susan confirmed that it could be run on the following morning but there's some additional wipe-down needed.
 - Cath: wants to support AA but we're a small church with limited human resources.
- Susan: it sounds like our consensus is to not have outside groups come in. Ann confirms that even if there's only one meeting, we're still responsible for cleaning.
 - Ann: opinions are everywhere, is there a motion? There was silence.
 - Cath: can speak to AA and let them know of our cleaning burden and our expectations about capacity and spacing. She would believe them if they said they'd do it.
 - Sanjay offered to run the UV light if AA will do the wiping down.
 - Susan: is retiring after December 4 so it will be easier for her to support it after that.
 - Amy doesn't mind cleaning the bathroom and wiping down if someone else runs the UV.
- Cath: how about we say 1 meeting/week for November and see how it goes. Worship in sanctuary showed her that reality was different from expectation and you had to actually do the thing to see what happens. She can also see if Thanksgiving through Christmas is when AA really needs in-person meetings – it tends to be their toughest period.
 - Carol: is still concerned about how many people they have, can we figure out how many people they expect and a safe capacity. Sanjay & Amy said they could support multiple meetings with next-day cleanings.
 - Cath: how do we figure out the room capacity. Sanjay: will use Fellowship Hall's room dimensions and an online calculator to figure out the room capacity and let the Cabinet know.
 - Ann: is it Fellowship Hall, kitchen & bathrooms? Cath: will make sure the kitchen is not included.
 - Cath: For AA, a grid seating model may not make sense. They need to see each other. At some point, it's up to them how to set up.
 - Cath: will talk to them to see if there's some way it can be made to work for them and us. Will email Cabinet with results. Appreciates people being willing to make things work.
 - Carol: wants to make sure people understand there's also a requirement for masks.
 - Ann: do we feel we should be supplying masks & sanitizer at the door for outside groups? Upstairs we have gloves, sanitizer and masks. She can get masks free from the state and replenish them as needed for now. Rest is a cost to the church. Cath: is worried about things walking away.
 - Susan & Carol: outside groups need to be responsible for supplying their own personal protective supplies.

Other:

- Ann: the town has decided to proceed with trick or treating. Do we want to do something for Halloween? There was silence.
 - Jill: her family is not doing trick or treating this year and is very cautious. She doesn't want the church to look like we're making light of the pandemic by participating.
 - Ann: town guidelines didn't seem welcoming with a requirement for tables in the parking lot, spacing, masks, low interaction, etc.
 - We decided to skip Halloween this year.

NHCUCC Annual Meeting

- Ann will be there on 10/17 online for her job and as our church's representative. We should let her know if anyone has strong opinions on the topics up for discussion and vote. Two big things are the conference's flat budget due to COVID and an environmental resolution.

Christmas Planning

- Cath: thinks this Christmas will be hard for a lot of people, maybe financially. Wondered if we wanted to look at it and take a risk. See if we want to increase our giving to people who are going to be hit extra hard this Christmas. Maybe reach out to the Celebration of Service people and offer them help in some way like labor, PR.
- Amy: Outreach is meeting tomorrow night and has an idea about a couple of things they'd like to do with the congregation in terms of giving but they are not necessarily monetary. One idea is a food box that each family could put together and donate. She doesn't know what will be happening with SHARE. She doesn't know if we should stick with that instead of throwing money at the budget.
- Cath: thinks homeless shelters will be hit harder this winter and veteran's services will be more needed. She is okay with saying "this is what we can do" and focusing.
- Amy: has been gathering a list after talking to the organizations the church supports to know what they'll be asking for from now until the end of the year. She can let the congregation know and see what calls to them. She knows the Lions club isn't doing their penny sale and many town organization fundraisers won't be happening. Rena asks what the needs of in-town families are. Amy: it's about time to email Rebecca, the welfare officer, again. The food pantry is overstocked and Rebecca has indicated they're in good shape.
- Carol: is there a way we can do this not just with the congregation but with the community, maybe using Facebook to spread awareness of organizational needs. Even if all we do is put the word out – like an opportunity to send a gift card or buy diapers. Amy: at the very least, she would like to figure out a way to do this.
- Sanjay: is there a way to make it a big area of focus that's memorable both for us and the community. Ann: just did a webinar on how doing something around a theme can unify the community. Amy agrees and says they'll discuss it at Outreach tomorrow. She agrees with a theme like "feed our community" or "clothe our community" and thinks these two stick out the most in her mind.
- Bill: from working at the Nashua food pantry, donations of food don't really go a long way. \$500 buys 3000 lbs of food. If we pay \$500, we will get a lot less. They also need clothes for winter.
 - Jill: do they have similar buying power with clothes? Bill: no. They buy food from a food bank in Manchester as part of a greater network.
 - Jill: we still need a theme but what if we focus on clothing items and money for food with explanation as to why this is a focus?
 - Bill: Salvation Army said they need winter coats and winter clothing for kids. One organization went from supporting 500 people per month to over 2000.
 - Carol: maybe we could have a goal like 500 sweatshirts, 1000 pairs of socks. She finds a general request for clothes triggers a less definitive response than a numerical goal.
- Cath: maybe play off the year with humor, like "2020 sucks, let's send it off". She wants to push a little to put the church's money in play. We can say something like we're donating the gift we normally give her to this project.
 - Sanjay: wants to have the church put up money. It feels like when God challenges him to stop trying to manage all risks with contingency plans and strategies and just risk falling on his face. For example, we put up \$2,020 and ask the community to help us get as far away from that number as possible.
 - Bill: thinks we can match up to \$2,020 looking at our budget and amounts we haven't spent. We can take it from the general fund. Ann: would we do it all with that fund or should we

use congregation support? Bill: suggests we use \$2,020 from the fund and apply the congregation support towards the amount that's being matched.

- Amy: so is it \$2,020 for the food pantry and the amount raised beyond that for other or new organizations? Cath: trusts Outreach to figure out how to use the money most efficiently. Agrees that we shouldn't dilute it by spreading it too thin.
- Susan: if it's 3 isolated organizations that everyone's heard of, it will have more meaning. Bill: looked at the organizations we support and many don't do food.
- Jill: could we set up numerical targets for clothing donations so they add up to 2020?
- Bill: the Salvation Army has already started collecting names for Christmas. SHARE may also have this data.
- Decision: we handed it over to Outreach to figure out the target. Amy: they may need help.
- Bill: should we authorize the \$2,020 from the general fund so they're not blocked? Consensus: yes.
- Susan moved to authorize making \$2,020 available to Outreach from the general fund in support of a Christmas giving project, Carol seconded; the motion passed unanimously.
- Cath: it's going to be a tough Christmas and she thinks people would get a kick out of seeing the church lit up like crazy from Thanksgiving to Epiphany. She has a couple of people she could approach for execution. We'd have to pay for the electricity.
 - Susan thinks it's a good idea. There's been positive feedback on candles in the window.
 - Ann: what if we did something on the lawn lit up, maybe a nativity?
 - Jill: there's a lot of value in spreading a little joy right now. It doesn't have to be tacky – maybe only white lights.
 - Sanjay: proposed inexpensive laser projectors that draw patterns on the building.
 - Candy: loves the idea of being like the Griswold's. Thinks we could get on the news.
 - Cath: will speak to people who've been interested in the past and will get back to the Cabinet by email.
 - Amy: Cath knows what she and her son normally put up in the front of the church so at least we have that available. Candy wants to go big.

Fundraising

- Carol: noticed that the bulletin says there's going to be a Christmas Faire. It should have said Christmas Faire meeting. There's no Faire as we knew it. The committee is going to try something new.
 - Food added to take-home meals: 100 jars of jam
 - Raffle off at least 1 possibly 3 big ticket items. Has a big fire pit full of smore's stuff, hot chocolate, etc. She will ask everyone to sell tickets.
 - They thought of a lottery ticket tree or cake.
 - The 3rd item was an experience.
- The drawing will be on 12/6 when we would normally have the Faire.
- Megan's gnome-making friend is making different gnomes this year. They'll be sold at THM pickup.

Finance & Treasurer's Report

BCC YTD Financial Summary	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs Expenses + / -
September	\$74,646	\$64,492	\$10,154

- Rena moved \$15k from checking to Money Market.
- Bill is beginning to work on the budget for next year. It will probably be kept flat or decrease a little.
- He noticed that for this month pledges have gone way down but we've spent more money prebuying fuel oil and catching up on our normal Outreach expenditures. We would have broken even without these.
- Take home meals are keeping us going, raising \$800/month. It has helped during slow months when we normally wouldn't have done THMs.

Outreach Report

- Senior Luncheon Sat Oct 17th-Ham, Broccoli, Pasta Alfredo-Pickup or delivery
- Continuing our sock & underwear collection from February. Items in by Oct 25th. Supporting the Nashua Soup Kitchen & SNH Rescue Mission. Put donations in plastic bin by side door or basket in front hallway. Amy will check outside bin everyday & bring in any donations.
- Sent out an all church email with information on where winter clothing donations are being accepted. Our organizations are not accepting donations but are currently giving shopping vouchers out for Savers, Goodwill & Grey Nuns Thrift Shop.

Trustees Report

- Locked in prepaid oil at \$2.09 or \$2.10 based on online research.
- The UV light seems to be going okay
- Will change the clocks next month.
- Reset the thermostats.
- Preparing for first snow.
- Did pruning around church. Asked for assistance with the rhododendron last Sunday.
- Other major projects are put off for now.

Deacons' Report

- The deacons met via zoom on 9/27/20
- reviewed the first in-sanctuary worship since the coronavirus began, which was held on 9/20/20
 - attendance was 16 people including Rev. Cath, there was room in the pews for one more person/family
 - the deacons will mark the available pews (observing the 6 ft. rule) with removable colored tape to make it easier for those entering the sanctuary to identify available seating; the balcony will also be measured and marked; free-standing chairs will be placed at the back of the sanctuary to take advantage of spaces without pews
- discussed options for in-person communion - Rev Cath presented her ideas on the theology and logistics of communion; it was decided that the deacons will provide the congregation with individual, pre-packaged communion elements that can be purchased online
- discussed reaching out to people we haven't seen recently to let them know weekly indoor services have resumed
- discussed Christmas - we will have to wait and see what is happening with the Covid numbers at that time, but even if there are no services we will plan to have luminaries line the walkways for Christmas Eve (half the usual number/50)
- Rev. Cath is working with Hollis and Mason to create a joint, pre-recorded service for the Sunday after Christmas (12/27/20)
- in lieu of a book group Rev. Cath will be offering a 4-week Video Discussion Group beginning on 10/18/20. The videos are short (10-15 min each) and discussion will follow on zoom.
- Rev. Cath is looking into possible knee surgery, if/when this occurs she will be able to give us sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements for the affected worship services

- we reviewed and scheduled weekly deacon duties/functions for the month of October.
- Did test Zoom in prep for communion and live streaming services.
- Cath willing to do multiple Christmas services as needed.

Minister's Report:

October 2020 (through 10/4)

Since this goes in the church's record, the Covid-19 global pandemic led the church to stop in person meetings and services on March 13, 2020. Averaging 25.67 hours/week, which puts me between 6 hours under and 2 hours over since Sept. 15. This time last year, I was 7 hours under to 1 hour over.

- Pastoral counseling over the phone & in person
- Virtual coffee hours on 9/12, 9/19, 9/26, 10/4.
- Online Prayer Group: 9/9, 9/16, 9/23, 9/30.
- Meeting with Kristine & Mike to go through wedding service plans.
- Gathering Joys & Concerns ahead of the service.
- Prototyping a Stewardship conversation with Amy.
- Reflecting on how I wanted to handle communion as a community that is both in person and on-line.
- Working on worship plan for Advent – Transfiguration.
- Planning Video Discussion Group.
- Pulling together the 2021 Stewardship Pledge Form with links to on-line giving.
- Figuring out the photo for NH UCC Annual meeting.
- NH UCC Hillsborough Association annual meeting (via Zoom).
- Preparing a recitation of the Kaddish for Justice Ginsberg.
- Identifying folks to approach about the Hillsborough Association's Committee on Church & Ministry.
- Beginning to plan a joint, on-line only service for 12/27 for Mason, Brookline & Hollis
- Celebrating the Labor Day holiday.
- Creating PowerPoint template to use in lieu of bulletins in worship.

Services:

- 9/13: [In person worship (last of the side lawn services) as well as on-line] Really living out our beliefs that nothing can separate us from the love of God.
- 9/20: [In person worship (in the sanctuary for the first time since March) as well as on-line] We're more like Jonah than we realize, wanting to protect our own comfort rather than remain in relationship with others.
- 9/27: [On-line worship only] Ezekiel reminds us that while we have inherited a story from the past, the next part of the story is ours to write.
- 10/4: [In person worship as well as on-line] Matthew reminds us that we're invited to God's wedding banquet in order to change our hearts and our lives.

Regular Meetings:

Cabinet, Deacons, Moderator/Minister, Clergy Support

Other Items

- Susan: There are art supplies on the 3rd floor. Libraries have been trying to put together craft boxes for families. John Panto offered to put together a group of people to sort through it. Carol: will talk to Susan about it separately. Amy: volunteers to help.
- Cath: Annual Meeting is coming up so we will need reports.

The meeting was closed in prayer at 9:38 am by Rev. Cath.