

BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 11/08/2020

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
John Panto	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 quorum.

Calendar Review

- November THM is 11/20.
- Carol agreed with Ann that it would be reasonable to add the day of the Christmas Faire raffle drawing to the calendar – 12/6.

Review of Prior minutes

- Ann: one more correction – Ann is the one who asked for Annual Reports by year end, not Cath.
- Carol moved to accept the minutes as amended with this correction, Candy seconded; the motion passed unanimously.
- Ann thanked Candy for putting Cabinet minutes up on website.

2020 Stewardship Campaign and Fundraising

- Ann: at the last Cabinet meeting, we had made the motion to make funds available for a community fundraising activity. What are we going to do?
- Bill: understanding was that we would do a community fundraising activity and that the approved funds were to match whatever was raised. He understands that Outreach chose not to do the community fundraising so he thinks the funds shouldn't be deployed. Bill wanted our contribution to be anonymous so we don't give a false impression that we're a wealthy church.
- Cath: thought we were still going to give this money away even if we couldn't raise funds. Clearly we left the Cabinet meeting with different understandings. Cath talked to Amy after the Outreach meeting the Monday after last month's Cabinet meeting and found that they were maxed out and couldn't take on another large project this year. Since we're not doing a large project this year, it's no longer a project with timeliness requirements.

- Amy: it's not that Outreach didn't love the project idea, it's that they were too heavily loaded and couldn't do it to the degree and quality they want to.
- Bill: tried to estimate where we're going to be at year end, extrapolating from the last 3 months. Estimated ~\$1,000 from the Christmas Faire and got an estimate from Megan of \$500 for one more THM. Based on that and our current expenses, we may break even at year end but just barely. Excluding the \$20k donation, we're losing \$3,000/month right now. The THM program is keeping us afloat.
- Next year, we will be about \$50k short given current pledges and estimates.
- Sanjay: doesn't think it's prudent to spend the \$2,020 given this projection of next year's finances. Amy agrees.
- Jill: if we vote not to do it at this time, that doesn't mean we can't do it next holiday season or sometime between then and now. She would bet our organizations would appreciate a boost anytime. Bill agrees. Many things could happen next year to improve our situation.
- Cath: will definitely support prudent use of our resources. Thinks as we go forward into 2021, we may want to reflect on the fact that we'll never feel like we have enough money to give away. We are a generous church but we need to reflect on the kinds of risks we should take.
- Bill: we have already funded our normal Outreach giving for this year. It's only the extra \$2,020 we're talking about. Ann: recalls we did at one point tighten our Outreach budget and then later brought it back to the original level. Bill agrees.
- Amy: Outreach did get a lot of sock, underwear, and men's clothing donations. The community may not be involved but the congregation has been very generous and giving. Outreach is still in some capacity doing what it normally would.
- Bill moved to not spend the \$2,020 this year, Rena seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Holiday lights

- Ann: saw that the PTO is doing some sort of holiday light extravaganza in December, like something we used to do with the yard sale, with individuals lighting up houses and a drive around guide. She asked Jill to see if she can find some information about it and Jill agreed to check.
- Bill: what about the lights that Amy normally puts up? Amy: she and her son normally do the bushes and around the door.
- Carol: heard rumors that we don't know if there's a tree lighting and that the light extravaganza is a replacement for that. Knowing a lot of places around town are going to do lights, she thinks we should. She talked to some people and thought we could get enough lights to wrap the trees in front of the church. She measured the trees and calculated what it would take for the 2 big red maples and the 3 little trees leading to the Village Store. For 2 trees – 18 strings of 33' lights – it will cost \$215.85. For all 5 trees, 28 strings will cost \$339. Thinks we should go 100' up, cover 8 branches, 4 feet out. An additional 2 heavy duty, all-weather extension cords will add \$80. With extension cords, the cost is \$296. It will use 9.6 Watts of power, which is 80% less than regular lights. She thinks it's an awesome idea to be part of it to show we're still here, active and participating. She would like to find the \$216 somewhere.
- Cath: this is the kind of thing we could ask for direct donations towards, if we're worried about our current budget. Amy agrees we could find donors.
- Amy: thinks we have extra boxes of lights in the bucket of Christmas things we already have. Carol: as long as they're outdoor lights. She would like to do it now while it's warm out. Ann: do we have the equipment needed to put lights up that high? Carol & Amy have ladders.
- Ann: should we make a motion to use these funds if we don't get donations?
 - Sanjay: conscience bothering him given we're not doing the \$2,020.
 - Carol: it's Sunday so we could ask for donations at church.
 - Rena: not sure we'll get money today, given low attendance.
 - Ann: should we set a deadline for donations?
 - Sanjay: thinks we should set deadline for tomorrow.
- Cath: there's a spiritual value in lifting people's hearts.

- Bill moved to take money from the general fund and replenish it with donations, Rena seconded, the motion passed unanimously.
- Amy: is she still doing what she normally would for church decorative lighting? Consensus was yes.

Thoughts on Reopening the Church / Guidelines

- Ann: based on calculations and Bill's recommendations, she plans for a November trial, specifically in support of AA.
- Bill: based on NFPA standards and CDC guidelines to reduce those by 50% for COVID safety, recommends raising the occupancy rates from Sanjay's calculations of 18 to 20. Sanjay: noted that this approach is based on considerations other than the linear propagation of particulates and is therefore not the same as maintaining a COVID-safe distance but decided not to die on this hill.
- Carol: thinks AA uses their own coffeemaker, not ours, and they will probably go in the kitchen anyway for water, etc. Amy agrees that this is a likely outcome. Jill: if we're going to assume this, she would prefer not to tell them not to use the kitchen.
- Jill: where our guidelines talk about disinfecting and putting away chairs and tables, we don't want to assume it's been done. We may want to add "by outside organizations" to the wipe down bullet point to show we expect our visitors to do it. Bill: the UV/Ozone from the disinfecting machine should make wiping down unnecessary.
- Ann: if we change the capacity number to 20, change the wipe down bullet item, remove the line forbidding kitchen use, are we comfortable with opening the church to AA?
- Rena: the Townsend community center is open to outside use but you have to bring your own coffee, water, and supplies.
- Carol moved to change the guidelines as Ann summarized and give AA permission to use the building as a trial in November, Bill seconded; the motion passed unanimously.
- Cath: reminds us that AA is still trying to decide how to manage their own safety.

BSA Proof of Claim Filing – reported by Rev. Catherine

- Boy Scouts of America filed for bankruptcy in February 2020 to create a trust for those who have claims against the Scouts for sexual abuse.
- On October 21, we were advised by the UCC that churches which had hosted Boy Scout meetings or chartered Boys Scout Troops should file a Proof of Claim with the bankruptcy court by November 16th. As I understand it, should anyone bring a suit against us because of our chartering of Troop 260, this will provide some additional protection for the church's resources.
- Since the legal form is unclear how to fill out, I got a referral to a bankruptcy lawyer in Nashua (Steve Notinger), contacted him and he offered to help us pro-bono.
- On October 23, we got the same advice from the UMC, with greater detail, providing the form we needed to submit and instructions on how to fill it out.
- On October 28, there was a mandatory Zoom meeting for the Granite District of the UMC about filing the Proof of Claim for the BSA. The UMC wanted all claims filed by November 1.
- On October 29 & 30, the UMC sent out additional forms which needed to be filed with the UMC to prove that we had been notified of the recommendation to file the Proof of Claim and to update their files once we had submitted it.
- On October 29 I asked Sanjay & Ann, as clerk and moderator, to figure out an archive plan for all the material surrounding the filing as well as the filing itself. My main concern would be having the material somewhere the church could find it in the future.
- On October 29 I sent the completed Proof of Claim to the attorney in Nashua in the late afternoon.
- On November 4 I followed up with the attorney to verify that there were no issues with the filing. They requested an addendum, which I sent

- On November 5 the UMC changed their filing deadline for the documents that they have requested from November 1 to November 9

Thanksgiving

- Cath: more attention is being paid to COVID transmission rates around us. Should we do a remote-only service the Sunday before and after Thanksgiving, driven by quarantine considerations for people who are going to or returning from seeing their families.
- Carol: suggests being remote on November 29th out of an abundance of caution. People may not be going anywhere but may have people in their houses.
- Jill: is there logic to say if we're doing it the Sunday after that we should do it the Sunday before also? If we're only doing it after, are we saying we don't trust our congregation? Before and after seems more caring, helping people protect their family and friends.
- Ann: as a person who will be traveling, is in favor of what Jill says (before & after). Discussion was supportive of this idea.
- Cath: are we infantilizing people, not respecting the people who long for in-person worship, and saying we don't trust people to watch out for their own well-being? Amy: no, the Covid numbers are going up and we're being advised not to gather with family and friends.
- Consensus was agreement with holding remote-only services the Sundays before and after Thanksgiving.

Stewardship Letter & Mailing

- Cath is signing letters and noting the few that need fixes. Through Candy's magic, they will go out on Monday. Thanks to Carol for creating beautiful stationery, Candy for getting good letterhead paper, Sanjay for generating the mailing list.
- Bill: we have 12 pledges for next year bringing us to \$20k. Some people have pledged on Easy Tithe which evens out receipts.
- Ann: do we know how we're trending compared to prior years? Bill: we are below prior years but not sure if it's also in number of responses, or just dollar value. He hopes that when the letter goes out, more people will pledge online.
- Cath: it also makes a difference that we're not handing out forms in the bulletins because she's seen them filled out during the service in prior years.

Budget for 2021

- Bill is doing a preliminary budget and it's not looking good. He is estimating income based on COVID patterns, not counting on breakfasts, no ghost trail run, reducing Christmas Faire expectations, and leaving THM the same. He kept inflexible expenses and lowered some administrative cost estimates. We're about \$50k short. We have received 12 pledges, totaling \$20,421.
- The missing income from loose collections, Christmas, Easter, and not having the usual volume of people sitting in pews is really affecting things. For Easter, we got \$400, which is far less than usual.
- Bill isn't counting on the person who has donated large amounts in the last couple of years as a given because we don't know what their circumstances will be this year.
- THM income for October was only \$51 but that's because the money wasn't deposited until November. The actual amount raised was \$1,900. There was some discussion about when revenue shows up in our financial reports and Bill noted that it has to be the month it actually goes into the bank account to make accounts balance correctly.
- Last year, we had budgeted approximately \$47k from pledges.

BCC Annual Meeting

- Cath's knee surgery is scheduled for 1/14/2021, provided COVID doesn't get worse.
- She doesn't have to be at Annual Meeting but if we want her there, she recommends we move it to 1/10/2021 but then reports would need to come in earlier.
- Ann: asked for board reports by 12/15/2020.
- Bill: we also have to consider how we're going to do Annual Meeting given quorum requirements.
- Ann: how would we get the attendance number required for a quorum. Cath: has been taking attendance of in-person worship and coffee hours.
- Amy: did the NH Conference put out guidelines on how to take attendance? Ann: for over 6 months, they have been telling people we need to count electronic attendees.
- Bill: Zoom meetings show real-time attendees but YouTube doesn't give accurate counts.
- Cath: this church never has a problem getting a quorum. Even knowing that not everyone might attend Zoom, she thinks we'll get a sufficient attendance.
- Sanjay: we shouldn't count YouTube time-shifted watchers but should treat them the same way we would cable TV watchers before Covid. Ann: is a regular watcher of the YouTube service and she thinks those watchers should count. Sanjay: it doesn't mean a YouTube watcher doesn't "count". It just lowers the quorum burden.
- Cath: on Sundays with in person worship, there's no one on Zoom. With Zoom communion, she never sees how many people are in meetings because it shuts down when the service is over and she doesn't get a count. Sanjay: hasn't seen other people on those Zooms when setting up the iPad.
- Carol: thinks we have to discount YouTube entirely as she's been at church and watched the same service on YouTube and has sometimes been counted multiple times for a single YouTube video. She thinks coffee hour is a useful proxy for those who watched the Zoom worship. Cath has the actual name list for coffee hour and a count for in person worship.
- Jill: is comfortable with just using in person and Zoom coffee hour to estimate the attendance for quorum purposes.
- Bill moved to use the sum of in-person and Zoom coffee hour attendance, net of double counting. Cath: said it was only 2-3 times we had both so she can handle the calculation. Carol seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- Carol: thinks it's important to have the minister at Annual Meeting. Jill agreed. We decided to schedule Annual Meeting for 1/10/2021, probably via Zoom.
- Cath: will get her report in on 12/15/2020. She would like to do a supplemental report for whatever happens at Christmas to get it into the final report. She would like to get that out by 1/3/2021.
- Cath: her knee surgery has a 6-week recovery. She has plenty of unused vacation time which she will use for recovery. She is working with the deacons on coverage. Veronica will do the Ash Wednesday service. Cath will handle Maundy Thursday. She will make sure she has pastoral coverage from Veronica and Tanya as needed.

Fundraising

- Selling trio of dips with November's THM, available in 2 sizes. Orders are coming in. Looks like we're doing well with it.

Pastoral relations

- Cath: We have to figure out the Assistant Moderator thing. PRC is not happening without that role being filled and that's not good church hygiene. We should fix that next year.

Publicity

- nothing new, just Facebook.

Trustees Report

- Sue went into the building and changed the thermostats and clocks.
- They met David from Millwork last week at the church. We had a minor problem with one of the locks in the sanctuary. They checked every window in the church and we're squared away. It was good to see them stand behind their work.
- Amy: had coordinated with Sue because Absolute Mechanical is coming in Thursday at 11 am. Do they just have to get into the church or also Candy's office? Cath: into Candy's office too. John Pan-to will be Amy's backup.

Outreach Report

- October 17th Senior Luncheon takeout & delivery meal – Approximately 50 meals including 4 to the Transfer Station-Received donation of fruit pies to give out with meal
- Nancy Dunbar dropped off items from our sock, underwear & clothing Drive to the Southern NH Rescue Mission
- Amy to drop off items to the Nashua Soup Kitchen and give items to Bill Dunbar for the Salvation Army
- Collecting gift cards for Share Christmas. They have changed their program this year so we are not doing our traditional wreath for gift giving. Donations need to be in by Nov 13th for distribution with the Thanksgiving baskets
- Take Home Meals & helping with Christmas Faire

Deacons' Report

- The deacons met via Zoom on 10/25/20
- Reviewed COVID adaptations to sanctuary worship for regular worship and communion. Will continue to look for ways to make worship during this time more comfortable/comforting.
- discussed ways to make Advent more special both in-person and online
- Began discussion of in-person and online Christmas Eve services. We may offer more sanctuary services this year and ask people to make a reservation. We will stagger the services to allow enough time to run the machine between each service (1:00, 4:30 & 8:00pm). Or COVID may force us to go exclusively remote. So we are planning for all possibilities.
- If we are able to worship in-person for Christmas Eve, we will need people to help with each of the services, welcoming, ushering, etc.
- Rev. Cath continues to work with Hollis and Mason to create a joint, pre-recorded service for the Sunday after Christmas (12/27/20)
- Scheduled weekly deacon duties/ functions for the months of November and December

Finance & Treasurer's Report

BCC YTD Financial Summary	Actual Income	Actual Ex-penses	Income vs Expenses + / -
October	\$77,968	\$70,830	\$7,137

- Already discussed.

Minister's Report:

November 2020 (through 11/1)

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. In person service resumed sporadically over the summer and resumed weekly on September 27th.

- Averaging 29.5 hours/week, which puts me between 14-32 hours over since Sept. 13. This time last year, I was 7-24 hours over.
- Pastoral counseling over the phone & in person
- Wedding of Kristine Brock & Mike Mancuso.
- Virtual coffee hours on 10/11, 10/18, 10/25 (no coffee hour on 11/1 due to technical difficulties).
- Online Prayer Group: 10/7, 10/14, 10/21, 10/28.
- Attending liturgy workshop for Advent/Christmas from the NH UCC.
- First two Video Discussion Groups.
- Working on worship plan for Advent – Transfiguration.
- Following up on my conversation with a representative from AA about using the Social Hall.
- Pulling together the 2021 Stewardship Pledge Form mailing project, including drafting cover letter.
- Attending Ecclesiastical Council for Barbara Papagian (via Zoom).
- Attending the NH UCC Annual Meeting in multiple Zoom sessions.
- Learning more features of the video software in order to produce the scrolling names portion of the All-Saints service.
- Scouting out what would be involved in lighting up the church at Christmas time.
- Taking the required on-line Ministerial Ethics course from the UMC.
- Making sure we knew what the town was planning for Trick-or-Treat so we could make a deliberate decision about our participation.
- Helping the Women's Club track down three electric urns for their event.
- Making sure Rev. Walsh-Don would take the Ash Wednesday service on her own if I were still out of commission from knee surgery.

Services:

- 10/11: [In person worship as well as on-line] Putting ourselves in the shoes of Jesus' enemies to make sure we're not missing anything.
- 10/18: [In person worship as well as on-line] Stewardship means working with a God so powerful that God can work through anyone, even us.
- 10/25: [In person worship as well as on-line] Getting away from word games to get away from the illusion of control over God's love.
- 11/1: [In person worship as well as on-line] All Saints Day remembrance of those we've lost.

Regular Meetings:

Cabinet, Deacons, Moderator/Minister, Clergy Support

Other Items

- Carol: as a side note, with the THM and extra food items we're making, we're struggling to find enough refrigerator space. If someone offers us a free refrigerator, we would appreciate it. We're also looking for space in people's fridges during THM prep.

The meeting was closed in prayer at 9:32 am by Rev. Cath.