

BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 2/14/2021

Submitted by: Sanjay Cherian

In Attendance (via Zoom videoconference):

Name	Role	Voting?
Catherine Merrill	Minister	N
Ann Desrochers	Moderator	Y
Sanjay Cherian	Clerk	Y
Susan Haight	Trustees	Y
Amy Razzaboni	Outreach	Y
Bill Dunbar	Finance	Y
Rena Duncklee	Treasurer	Y
Candy Tiner	Publicity/Deacons	Y
Megan King	Interested party	N

The meeting started at 8:09 am with a prayer from Rev Cath. We had a quorum.

Review of Prior minutes

- Candy moved to accept the December minutes, Susan seconded; the motion passed unanimously.
- Annual Meeting minutes – Cabinet indicated acceptance by silence when asked for corrections.

Revisiting Reopening of Church

- We said at our December meeting that we would revisit the topic at this meeting.
- Cath thinks we still need to stay apart. Her intention is to have 2 in-person services on Easter day, a morning sunrise service and a 10 am service on the side lawn, or in the parking lot if there's snow. The NH Conference said to expect to worship remotely until the end of Easter.
- Sanjay recommended staying closed because we're so close to being vaccinated widely enough. Candy feels similarly because of the trend in cases. Ann agrees.
- Megan would like to reopen as soon as possible because high school cases are stabilizing.
- Susan: would like to see us open by end of April, back to inside worship.
- Amy: the sooner the better, particularly given the number of people we have. She thinks it would be very safe for us to get back together.
- Bill: more people are getting shots so it's getting safer.
- Cath: based on her UK family experience, for people who haven't gotten their shots, the new Covid variants are more dangerous. Still, we're good to go month-by-month with the decision process so for now, we'll say we're staying remote through the end of March.
- The discussion concluded that we'll stay month-by-month and revisit the situation at the end of March. We also said we'd stay compliant with existing protocols to take care of people who haven't been vaccinated. Bill: we should also see what the CDC says as we go forward.

Emergency Management Conference:

- Ann had tech issues but will get back to us once she's watched the recorded sessions if there's anything that is relevant to us.

Library Parking

- The town has already made town buildings in walking distance available for library overflow parking.
- Susan: the library is appointment-only right now. Russell thinks the time allowed in the library is about 1 hour. She would have to talk to the Trustees because right now, Jerry Farwell's guys plow for us at no cost. If we open for the library, we would have to make sure the parking lot is always plowed out. We would also want to talk to the town about them arranging plowing in exchange for us allowing parking.
- Ann: is also concerned about liability because we take care of the parking lot iciness when we are doing things at church. If people are using it when we're not present, we should be concerned about liability for people getting hurt.
- Bill: if our parking lot is open, people will use it without asking like the house next door already does. If we say nothing, then if the lot is not plowed, people won't park there. Sanjay: not sure that's how legal liability works.
- Cath: if they're going to park there anyway, why not invite people actively?
- Amy: if we don't want people parking here, should we post no parking signs? Or is it better to be friendly and accommodating and actively invite and support parking? She thinks we should do the latter.
- Cath: What about plowing? Bill: leave it as is. Sanjay: thought Susan was saying we should ask the town to take on the extra plowing. Susan: that was an idea for consideration.
- Megan: definitely thinks we should open it up. Cath: should we say people should feel free to park or just leave it not said? Megan: hears from the community that we have made people feel shut off through prior actions.
- Bill: instead of talking to the town, we could tell the library that if people want to use the church parking lot, they can.
- Susan: after talking to trustees, she will talk to library people.
- Sanjay: thinks we should check with someone, maybe our insurance company, about the consequence of opening our parking lot up. He supports opening the parking lot but doesn't want us to guess about the long-term consequence.
- Susan will follow up with the Cabinet after discussions by email.

Action items from Annual Meeting

- Ann: We should focus on unfilled positions that impair our existing function. Is assistant treasurer such a position? Rena: it's not a problem leaving the role unfilled.
- Cath: CE being unfilled is problematic but any solution is part of a wider discussion.

Brochure for welcome baskets.

- Ann: do we know how many brochures the town hall has left? Candy: has one she will make more copies of and deliver. Is it up to date? Candy: will revisit before printing but nothing has been changed since she became secretary. Does she have to check with everyone before printing? Cath: just print them.
- Bill is comfortable with the \$100 estimate for printing these two-sided, full-color trifold brochures.

More active faith formation for children

- Up for discussion. How to maybe start doing things offline like Melanie's idea for making pretzels with kids, and then online when we get back together?
- Megan: what about something like what the library does? Crafts packet that kids pick up and can do offline, to get kids offline. Maybe something in a Ziploc bag that people can pick up from outside the church, advertised on our website. Candy liked the idea very much.
- Amy: we probably already have supplies at the church for any ideas people come up with. Susan: is in favor of putting together craft baggies.
- Ann: asks Amy if the bin outside the church has worked well for drop-off to understand if it could work for pick-up? Amy: it has worked for drop off since church people tend to use their keys to leave their contributions inside. If we needed a scheduled pick-up time, she could be there. She checks the bin every day but there are also a lot of things left by church members on the hallway bench.
- Susan: is willing to work with anyone else to put it together and make sure things are available.
- Ann: thinks it's good community outreach to support scheduled pick-up but also that things could be dropped off whenever it was convenient.
- Amy: would THM pickup be a good time to also pick up the crafts if people wanted to talk? Megan: thinks having it available at all times would be good, with a new craft offered once a month.
- Cath: should we reach out to the Women's Club and ask if they wanted to do it with us? If we want, try one without partnership and see how it goes, then try. Ann: is the Women's Club the best group or is there another town group more connected to children? Amy: think she saw the PTO just did something like this for Valentine's Day. Will check the website.
- Candy: if we had an outside group helping us, could we still incorporate Christ into it? Or would it be a generic craft. She would still like to be able to keep something for Christ in there. Ann: is particularly concerned about the PTO who used to be willing to distribute stuff from the church but that has changed.
- Cath: why not try something on our own and then see where we want to go next. Partnership gives us more outreach. Megan: asked to be notified when something is put together and she will also post to social media to augment Candy's efforts.

Brainstorming meeting

- Cath: Tad Putney thought the candle lighting project commemorating Covid deaths was an interesting idea. She thinks he understood why we were cautious about taking on such a big challenge and agreed that it would have to involve civic groups around the community. He had questions about logistics re: candles, could they be blown out, etc. She thinks his overall reaction was it could be interesting and could help pull the town together. She doesn't think he had concerns about it. She thinks he thought we do a trial run for people who died in NH and see what 1000-1200 would look like, then see if we wanted to take on a bigger slice.
- One thing we need to consider is that if we are going to go for a larger project, we have to think about what that does to the transfer station at the end in terms of cost to the town for extra disposal.
- Sanjay: is Peter aware of this meeting? Yes, he's on a fire call.
- Bill: we have the white Christmas lights that were strung on the trees. Maybe we could use 400,000 white lights. This won't affect the transfer station. Cath: one of the reasons for doing this is to open a conversation in a wider community. Susan: maybe a tree outside Daniels Academy strung with white lights as a memorial tree. Can the tree support 400,000 lights? Probably not but we could start with commemorating NH.
- Megan: the original idea was to get the town more involved. This conversation sounds like an internal project.

- Is there a committee formed yet? Ann: no, there was a lot of enthusiasm but not a lot of traction for fleshing this out.
- Cath: when done talking with Tad, they thought the natural next step was to have an initial proposal that could be taken to civic groups who might partner with us. She thinks our next step is to draft that, perhaps initially at the NH level and then worry about the national level.
- Bill: we probably think this is a great idea but who's going to head it up? Susan: is there anybody not involved in a project for whom this is right up their alley? Silence.
- Megan: Peter needs to be part of the conversation. Ann: Peter was clear that he couldn't take on being the main point of coordination. He'll help with ideas and support.
- Cath: if we looked at it and there was enthusiasm and town didn't object but we didn't find the right leadership, then we owe it to the rest of the church to let them know we chased it down but it seemed bigger than we were currently able to handle so we are back to thinking of ideas. It's part of brainstorming.
- Peter joined the Zoom at this point. Ann & Cath summarized the discussion so far and brought up the idea of Christmas lights instead of candles. Peter: thought of other ways to approach this project because it's huge. Thought we could create plywood boards with 1000 LEDs each powered with 12V. We would have to make 4000 boards and the death count is now approaching 500,000. Part of his thought was to just start and others would join. He would like to take the lead on this but thinks it would drive him over the edge with all the other things happening in life right now.
- Cath: is happy to organize a meeting in the next couple of weeks to flesh it out and decide if we're going with a small initial and a big subsequent project or just a big one. A big project has the opportunity for a snowball effect. A small one lets us work out the logistics first. She can't lead the project all the way down the runway but can take the first step.
- Peter: if we start with the small and say on a particularly day BCC will be lighting individual memorial candles for NH deaths and consider one candle for every 50,000 deaths for the national commemoration, and invite town organizations to participate in lighting candles for the latter. He even thought about making popsicle stick crosses in the church yard lit with LEDs, maybe each one representing 5-10k people.
- Cath: it's not about solving the problem in this group but seeing if we have the bandwidth for the activity. Defining specifics is part of the activity. Whatever the memorialization activity is, there are things we need to learn through it, e.g. if part of it is how to use social media to widen support, we'd need to pay attention to that.
- Ann: the project would be building on "this is our strength and this is how we can share it" but it needs definition first.
- Cath: definition will take time and effort. Wondering if we have the right people here to do it. Peter: should set up a meeting in a couple of weeks. If we can't converge on a clear, concise definition, it will tell us this isn't what we should be doing. Amy: agrees that it shouldn't just be the Cabinet deciding on the actual activity.
- Cath: will schedule a meeting to come up with a proposal for a first step.
- Ann: and would we also want to build in the reflection effort about "is this action in support of what we're trying to achieve?"

Deacons' Report

- the deacons met via Zoom on 01/24/21.
- discussed possibility of outdoor candlelight service on Maundy Thursday.
- Easter - planning for a sunrise service at Andres and a brief 10am outdoor service at the church, rain or shine.
- discussed possible wedding on April 9.
- discussed archiving options for worship services.

- discussed idea of renting a tent for summer services.

Wedding

- Cath: Clyde & Allison's son Brett wants to get married at church. He and his fiancée met 5 years before on this date so it's important to them. They would like a wedding of fewer than 20 people at the church on the afternoon of Friday 4/9. She has told them we are not at worship right now but can't make a commitment. They are perfectly comfortable with whatever restrictions we would like to maintain so she's bringing it to us. We would need to have the church clean. Small group, music via iPod. If not possible, she has committed that she will marry them wherever they want on that date.
- Susan: from the trustees position, a wedding in church is perfectly fine. They will clean & run the UV light before and afterwards. There is general support and willingness to help out.
- Cath: is there any concern with inconsistency of policy since we're not meeting there in person? Bill: he would only say they couldn't do a reception with food at Fellowship Hall. Cath: they'll do that elsewhere.
- Peter: thinks it's okay as a special event. Doesn't think it goes against any rules based on size. Ann: as long as they're meeting our guidelines. Bill: CDC guidelines may have changed by then. Susan: is a strong advocate for supporting this wedding. Feels there are times we should ignore rules and go with our gut.
- Cath: if there's a funeral that follows similar constraints, should she agree without bring it to us?
- Sanjay: deciding case-by-case based on the prevailing conditions at the time of the request, even by email, would be defensible against accusations of inconsistency. Peter felt doing this case-by-case per-request was the way to go.
- Our conclusion was that Cath will get back to Brett that it's a go. She will get specifics so that we can make sure all the logistics are covered.

Tent discussion

- We could have a big tent set up on the side lawn all summer for safer worship. If we had it, we would know we could always meet outdoors rain-or-shine. There is cost associated with it and health & safety guidelines due to accidents from improperly-setup large tents. The state has licensing requirements.
- Peter: thinks cost will be a limiting factor. It may be more cost effective to buy a tent. Covid conditions may also decrease to where we don't need a long-term rental.
- Russell & John P are going to get prices for us. They have reached out for pricing but have received no responses yet.
- Ann: if we decide to buy it, it will still need to be licensed and we will have to pay a qualified installer.
- Megan: the high school had tents set up from the beginning of year to 11/1. It killed all the grass.
- Peter: we could do BYO smaller tents.

Other worship:

- Based on the response to Christmas Eve, we may do a candlelight Maundy Thursday service in the parking lot along with a recorded service. Veronica is taking the lead on Ash Wednesday and Cath for Maundy Thursday. She wants us to get back to in-person worship as soon as we can but safely.
- As Covid rates come down in MA, they will look at rescheduling Cath's knee surgery. Ann: is our prior plan for coverage easy to move or is it a new planning exercise? Cath: they were thinking of doing services from Horton Center and other places. One person was willing to do a service. She thinks communion will need someone ordained to do it. So it's not a nailed down plan but will need to be revisited.

- Ash Wednesday? Currently planned to be done by Zoom.

Calendar Review

- February 17th – Ash Wednesday Service
- February 19th – Take Home Meals
- April 1 – In-person outdoor candlelight service for Maundy Thursday
- April 4 – two outdoor in-person services for Easter

Pastoral Relations

- Nothing to report

Trustees Report

- Nothing major. Checking on church regularly and making repairs as needed. Let her know if anyone sees anything that needs doing.
- Ann: any requests from outside organization to use church? No.

Finance & Treasurer’s Report

BCC YTD Financial Summary	Actual Income	Actual Ex-penses	Income vs Expenses + / -
January	\$7,237	\$6,497	\$739

- We received approval for the Payroll Protection Program Loan of \$5,672.00 on February 10. This will cover 2.5 months of Catherine’s salary (our current W2 employee). The funds were deposited in our back account on February 12th.
- Catherine will get two checks each month because one has to exactly match salary and other will contain reminder.
- Reason why we didn’t get check before was Bill had been told he could submit 1099 employees but it’s only W2. Learned that secretary and custodian should be W2 employees.
- Megan: is Bill recording this under income? Bill: yes. For loan forgiveness, we have to show that the loan was used for only salary.

Outreach Report

- Diaper Drive to support Marguerite's Place until February 19th.
 - Drop off items in bin at side door of church, on Feb 19th 1-5:00 during THM or send monetary donation to church.
 - Good response so far especially from community.
- Senior Luncheons-Delivery or pickup
 - Saturday March 20th- Planning some type of pasta not corn beef & cabbage
 - Saturday May 15th

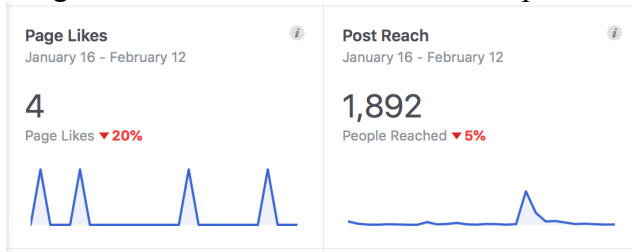
Fundraising

- Nothing to report

Publicity

- In January we posted multiple times on the Facebook page as well as the Hollis-Brookline page and the Brookline page for the Annual Meeting. We also posted 2-4 times per week as usual for worship times, prayer group, and additional information.

- We did reach out to the newspaper for the Annual Meeting.
- Hoping to do some Facebook Live videos as events start happening again that I can attend, like cooking for Take Home Meals, and the Diaper Drive.



Minister's Report:

February 2021 (12/7 through 2/7)

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 services resumed over the summer and resumed weekly from 9/27 – 11/15. With the rise in cases, we went to remote worship only starting 11/22.

- Averaging 27.5 hours/week, which puts me between .5 hour under to 52 hours over since Sept. 13. This time last year, I was averaging 25.65 hours/week.
- Pastoral counseling over the phone & in person
- Graveside service for Dave Larkin on 1/20.
- Beginning plans for Brett Ferrell & Nicole Meany's wedding on 4/9.
- Virtual coffee hours on 12/13, 12/20, 1/3, 1/17, 1/24, including a couple of personal interviews to see if that would change attendance.
- Online Prayer Group: 12/9, 12/16, 1/6, 1/13, 1/20, 1/27, 2/3.
- Attending the Brookline Community Church Annual meeting.
- Attending the Brookline Community Church Brainstorming meeting.
- Figuring out Advent wreath lighting liturgy and recruiting volunteers. Helping record some of the videos.
- Writing and sending out letters to previous pledgers who had not pledged this year.
- Writing my contributions to the Annual Report (Minister's report, CE report, portions of the Clerk's report, helping review the Deacon's report)
- Writing the Christmas letter.
- Working on a 12/27 worship service with Hollis.
- Planning Ash Weds – Easter 4.
- Attending the on-line Southern NH Outreach for Black Unity MLK breakfast on 1/18.
- Getting the Boy Scouts of America material transferred to the archive set up so we can find it again later.
- Speaking with Tad Putney to get his insight on commemorating the number killed by Covid.
- BTS Fireside chat with Maren Tirabassi.
- Suspending work on pulpit supply plan for knee surgery with Jill.
- Christmas and New Year's holidays

Services:

- 12/13: We're part of God's team for building the new normal.
- 12/20: Let's give God's plan a try.
- 12/24: Instead of "be not afraid," go ahead and be a little afraid. Just be something else as well.
- 12/24: [In Person] Prayers and Scripture Readings

- 12/27: Joint Service with Hollis: Where have you seen God today?
- 1/3: Zoom communion: God's love is a mystery that solves us.
- 1/10: Gaining resilience from letting the Holy Spirit do more of the work.
- 1/17: On-line service from the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA.
- 1/24: Fishing for people means fishing for chaos. But God specializes in creating out of chaos. So it will work out.
- 1/31: Having prophetic roles in society means we expect God's unexpected and true word to be a part of our community.
- 2/6: Full Zoom service: Healing means more than curing the body.

Regular Meetings: Cabinet, Deacons, Moderator/Minister, Clergy Support

Somebody had suggested that she try a QR code for simplified donation. In next week's service, there will be a musical interlude with a QR code.

New or Other Business:

- none

The meeting was closed in prayer at 9:37 am by Rev. Cath.