

BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 3/14/2021

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	Y
Jill Aitken	Deacons	Y
Peter Bretschneider	Assistant Moderator	Y
Nancy	Interested party	N

The meeting started at 8:06 am with a prayer from Rev Cath. We had a quorum.

Calendar Review

- We confirmed the items from Ann's agenda
 - March 20 - Senior Luncheon Pick Up or Delivery
 - April 1 – In-person outdoor candlelight service for Maundy Thursday
 - April 4 – two outdoor in-person services for Easter (sunrise at Andre's, 10:00 am at church)
 - April 9 – Ferrell Wedding
 - May 2 – Hillsborough Association Annual Meeting – May 2, 3:00 PM
- Take-Home Meal 4/16 added
- Hillsborough Annual Meeting – they want each church to provide a 2-3 minute testimony about what each church has been up to during this Covid period. Is anyone interested in being our Zoom representative? The association moderator will be providing a prompt. Nobody volunteered.

Review of Prior minutes

- Bill moved to accept the minutes, Amy seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Record Keeping

- Cath had sent Ann a reminder from the Methodists about a property tax exemption form. Rena was on top of it and has had Cath do it every year. Ann couldn't find the form anywhere when she looked. We should keep track of this every year.
- Rena – there are copies in her files.
- Ann: What other things should we be tracking?

- Nothing from Rena for the town
- IRS quarterly reports from Rena
- Elevator inspection happens every January – Susan receives the permit by mail and puts the original in the elevator
- Fire safety inspection? Doesn't the fire department notify us? Bill: has been down there and seen someone inspecting and tagging extinguishers. Rena: that was Liberty (insurance).
- Bill: Cath doesn't have to be the one to sign the tax exemption form. It can be any officer of the church.
- Sanjay should copy Candy on whatever is sent because she archives physical and digital items.

Covid Memorial update

- Met a couple of times in past weeks. Couple of emphases:
 - Continuing to reflect on what a memorial can look like because we're talking about reaching out to other groups and need something to talk about.
 - Maybe an important part of reaching out is saying we don't have something fully thought out but would welcome their participation in defining it
- If we don't have an identified leader within the church, do we go out and see if someone outside is interested in leading? Maybe the effort will be an idea we spark and someone else leads.
- Sanjay had created a write up as a prompt for meeting attendees to help guide conversations with other groups.
- Ann: next steps? Cath: will be meeting today after coffee hour to see with another week of thinking where people are and if they've had a creative idea on how to move forward.
- Is the Cabinet comfortable waiting until April to find out where it goes? There was general assent.

Faith Formation for Children

- Ann: as far as she knows, it is just there as a brainstorming topic and she is not aware of anything active happening. Cath: agrees but as we go forward, it will be hard for families with kids to come without activities to engage the kids while the parents are at church. If we inspire people to come, the lack of children's activities may be a barrier to their continued participation.
- Ann: The Take & Make craft with THM may be better suited as an organized craft for children who come during worship if we have someone to lead it. Susan agrees and noted that we made 16 prayer pots and 12 lilies and have 3 prayer pots and 4 lilies left.
- Jill: we don't need to talk about it at this meeting but once we open up, thinks a craft is a fantastic idea for kids. The things families (including hers) are looking for:
 - Separate activity for kids from the adult service
 - Some kind of Sunday school type element to teach the kids about God and Jesus's love, Bible stories, etc. Doesn't have to be an hour activity, could just be 10 minutes
- Ann: the prayer pots had a faith-based component and she is looking for other crafts that have that. She felt like it would do better as an in-church activity because the crafts are going out but she doesn't know what's being done with them.
- Jill: it is worth doing the way we're doing now. Amy: agrees and thinks it was a great idea to give them out at THM. She thinks it's one step of being in community and hopefully when we reopen, people will remember and come back to church.
- Candy: Amy had put some things together a couple of years back for when we do have kids in church. They're in the mailroom on top of the mailboxes.
- Peter joined the meeting at this point. He isn't on the all-church mailing list and didn't get the notification.

ONA

- Ann: believes the ONA team have started getting back together.
- Jill: the group met last month. Not all members were able to attend so they used it as a brainstorming session for some near-term items and some items further out. They were supposed to meet this past Tuesday but had to cancel at the last minute. They usually meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm. If anybody wants to join, they're welcome to.
- Ann: are they going to move forward with one-on-one ONA conversations? Jill: the plan was to do so slowly while not meeting in person. Now that we're reopening, it might pick up momentum.

Brochure for town hall

- Candy: they just came in the mail and look terrific. She will take them to town hall on Wednesday.

Miscellaneous

- Bringing up Bob's comment about the church perhaps sponsoring a team. It's on the list for thoroughness. No action was taken.

Finance & Treasurer's Report

BCC YTD Financial Summary	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs Expenses + / -
February	\$18,520	\$14,242	\$4,277

- Bill: we got our loan but are hoping we won't have to pay it back. We won't know until April. It can only be used to pay the minister's salary.
- Ann: any other things to prepare? Bill: if we look at budget now, excluding loan, we're at a \$1,300 deficit. If we don't have to pay off the loan, we're \$4,377 in the black.
- Ann: the Conference got the first loan and didn't have to pay it back. Bill: we shouldn't have to. We can only compensate W2 employees with it. Secretary, Treasurer, Janitor should be W2 employees, not 1099. If we dictate what they do, when, and how, they're W2. We won't change it this year because we'd have to submit IRS paperwork.

Revisiting Reopening of Church

- Gov Sununu issued new Covid guidelines last Thursday.
- Bill: thinks we should reopen according to 50% capacity recommendations. It's going to be hard to say why we're closed if retail stores and others can go back to 100% occupancy. We were allowed to reopen at 50% capacity from August 11 and allow up to 100 people inside.
- Ann: if we look at the recommendation for religious groups, the strong recommendation is to meet outdoors if possible.
- Jill: are there recommendation updates from UCC/UMC? Ann: this week's UCC guidelines came out and recommend churches stay closed at least regarding indoor in-person worship until the end of April. That date is because the guidelines are updated every month and not enough people have been vaccinated.
- Amy: thinks we should reopen too. We worshipped indoor safely last Fall. We have our own guidelines and pews set up and the UV machine. She thinks we're losing momentum and people.
- Nancy: agrees with Amy. After talking with THM people who came Friday and people associated with the senior luncheon, she saw that some people are a little frustrated not coming to church. After seeing other churches in the area open, they think we should be too. She talked to a couple of people at THM who are new to town and were asking if we were open. She talked to some people who used

to come to this church and want to come back. She knows at least one of our members is attending another church. She thinks we can do it safely and it's time.

- Bill: is there a way to do Zoom broadcast during live church? Yes and we have done it before.
- Peter: are we saying we'll restart in-church worship next week? Ann: will defer to Deacons and Cath as they have preparation to do. Cath: checked her Maine appointments and said we can do next Sunday in-person. Expectation she would set is that Palm Sunday service won't have palms and physical items handed out. For Easter, she was going to do the service on the side lawn outdoors and assumed we wouldn't need flowers or sanctuary prep. If we want to do in-sanctuary worship, we have to consider what it would look like in the church.
- Ann: Easter is when we usually get more people. Would we have a more welcoming experience outside where we can host more people? Jill: it's certainly not welcoming if we have to turn people away due to capacity limits. It will be weather-dependent.
- Cath: we won't have bulletins so there will be no paper handouts. It can feel unwelcoming if people don't know what to do.
 - Peter: thinks we can hand out bulletins as long as the greeter wears rubber gloves. People don't have to take them. We can leave the decision to people coming in.
 - Ann: the person handing them out is at increased risk because he/she has to see everyone.
 - Peter: is willing to hand them out as he's been vaccinated.
 - Cath: concern was if whether had a vaccinated Deacon.
 - Nancy & Amy: we can have bulletins available for pickup but not personally handed out.
 - Candy: we can have a QR code for quick access to the bulletins on people's phones.
- Decision: we will do an in-building worship next Sunday without bulletins. We will plan for bulletins on the following Sunday and will figure out Easter later.
- Ann: Is Easter inside or outside? Depending on weather but if indoors, we can use the downstairs hall for overflow.
 - Cath: the TV we use is not downstairs and available for overflow.
 - Sanjay: we can set up the projector in the sanctuary and TV downstairs.
 - Cath: the projector is a less clear image, particularly when it's sunny.
 - Peter: can supply a TV for downstairs if we need it.
- Bill: there are safe ways to support more safe occupancy upstairs. Ann: we measured the spacing last time so it's already set up to meet a 6-foot distance.
- Decision: We will hold Easter outside if the weather is good, inside if bad. Peter: if we do it outside, chairs will dig into soft lawn. Cath: if people are willing to park at town hall, we can do the service in the parking lot.
- Cath: part of the plan for coverage while she was not here included remote worship in the form of pre-recorded services from non-BCC sources for all 6 weeks. We had planned for a separate in-person worship during 3 of those 6 weeks. She didn't think this would be a problem because of the transition. Jill: Cath is out from 4/18 to 5/30. 5/2, 5/9, and 5/23 were the dates tentatively set for in-person worship.
- Jill: there will always be online worship in the coming weeks. Amy: can the televised service be viewed in church by people who want to watch it together? This would be for consistency rather than being off and on regarding the resumption of in-person worship? Cath: yes.
- Ann: if we're phasing back in, are we just putting in-person worship on Zoom or having a separate fully-constructed service on YouTube? Jill: that [Zoom] was the plan prior to today's meeting? Ann: trying to make sure there isn't triple-work.
- Cath: when a human is leading worship, it's easy to Zoom people in. When it's not a human leading, we wouldn't do the Zoom – just the recording. This would be because of a desire for consistency after restarting. The flatscreen TV gives a better experience than projector.
- Ann: for in-person worship during Cath's recovery, were we thinking outdoors? Jill & Cath: yes. Ann: is seeing feedback from people who are not vaccinated that they feel safer outside.

- 3/21, 3/28, 4/4, 5/2, 5/9, 5/23 will be in-person at the church, either inside or outside. Ann: on other weeks, did she hear we would do in-sanctuary viewing of video as requested by Amy? Bill: we should plan on cleaning every week since inside/outside is weather-dependent. Susan: we need to let Susan Laub know.
- Sanjay: should he leave the flatscreen TV upstairs except for Easter if it's needed for indoor overflow? Cath: please leave it upstairs until Easter and we'll figure it out then.
- Maundy Thursday: we don't have to do anything for the Wednesday outdoor event but please clean for the Ferrell wedding.
- Jill: should we take the tape down for the wedding? Susan: had already planned on it. The Deacons will put the tape back afterwards. Cath will send the 4/9 wedding time to Susan so she can plan cleaning & detaping/retaping.
- The tent discussion was shelved because we've decided to restart indoor worship. Bill, Ann, and the Deacons had come to the conclusion not to use the money for it anyway.

Community Parking Lot Use

- The Trustees met last week and felt we should leave things as-is. We should not issue a special invitation so as to avoid liability.
- Signage: we have 2 signs for handicap parking and a sign for basketball hoop users to use the trashcan. They want to add a new sign under an existing one to protect us, saying the church is not responsible for any loss or damage.
- Cath: the example sign language sent out by email was a little off-putting. She would want more welcoming language.
- Bill: the insurance company recommended signs and said that if we formally go to the town/library saying they can use our parking lot, they have to put us on their insurance. It's similar to how we had to add the Methodist church to our insurance policy.
- Sue moved to put an additional sign on the existing location, Candy seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Plans for Cath's Medical Absence

- Jill: the wording in the Deacon's report was from before Cath found out about her surgery date so the last 2 bullets address that.
- We will provide an online service. Some weeks will be prerecorded and some weeks a Zoom broadcast of the live service happening in church. A link to the prerecorded service will be sent out on Saturday preceding the service. For live services, we will send an email on Saturday with the Zoom link.
- The 3 Sundays we talked about in-person worship [5/2, 5/9, 5/23] are fairly firm. They will be outdoors if weather permits. How easy is it to Zoom outdoors? Cath: we won't Zoom outdoors in-person services. Jill: if we get rained out, do we want to Zoom the resulting indoor backup plan. Cath: the issue isn't Zooming, it's getting a link out with zero notice for the last second decision. She says the plan is to have a prerecorded service for people who won't be there, and live worship for people who are there, at least during her outage.
- Jill: is changing the language of the notification to correct that the service isn't rescheduled for weather but moved indoors.
- On 5/2, the plan is to have worship led by Teri Motley. It would be a communion service. They will double check with her that she's good with worshiping indoors if rained out.
- Bill: asked for clarification given we had previously said during this meeting that we would hold indoors worship except for Easter. Now we're talking about outdoors as the default. Cath: yes, it did shift during the conversation. Sanjay was asked for clarification from his notes. He acknowledged that the conclusion did shift. We identified all the dates because the Trustees had to plan for indoors

as plan B for bad weather. Jill: some people are comfortable coming to outdoors worship but not inside. If we make outdoors the default plan and indoors the backup, it allows more people to worship together because it captures the people who are only/more comfortable outdoors. Nancy: we have to consider blackfly season too.

- Peter proposed deciding on Wednesdays for the coming Sunday and having the church sign say to assume outdoors for days other than when there's bad weather. Cath: it's too much work to update the sign.
- Cath: we should plan for indoors worship during the next 2 weeks because it's March in New England. Susan: asked Bill to run the UV disinfecting light the next 2 weeks.
- Peter: we should update the sign outside to indicate in-person worship is resuming. Cath: asked for one Sunday's grace and to have the sign updated for Palm Sunday so she can get back in the swing.
- Coffee hour: should we have one? Sanjay: don't say no coffee hour explicitly, similar to our parking lot policy. Peter: just don't make coffee or food. Ann: our guidelines say no coffee hour. Should they be updated? Conclusion was to not have a coffee hour that's by invitation and with food offered. Bill: people are going to meet anyway like they did in the parking lot.
- Cath: if we don't have to feed and coordinate food prep during this busiest part of the worship prep season, that would be helpful. Bill: we weren't talking about having food.
- Jill: do we still offer Zoom coffee hour? Cath: she can do it from her office at church but no one came after prior in-person worship. People who wanted to see people came to the church and Zoom coffee hour was empty.
- Jill: for the period when Cath is away and there will be pre-recorded worship, she's guessing there will be lower attendance in church to watch the recording. Would it make sense to do Zoom coffee hour for those services? Maybe the Deacons should figure that out? Ann: happy to let the Deacons decide since they orchestrate things anyway. Cath said they'd figure it out.

Trustees Report

- Reset clocks and thermostats, replaced batteries at church last night.
- Is looking to replace the thermostat in Fellowship Hall because it doesn't distinguish between Saturday & Sunday. The motivation is because the oil bill came in high.
- Susan also noticed the weather stripping under the side door came off and we may have lost heat through the large gap there.

Pastoral Relations Report

- Peter: Nothing to report
- Cath: they did meet middle of last month. Doesn't think they'll meet again until she gets back in June.

Outreach Report

- Diaper drive in February for Marguerite's Place-Collected 2,725 diapers/pullups and 5,060 baby wipes. Great response from the Brookline & Hollis Communities. Dropped off to Marguerite's Place.
- March Collection-Cleaning supplies, trash bags & paper towels for Janice's House. Safe emergency shelter run by Bridges for domestic abuse victims and their children.
- Senior luncheon March 20th & drop off for items for Janice's House
- Next Senior Luncheon-May 15th
- Made a \$200 donation to a Hollis family in need of a heating system
- Very excited with the response to collections – it well exceeded what Amy thought they'd collect
- This month's cleaning supply response was overwhelming as well
- Megan does a lot of Outreach's social media posting. Not only are people donating to active drives but they're having online conversation about things they want to donate.

- People want to give, despite the difficult times. Senior Luncheon – people are saying what they’re going to bring and asking what they can.
- Cath: asked if Amy would provide pictures to put in the bulletin for people who didn’t see the collections first hand.

Deacons’ Report

- the Deacons met via Zoom on 02/28/21.
- decided to move forward with 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.
- no Communion Easter Sunday, plan to have Communion on 4/18 instead.
- reviewed rental prices for a tent for summer services, decided not to move forward at this time.
- the Deacons will call the more senior members of the church to ask whether they need help getting signed up / getting to Covid vaccines.
- the Deacons met via Zoom on 03/07/21 to discuss worship plan for Catherine's surgical recovery period.
- During Catherine’s surgical recovery period from April 18 - May 30, it is the Deacons’ intention to provide a pre-recorded online service every week from various sources. We also hope to provide some in person services outdoors, on the side lawn, during that period. If an in-person service gets rained-out, it will be rescheduled for another Sunday. We plan to hire Rev. Teri Motley to lead us in worship one Sunday, outdoors on the side lawn. We will have Communion on the Sunday that Teri leads us in worship

Minister’s Report:

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 28.25 hours/week, which puts me between 17.5 to 80 hours over since Sept. 13. This time last year, I was averaging 25.7 hours/week.
- Pastoral counseling over the phone & in person
- Beginning plans for Brett Ferrell & Nicole Meany’s wedding on 4/9.
- Resuming work with Jill on coverage for knee surgery.
- Virtual coffee hours on 2/14, 2/21, 2/28, 3/7.
- Online Prayer Group: 3/3.
- Creating a video that includes a QR code for our Dedication of Gifts prayer in the on-line service.
- Continuing work to see if we can flesh out project around memorializing Covid deaths with other groups in town.
- Planning B Easter 5-Proper 8.
- Getting pastoral care coverage set for my surgery window.
- Attending a one-hour academic lecture on a new translation of the Pentateuch from Bowdoin College.
- Attended a 90-minute session on Lenten Worship Planning through the NH UCC
- Attended a 90-minute session on setting Psalm 13 to music through the BTS
- Printing & forward filing for B Easter 5-Proper 8.

Services:

- 2/14: On our journey of faith, we'll encounter the Cross and be overwhelmed. That's the way it's supposed to be.
- 2/17: Text only Ash Wednesday service.
- 2/21: What are you drowning in.
- 2/28: Use your experience in the pandemic to really get a feel for what Good Friday felt like when you didn't know Easter was coming.
- 3/7: Acknowledging that idolatry still pulls us away from God.

Regular Meetings:

Cabinet, Deacons, PRC

- Is grateful to the Deacons, Yi Fan for music, help for technology now that we're going back to in-church worship.

New or Other Business:

- none

The meeting was closed in prayer at 9:34 am by Rev. Cath.