

# BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 6/13/2021

Submitted by: Sanjay Cherian

## In Attendance (via Zoom videoconference):

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

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

## Calendar Review

- June 18 THM cooking
- July 4<sup>th</sup> – the town sent out note saying we were having a parade.
  - Cath told them we'd have a quick service (15 min prayers & blessings on side lawn), then turn our chairs around and enjoy the parade.
  - Jill: what time? Cath: Line up at 9:30 to start at 10. Amy confirmed that was the usual schedule.
  - Ann: is this when we're switching to 9 am services? Cath: thinks we're switching next week, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in June. There was discussion whether this should change. We confirmed we'd stick with next week. Candy will update the calendar.
  - Bell-ringing. Ann & John will be there, as will Sanjay. Cath: Howard is normally our ambassador but with his kids not vaccinated, she doesn't think he will be there this year. How many people do we need? Sanjay: 3 is the minimum, 1 on the rope, 2 on the stairwells. Ann is Bill Quigley's contact.

## Fundraisers & Financial Impact

### Christmas Faire

- This is the big one. It probably needs a committee right now to start planning. Ann asked Amy if she helped with it last year. Carol had made notes. Amy has notes for the breakfast buffet but doesn't think she has Christmas Faire notes. She can help but can't chair with the wedding and other commitments. [Sanjay checked with Carol a few days later and confirmed there is no playbook for the Christmas Faire, just loose notes on her computer.]
- Amy asked Bill what we made last year. He doesn't know offhand because December's THM and other things are combined with it. Rena says it's \$2,100 for the Christmas Faire last year.
- Amy: the bigger question is what type of Christmas Faire would we have?

- Ann: is trying to remember if \$2,100 includes the soup & chili supper revenue as part of the Faire last year.
- Bill: would like to see the Faire, soup & chili, and THM separated in financial reporting. If you're only going to make \$2,000 and spend 6 months and many people-hours, is it worth doing?
- Rena: in Nov, we took in \$1,299, Dec \$590.
- Cath: recalls that last year, we had extras – dips, whoopie pies. Amy thinks one month was dessert (whoopie pies), and another was dips.
- Ann: what was the raffle item last year? Amy: A fire pit.
- Bill: also what is the status of the church opening?
- Sanjay: this is an opportunity to try something new. We live in a different world than the one where the Christmas Faire was done. We don't want to do someone else's labor of love but not as well as they would have. This gives someone else a chance to come up with something new.
- Cath: there may be some value we learned in the last year from extending THM. What can we do to have those customers be able to contribute to, support, etc. that's part of the activity? Maybe less of a one-day activity and make it multi-day. Extending what you already have instead of creating a whole separate thing.
- Ann: won't close the topic now. It's good to have on the table. We can start talking to people about holidays.
- Cath: right now, she can't make the jams. She can't stand as long as it requires.

### Breakfasts

- Ann felt like it was a lot of work for not a lot of money. Are we going to have the church open for eating in?
- Bill: thinks having the church open is bigger question. With everything else open (stores, restaurants, etc.), not being able to go to church is an issue.
- Jill: do we have numbers? Bill: Usually around \$200. We do 3 of them. The spaghetti supper is usually \$400-500. They are having the Ghost Run this year.
- Amy: agrees that the bigger question is whether we're open or not.
- Rena. We made \$1,000 from all breakfasts in each of 2018-2019. So ~\$250/breakfast.

### **Reopening Guidelines**

- Bill notes the Catholic church, Hollis, and Mason churches are open. Even Cornerstone is open (masks optional as per CDC). We're the only one not open.
- Bill wants to open; Candy and Amy agree. Amy: people can make their own decisions. Bill: Hollis does live Zoom as well for people who don't want to come. Ann: is there no online non-real-time version? Bill: as per the Hollis web site, only Zoom & in-person.
- Sanjay: would like to be open as well, with safety protocols to be discussed.
- Bill: Nancy doesn't want to come to outdoor services because it's too loud with traffic for her to hear.
- Cath: for people who aren't able to be vaccinated, do we want to make allowances for them that stores and restaurants wouldn't? Sanjay: would rather be more inclusive than less, not accounting for the work involved. Thinks Zoom is less inclusive than in person.
- Cath: appreciates the noise issue. Thinks outdoors is more inclusive and welcoming. Ann: do we still move inside for bad weather? Cath: yes.
- Sanjay asked what being open means to the people who wanted to be open? Bill: open means open – indoor worship, Fellowship Hall, outside groups, suppers, dinners, etc. Optional to wear masks. Just like the senior luncheon, you could come eat lunch inside with friends if you wanted, or take out a meal. People who came were overjoyed to sit with friends and it was their choice. Some chose not to

go inside but it was up to individual choice. Right now, people think the church is still closed and if you want to go, you sit outside and nothing else is going on at the building.

- Jill: understands Bill's point. Something to keep in mind is that this definition of open can mean closed to people who aren't comfortable worshipping indoors.
- Amy: agrees with Bill's statements. When Ann sent out the email asking about people's comfort levels, did she get feedback? Ann: yes, people who have concerns even if we were to reopen to inside worship wouldn't be comfortable with everything being optional. The way they put it, if you're vaccinated, you get to do x,y,z. If unvaccinated, you have to make other choices. Ann would rather not make the environment one where people can infer things about others based on the choices they make. There were people who said they wouldn't come back if we were inside without social distancing and other protections.
- Bill: we're talking about two things. One is Sunday services the other is breakfasts. etc. We can have separate rules for each.
- Sanjay: noted that Christianity to him is not about majority rules but hunting down the one lost sheep. He doesn't want a policy that models exclusion.
  - Amy: whatever we do, we're going to leave someone out. This situation isn't going away and we're going to have to keep living with it.
  - Jill: agrees with Amy, there's always going to be someone who doesn't come.
- Ann: we're not policing people. Noted that there was an in-person senior luncheon so clearly guidelines are just guidelines and people are making their own decisions.
- Cath: do we want to say we're open? That use of Fellowship Hall reverts to prior patterns under CDC guidelines, etc. ("Hannaford rules")? Worship is x,y,z? There may be different rules for worship than community events and we recognize that being welcoming in worship is different than being welcoming in senior luncheon. Does that help? Ann: yes, worship is the substance of who we are, the other things are optional. Worship particularly indoors: social distance, encourage mask, ventilation.
- Sanjay: likes this. For worship in particular, he would like those who want to come to be able to come, particularly those who want to come but need to care for their people's safety. People who choose not to because they don't like the terms can choose not to come.
- Bill: is okay with this general idea. We can ask neighboring churches how they decided. Says Hollis rules say you can sing low or hum behind masks. Mason: is open and having coffee hour in their hall. Our fundraisers are all optional and we can offer the takeout choice.
- Cath: other thing we could do is have the social hall open and to groups. She would be happy to talk to neighboring churches. She would like to make our own choice, e.g., outdoors most of the time in summer, indoors and we request people to wear masks, revisit in September. Some people are saying it's a bit too early to come back and we can respect them. For now, we should make worship entry easier. If it's raining in summer, worship indoors with masks recommended and socially distanced.
- Sanjay: proposed singing outdoors. Ann asked if it would be masked. He was intentionally unspecific. He is not yet comfortable with communal singing indoors but wanted the togetherness of outdoor singing masked or not. Ann: recommendations tend to be for masked singing. Sanjay asked if that applied to outdoors also? Ann didn't know.
- Cath: wants to get back to singing as that is her definition of when Covid is over. At the moment, Yi Fan helps with finding videos. Having to do 2 versions of music might be too much work. We can cancel offline services if necessary. When people watch YouTube service, it's not Sundays at 10. If we did Zoom only, we would have to figure out how to post it. Ann agreed to watch today's service if live Zoomed. Sanjay to send her the Zoom link.
- Cath: most people who do Zoom post it to YouTube to solve the asynchronous viewer problem. We have music rights issue for songs not out of our hymnal but we can deal with that.

- Cath: our 2 accompanists haven't come back to in-person worship yet. She is not good with picking music, and leading singing without an accompanist. Both of the accompanists need a little more time to be comfortable.
- Ann: should she record today's Zoom test? Sanjay: not necessarily as he will record it from the transmitting device. Cath: asked Ann to watch the test live because sometimes it looks fine to the recorder but the viewer experiences break-up. Ann: might record locally as well.
- Cath: separate from that, what guidelines do we want to put out for June to early September? Ann: recapped existing plan as outdoor worship, some social distancing, masks optional (observes people take them off when they sit down) or recommended until seated, indoors if inclement weather. Working on the singing part – it's not yet nailed down. Cath: intention to begin singing outdoors. At least for now if we go indoors, we won't be singing while we're working it out. Doesn't know if we will do a singing update to the policy when we figure it out. Happy to work with people to figure out how worship plan & design fits with the singing part.
- Ann: after today's test, might we change from prerecorded to being Zoom recording only? Cath: if we're not really recording a live service, she'll handle technology. If we're recording a live service, she would like one person doing all technology stuff so she can focus on the service. When she does the pre-recorded services, there's a good quality service online. If in-person worship is a little lower quality, it evens out because we're in person. Given the size of the church, it will take away from someone's worship experience to have to record. Sanjay: volunteered to do the tech stuff. Candy offered to help.
- Ann: we've done a summer modification for guidelines – are we tabling in-person meals for fall? Cath: thought Fellowship Hall being open meant it was fully open. If we want to do a pot luck lunch, we can. There was agreement that Fellowship Hall is open. Amy: so, if an outside group wants to do a dinner, can they do it without a Cabinet vote? Consensus was yes.
- Cath: if invited to do a wedding/funeral that can't be socially distanced, do we (Cabinet) want to hear about it? Bill: doesn't think we need to hear about it. It's their choice. Ann: we need deacons to support some of those events. Would they be comfortable? Would we get enough people to support it given no safety protocols? Cath: says she'll ask them. Suspects she could ask the deacons and the congregation for help. Music would be the tricky part.
- Ann: Going back to breakfasts etc. are we doing them?
  - Bill: breakfasts are run by the deacons so it's up to them. The spaghetti supper is run by someone else.
  - Cath: one year we couldn't do the spaghetti supper and someone from the conservation committee figured out how to feed people and we just provided the space. We have to give them enough time to organize it.
  - Ann: did we do it in partnership with some other organization and share the revenue? Cath: doesn't object to either scenario but doesn't remember that.
  - Bill: the bigger thing is who would be the organizer? It's a go if someone wants to organize it, no go if not.
  - Jill: anything we do takes effort and we have a limited number of people. Question is if we eliminate all fundraisers that's a problem but are the fundraisers we do a good use of time, assuming someone is willing to organize it. We wouldn't prevent anyone who's interested in organizing something. What's the best way to use our limited resources?
  - Bill: sometimes it's more than the money but the goodwill in the community. Like the THM that's generated talk about the church not only in Brookline. A lot of people donate food to THM so as we do fundraisers, we're also asking people to donate to that. Do we dry up the well by asking for too much donation?
  - Amy: people bring money as well as goods to contribute to Outreach drives, like at senior luncheon and THMs.

- Jill: can talk with the deacons about putting together breakfasts. Would it make sense to schedule them for fall when people are getting back in the groove or do we want to try something in the summer to advertise being open again? We would also have to talk to them about feasibility. Bill: we also have to ask the deacons who is willing to be there. Jill: it would be a mix of deacons and others.
- Cath: if we're doing something in the summer, we're going to have the most people at our doorstep on July 4<sup>th</sup>. It's only 2 weeks away but we could do burritos, coffee, OJ. The other option is some day in the fall that's important to town sports, where the focus is not on our event but on the community around us. It leverages social capital that comes out of the meal.
  - Bill: the winter carnival was the one that worked well. The events that made money were the ones focused on town.
  - Amy: breakfasts are so hit or miss money-wise that correlating with something else going on is good. Unless we're doing July 4<sup>th</sup>, summer is probably not a good time to do a breakfast.
- Even if someone wants to head up breakfasts, there were a lot of non-deacons helping on site and making food and dropping it off. Cath: we don't have to have as full a menu as usual. Amy: agrees and has Carol's breakfast notes, which were very detailed. Candy: asked for a copy of those notes (Jill wanted a copy also) to put on Google drive. Cath: noted that was Carol's way and we may have to do something that's more us.
- Ann: any other things that need to be brought up?
- Jill: deacons talked about lake services. People have enjoyed it but the town has been having trouble with people from MA coming in early and camping out on the beach without paying and hanging out all day. The deacons have been going back and forth about whether it made sense or not. She knows at least one person from the congregation has told her they're excited for that to start up again.
  - Cath: we have also had people approach us saying let's not get into the middle of a fight. Ann: are the lake people going to be more rigorous about policing membership? Bill: when the beach is open, you just need a free placard to park. To go on the beach, you need a paid membership. Outside hours, when the gate is open, anyone can park there. Russell would get keys to the gate but people would come in and park while we were having our service.
  - Bill: if we're doing outdoor services in summer, why even do lake services? Jill: change of scenery, perhaps less road traffic.
  - Bill: says we should stay away from the lake this year so we don't add to any feud.
  - Amy: let the town get things sorted out this year and approach them next year to see what we need to do.
  - Jill: will take this back to deacons as a recommendation we have no lake services this year.
- Cath: has jury duty starting the week of June 28<sup>th</sup>, one day one trial. Ann: June 27<sup>th</sup> is ONA Sunday for the national coalition so many worship resources are available.

## **Faith Formation**

- Cath: there is not enough time to discuss it today. She is excited about it and thinks it's the right move.

## **Deacons' Report**

- Deacons met on Sunday, May 23, 2021.
- Discussed possibility of having services at Lake Potanipo this summer - Deacons would like input from the Cabinet.
- Will continue to worship outdoors at this time, weather permitting.
- Will continue to offer on-line worship each week for now.

## **Finance & Treasurer's Report**

BCC YTD Financial Summary	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs Expenses + / -
May	\$34,212	\$35,905	(\$1,693)

## Outreach Report

- May 15th Senior Luncheon-People brought items for food pantry & Veterans bedding Drive. Interest is dropping for the pickup or delivery. They are asking when we can have a traditional sit-down senior luncheon. We are thinking Sept or Oct and still offer take out also.
- Amy dropped off the bedding items and Uber & Walmart Gift Cards to Harbor Cares. Items went specifically to Dalianis House Veterans homeless shelter in Nashua. Amy was offered a tour of the homeless shelter and was able to speak with Sean, one of the case managers, about their program. Sean said we would be able to schedule another tour in the future with the Outreach Board.
- Thank you to Candy & Megan for all their advertising efforts with our collections this year. The communities of Brookline & Hollis are getting more involved in our Drives, and it also helped coordinating drop offs with THM & senior luncheons. Our communities are seeing firsthand what Outreach & BCC is doing to support organizations in the area.

## Minister's Report

(3/8 through 6/6)

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 11/22-3/14.

From 3/21 until today, we've offered remote and in-person worship (including Maundy Thursday). I was on medical leave from 4/11-5/9 (I had been scheduled for knee replacement surgery on 4/15, but that was postponed). During some of those weeks, the in-person service was watching the remote service together in the sanctuary.

- Averaging 27.9 hours/week, which puts me between 14 to 109 hours over since Sept. 13. This time last year, I was averaging 26.3 hours/week.
- Planning and joyously officiating the wedding for Brett Ferrell & Nicole Meany
- Helping the Deacons prepare for worship coverage while I expected to be out with surgery: taking notes on what I did logistically, pulling together resources for weekly Joys & Concerns, creating library of Household Prayers for bulletins, creating worship briefings for 5/9 & 5/23, two worship services that would be lay led during my absence, giving Candy a quick overview of the video editing software I use.
- Pastoral counseling over the phone & in person
- Flag ceremony for Dave Larkin at Home, Health & Hospice at the hospice house.
- Making sure Jen Szilagyi got the information she needed for her October wedding.
- Supporting discussion about Covid memorial project.
- Five weeks of medical leave after three days of hospitalization.
- Virtual coffee hours on 3/14, 3/21, 4/4, 5/16, 5/23, 5/30, 6/6 (not every coffee hour was attended, but I was there for at least 15 minutes just to be sure)
- Online Prayer Group: 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 5/26, 6/2
- Providing video reflection to a colleague who needed emergency pulpit coverage in March
- Making sure the pastoral care coverage set for my surgery would cover my medical leave

- Publishing B Easter 5-Proper 8 (May & June).
- Worship planning for July, August and the first half of September (B Proper 9 -19).
- Getting the Easter letter written.
- Attended a five-hour Boundary Training session through the NHC UCC
- Attended a 90-minute session on Using Sacred Music as a Resource for Faith Formation through the BTS
- Restoring my office post-Covid evacuation. Lots of books needed to be reshelved and lots of new books had arrived.
- Memorial Day Holiday

#### Services:

- 3/14: Getting past our modern-day skepticism about Moses' snake on a stick as a snake bite cure.
- 3/21: Being ready for the transformation to come from God in the new covenant
- 3/28: Palm Sunday, a series of reflections on the Passion story from Mark
- 4/1: Maundy Thursday service, prayers in response to the reading from John
- 4/2: Good Friday Vigil (bulletin only, Candy & I did it together)
- 4/4: Easter remote service included a special Flowering of the Cross video, in person services included hand out bulletins for the first time in over a year. Based on the Easter story from Mark (didn't use the traditional reading from John). Letting Jesus take us where he's going, rather than keeping him here with us

#### [Medical leave]

- 5/16: Following Jesus means witnessing his work in our daily lives, even in small frustrating corners of those lives.
- 5/23: Pentecost: how Jesus set us up to follow in his footsteps and continue his work.
- 5/30: Eternal life is in this world, in the face of fear.
- 6/6: God chose human companionship over human perfection, which may make a tough story a bit easier to hear.

#### Regular Meetings: Cabinet, Deacons, Moderator, Clergy Support

### **Trustees Report**

- The Trustees are replacing the shingles and cleaning out the basement. Peter brought shingles and we will start the project on 6/17, beginning with the handicap ramp entrance since the THM is also that day. No date set yet for the basement.

### **Publicity**

- In May we posted on Facebook about the weekly service. We also posted about the vaccines available, and the take home meal. Our webpage has been pretty consistent with the number of views each day/week/month.
- We do update the website weekly. This graph shows the unique views for the month of May. For this graph the unique visitors are each individual log on to the website. If one person logs on multiple times in a week they count as 1 visit

The meeting ended at 9:30 am with a prayer from Rev Cath.