

BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 7/11/2021

Submitted by: Sanjay Cherian

In Attendance:

| Name | Role | Voting? |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Catherine Merrill | Minister | N |
| Ann Desrochers | Moderator | Y |
| Peter Bretschneider | Assistant Moderator | Y |
| Sanjay Cherian | Clerk | Y |
| Amy Razzaboni | Outreach | Y |
| Bill Dunbar | Finance | Y |
| Rena Duncklee | Treasurer | Y |
| Susan Haight | Trustees | Y |
| Jill Aitken | Deacons (Zoom) | Y |

The meeting started at 10:16 am with a prayer from Rev. Catherine. We had a quorum.

Calendar Review

- Even though everything on our main web page is correct, the calendar still says services are at 10 am and needs correction.
- September 11th is a Saturday and the 20th anniversary of 9/11. The Deacons thought it would be good to combine with our observation with the town's. Cath reached out to Tad. While the town isn't planning anything, he suggested we check with the Legion. So, Cath reached out to Greg D'Arbonne. She's working with the deacons to figure out how to do something more meaningful and that's more of a community thing. The current plan is to have an activity with the town on the 11th and service on the 12th but less focused on 9/11.
- We need to do a stewardship campaign in the fall. Susan: we found the Pony Express records yesterday and put them in the secretary's office. Bill: we really need to push online giving because you set it up for the year and don't think about it again. There was discussion around whether there was discomfort around not putting a contribution in the plate when it's being passed around.
 - People indicated they were generally not uncomfortable.
 - Cath: at Newburyport they had a basket of little crosses so online givers could take one when they came in and put it in the plate.
 - Bill: online giving shows less of a summer dip than physical giving.
 - Cath: we may want to redesign pledge forms to make online the focus.
- Amy: October 2nd will be an in-person senior luncheon
- THM: September 10th planned, currently thinking October 15th for the next.

Review of Prior Meeting Minutes

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

Faith Formation

- Ann handed out the job description for the Christian Educator. She noted that at the last Cabinet meeting, Sanjay had brought up the short-term/long-term vision issue regarding this hire. She has discussed it with Rev Cath and they concluded that the immediate need was for something short-term. We have to meet the need for immediate offerings for kids. We will revisit the long-term strategic vision later.
 - We have tweaked the language of the job description to be more about being welcoming.
 - Cath noted that the job seems to be about kids and giving them a great experience but it's really a service to the parents. Kids having a great experience contributes to it.
- Cath: next week we're going to resume children's message in worship.
- Amy: background checks – she used to do them but hasn't logged in to the system for a couple of years.
 - Cath: Lindsey was doing them so she has all the credentials. Amy thinks the credentials are also in the lock box in the secretary's office.
 - Ann: asks who we are using for the check. Amy: she has to look in the folder. She thinks the company changed names a couple of times.
 - Ann: thinks if we do the normal background check, we can do it fairly inexpensively through Praesidium for \$6.95. The cost will be more if we have to check the driving record as with youth group volunteers. Amy recalls what we used before being \$9. She can try to login and see what happens.
- Cath: we should reach out to families with kids about who they know who might be interested, like their babysitters, etc., i.e. people who already have connection to some of the kids and see if we can start there. Bill: consider people who do the after-school program at Scribbles.
- Susan: will step up and help, e.g. with crafts. Amy thinks there are still some crafts she made a while back on the bookcase in the mail room.
- Ann: we need a team of people on the interview committee for the Christian Educator. Cath, Ann, and Susan volunteered.
- Peter: who is going to reach out to the families? Cath & Ann.
- Peter: assuming we don't get anybody, how will we address the need? Do we want to set up a small activity (not necessarily Sunday School)? Peter says he can help with that if someone wants to do something – a crafty thing.
 - Ann: has lots of curriculum like a little story that the craft goes with that we can download for free.
 - Peter: can we assume we have to do something for September?
 - Cath: we need to be realistic that if we keep asking adults to step up and there's nothing to step up to, it can be hard on adults.
 - Peter: we have to do something for kids and adults have to realize it's a best effort.
 - Jill: agrees with Peter that it would be good to have something ready to go. She knows it can be hard on adults but we can make it clear to volunteering adults the nature of what we're doing as we build things up. She ran into another classmate of Jocelyn's at the July 4th parade whose mom said that her daughter keeps saying that she wants to come to our church. Jill told her the current state of things and that we're trying to pull something together. Cath thanked Jill for her advocacy.
- Peter: has there been any thought of creating a Sunday worship for kids day? i.e. a whole service for kids? Maybe the band plays and we can advertise it as for kids. Maybe a kickoff day. Cath: is struggling with the issue that we get the same people as usual when we advertise a special service. We need word of mouth to draw new people. Scouting Sunday is the service with the most kids in it. She has always tailored it to be scouting-focused. We're trying to do what Lindsey taught us: start with what works and try to expand laterally. What Cath has gotten is that kids' services are disappointing.

If we expand on Scouting Sunday or tie it into a kids' sports season, maybe that's the kind of thing that will work.

- Ann: are we still doing the Blessing of the Animals? Cath: it's moved around in time and still doesn't get many non-church people. It's usually around the time of the Feast of St Francis.

Fundraisers & Financial Impact

- Ann: Thanks Donna for retiring and stepping up to run the Christmas event. It's going to be different than the old Faire – maybe a couple of nicely themed raffle baskets with early ticket sales. In talking to Megan, Ann thinks it's still important to do soup & chili after tree lighting.
- So far we have heard nothing about people who want to take on breakfasts. Jill: spoke to the deacons. Because the deacons focus on the spiritual needs of the church, a breakfast fundraiser wasn't in line with their focus on internal community. The August pot luck seems more in line with their mission. It's not a fundraiser but a congregational communal event.
- Ghost Run is being held but no idea if we're doing spaghetti supper. Cath: if we're not, they need to know. When they did it, they needed our space so we need to be able to let them know if we're doing it or not. Amy: when? Cath: near Columbus Day, probably October 10th. Bill: October 16th & 17th so dinner would be 15th – Friday night. Maybe not a great day to do THM. Amy: will let Megan know. Peter: maybe combine and do spaghetti for THM and supper. Bill: usually it's people making sauces and bringing them in, salads. Cath: reminded us we need gluten-free, vegan options for the runners so logistics need to be considered. Susan: said she would coordinate the spaghetti supper if the THM scheduling conflict for that day is resolved. Doesn't think we need to be elaborate. Bill: already sold out of registrations for this year. A couple of people noted that Carol had good notes from doing the supper in the past. Cath: will reach out to Carol to see. Bill: may be able to get spaghetti if he knows how much – overloaded at food pantry. Amy: we might still have some here from before.
- [After the meeting, Amy reported that the THM group had moved the October cook day to October 22nd.]

Knee Surgery:

- Cath: was tested this week. Of 4 doctors who need to agree, one has said it's okay with her and now she needs approval from other 3, any of whom can shelve it for 3 months.
 - Ann: so deacons are in a holding pattern but have it under control?
 - Jill: the deacons have a plan of action that will be implemented as soon as there's a date and if the date changes, they will work with the people involved.

Worship Guidelines and Hybrid Meetings

- Ann: asked Jill how attending this meeting by Zoom was going? Jill: said okay for now but would be nice to see everyone in the room.
 - Peter: for \$299, we can get a self-steering camera that aims to the vicinity of whoever is speaking.
 - Ann: asked Jill how the sound was. Jill: pretty good and it is the most important part. She can hear clearly most of the time and can't hear Sanjay typing immediately next to the iPad being used for Zoom.
- Ann: asked Bill and Rena if we have budget for a Zoom-specific camera. Cath: do we need it now?
 - Ann: are any other committees having needs?
 - Cath: The 9 am service is a problem for meetings before worship. Asked how Outreach was managing given that they are likely the biggest board.
 - Amy: Outreach is meeting in person and she has left it open for people to say if they're uncomfortable.
 - Jill is okay with the current set up and not a new camera. Sanjay noted that he placed the iPad today in a location that favored audio over video. Jill: agrees with this tradeoff.

- Ann: Is there anything in the guidelines that needs modifications before the end of summer? There was discussion between Bill and Ann about the guidelines and the need to cover recovery from emergency shutdown like testing water if it hasn't been running through the system for a while.
 - Susan: has been coming to run water and flush toilets just for the health of our drains.
 - Jill: reminds us of the need to run sinks and run the upstairs bathroom as well.

Deacons' Report

- Jill: we've covered what she would have reported earlier in the meeting.

Finance & Treasurer's Report

| BCC YTD Financial Summary | Actual Income | Actual Expenses | Income vs Expenses + / - |
|---------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| June | \$42,170 | \$42,361 | (\$191) |

- Bill: this month we did pretty well become someone left us an unexpected \$2,500 in their will. Bill has been working on the TD Affinity program as we haven't received our check. Rena has gone to the Milford branch but they don't know about it. Bill has called. TD doesn't seem to know. Finally got a call back from the former Brookline/Milford branch manager confirming it. She said she'd contact the Affinity department but Bill is still waiting. Corporate thinks it was a local program but former branch manager said there was a whole department managing it.
- Worked on loan forgiveness next, also through TD Bank. The web site did not have what Bill needed to enter information. He called by phone and was on hold for 30 minutes.
- If we get Affinity money, normally \$2,500, that will help. The loan forgiveness, a little over \$5000, will remove that pending liability and also help.
- Cath: thanked Bill for being relentless and expressed sympathy for TD Bank who will not be able to escape his efforts.
- Bill: looking at the summary sheets, we still have \$72,000 in cash available to keep us going and haven't had to touch trust funds. We're one of the luckier churches. Susan: expressed gratitude that we sold the parsonage.

ONA Committee Update

- The committee has been placing the following message in the church bulletin.
 The Open and Affirming team sends you greetings. It has been over a year since we began the stay at home precautions due to Covid. We have greatly missed our church family. Last year we had just started to have conversations with our fellow members to listen to your thoughts and concerns around the Open and Affirming process. Due to Covid we were not able to continue the one to one conversations, and we stopped our team meetings as well. We have recently started to meet again as a team and are hoping to resume the one to one conversations with our fellow members. We will be reaching out to all members of the congregation throughout the spring and summer. However, to help facilitate questions and suggestions we have also created a question box to gather any questions or suggestions you may have. It is located on the table in the upstairs hall as you enter the sanctuary. In addition, we welcome your comments via email or post. These can be addressed to ONA c/o Brookline Community Church 2 Main Street, Brookline NH 03033. This will help us to facilitate conversations and will help us through the process. We look forward to our conversations as we thoughtfully explore the process of Open and Affirming together.
- Jill: the committee did not end up meeting last month – she doesn't remember why. Brian Rader spoke to them probably in May, joining their Zoom. He talked about what he's done in his life to get laws put into place. Jill believes they're meeting again this Tuesday. Ann: won't be there because it's the week of General Synod.

Outreach Report

- Just working on the senior luncheon. Activities they would normally be doing aren't going on. Amy expects they will come back and Outreach has collections planned for the Fall, etc.

Minister's Report

- Actively working on worship planning for Fall in case of surgical recovery.
- She will keep bringing up using Psalms more in worship.
- She will see what can be pulled together for 9/11 & special events in the Fall.

Pastoral Relations Committee

- No meeting this summer

Trustees Report

- Basement cleanup
- Peter redid our roofs over the entryways.
- Susan & Melanie will be cleaning up the basement with a shop vac this week.
- There's a dead tree outside that they'll be looking at taking down at some point. It's not a major concern for now. Peter: we should wait until Fall to take that tree down.
- Ann: if we're moving forward with child Christian Education, we need to clean out a classroom space, whatever room works. Susan: thinking of a 3rd floor classroom, which needs some organization and cleanup.

New or Other Business

- Cath: do we (Cabinet) want to meet in August? Peter: we probably should, maybe by Zoom, not necessarily on Sunday, to know what we're doing in September. Ann: would we prefer the evening? We converged on August 10th or 11th. Ann will set it up.
- Sanjay: described New Beginnings's plans and schedule: practice every other week, no regularly-scheduled Sundays, letting Cath know when we have material ready and letting her schedule it. Cath: she just needs to know Christmas Eve ahead of time.

The meeting ended at 11:25 am with a prayer from Rev Cath.