

BCC Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Date: 05/08/2022

Submitted by: Sanjay Cherian

In Attendance:

Name	Role	Voting?
Catherine Merrill	Minister	N
Ann Desrochers	Moderator	Y
Sanjay Cherian	Clerk	Y
Amy Razzaboni	Outreach	Y
John Panto	Deacons	Y
Candy Tiner	Publicity	Y
Susan Haight	Trustees	Y

The meeting started at 8:36 am with a prayer from Rev Cath. We had a quorum of filled cabinet positions.

Calendar Review

- THM request from Cath: put up a sign thanking people for how much money we raised for Ukraine.
- Senior Luncheon is still May 21st.
- June THM is on the 18th, with a BBQ.

Review of Prior minutes

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

Emeritus Recognition

- Should we establish consistent criteria across the Church Boards? Or let this go?
- Sanjay recalled his experience of seeing an emeritus position created to allow a long-serving board member to graciously step down from meeting attendance. Ann pointed out that the emeritus photos were up 20 years ago, long before he was active in the church.
- One of the important drivers of this conversation is the question about why there are no women on the emeritus wall when everyone can recall very important women in the life of the church.
- Susan: thinks there's too much politicization of things that don't need to be politicized. To her, the reason for emeritus recognition is to recognize a long-term commitment. We shouldn't undo the past to bring it forward.
 - Candy and Amy agreed.
 - Ann: agreed and reiterated that the issue was why the men were recognized and the women weren't.
- Cath: even if it was the past and we've moved forward, what does it say about us that we have a wall of recognition and there aren't any women? Is there a way to recognize those women we want to recognize, like Dottie Bowe?
 - Ann: this is partially why she took the pictures down. She's not sure we can find pictures of those women. Until we figure it out, not keep it a constant irritant in people's eyes.

- Cath: when she first came, there were recognitions from the boy scouts and miscellaneous things in the minister's office. She asked if the Trustees wanted to put them on the wall outside her office. There's definitely a need to recognize service and to let people exit boards gracefully. She is good with doing it via a plaque or other options. She recalled what she knew of Dottie Haight, Art, etc. Maybe we say someone is emeritus, recognize them in worship, and that's it. No plaque or photo. The idea is that anyone who serves the church is doing it unselfishly. The risk with this is not recognizing quiet people who served behind the scenes and would like to be recognized but wouldn't speak up.
- Amy: how do we do this faithfully for someone who's done a lot for the church but has ruffled feathers along the way? We could put someone up there who everyone likes but one person had a bad experience with.
 - Cath: thinks it's a good question. She had agreed with taking down the pictures in the moment.
 - Amy: a plaque with the person's name would be sufficient.
- Ann: could we plant a nice bush and put a metal tag around it with their names?
 - Cath: has had experience with a similar scheme where the tree dies and there's a scramble to rectify the situation.
 - Amy: is not sure we need to be too invested in the destiny of one particular bush but to the commemoration in general.
- Consensus: we need to think about it for another month.
- Sanjay: noted the potential unintentional consequences of filtering potential honorees by duration of service because of the demographics of Brookline. There are lifelong residents and people passing through for a decade or less, both of whom may have been deserving of recognition.
- Cath: let's be aware of history that needs to be preserved like the loud clock that used to be in the back of the sanctuary and is now in the deacon's room. It has a story that she wouldn't have known but is important to some people.
 - Ann: noted things in the church that she can't get rid of because they have significance from her memory.
 - Amy: things from her time with the church have personal meaning to her but things from 30 years ago do not.
- Cath: the Congregational Church was founded on the idea of limiting idols, which is why our churches tend to be bare.
- Sanjay: we need to distinguish between artifacts of the church's life and practices and artifacts of individuals. For example, evidence of Sunday School through the ages like in our front entryway are meaningful to him despite being from so long ago. There's constant tension between wanting to avoid accumulating clutter and commemorating where we've been.

UMC Split update

- Ann: The UMC is going through a lot of discernment. At the national level, any decision has been pushed off to the 2024 conference. At the local level, there will be discussions this June. Even if they pass, there is no effect until next June. After reading 228 pages, the version in the agenda is the status.
- Cath: agrees with Ann's reading that a decision is not imminent. In all likelihood, the UMC's default path will be the path we take and would require almost no effort on our path. Because we're federated, we're low on the UMCs list of concerns. She expects that when their decision happens, it will be a non-issue for us.
- Ann: the Global United Methodist Church denomination just went into effect and is very conservative. Other churches are using existing mechanisms for disaffiliation.

- Cath: learned from the Boy Scout issue that the Methodists are very process-oriented and will make sure everyone follows their process. They will drive us to do so just because we're on their list of to-do's.
- Ann: the UCC is already in the "full inclusion" bucket so going with the corresponding UMC denomination makes sense. If we were to disaffiliate, we'd have to look at our relationship with the UCC as well. Cath: reminds us that her standing is through the UCC.

Cleaning of the Church

- Sue H: Talked to Sue Laub when she got back from Ohio. Sue L said that if she had an expectation list from us, she could look at it and decide if she could meet our expectation. She feels bad that Sue H is doing a lot of the cleaning as a volunteer.
- Our main vacuum cleaner is too heavy to move up and down stairs easily.
 - John: can we get a new lightweight vacuum?
 - Sue: Sue L keeps one upstairs. She doesn't like the Dyson or swivel ones.
- She doesn't think Sue L should be cleaning up after our guest organizations who weren't taking their own trash out.
- Amy: maybe it's a good idea to make a list of expectations but then how do we let her gracefully bow out if that's what she needs to do?
 - We have a pre-funeral cleaning list that Cath can give Sue H as a starting point. Cath also thinks we as a church have a right to have an expectation of duties associated with a role.
 - Sue: thinks that's what Sue L is looking for. She budgets her weekly time for cleaning largely around Sunday worship. She doesn't have it set in her mind to work around other things like AA and Girl Scouts.
 - Cath: if part of the struggle of a small church is to hire out people to stay on top of routine tasks, part of what we're paying for is to not think about it. If she wants to know expectations, we as a church can say which times to clean, and to check the online calendar.
 - Amy: or we know what the person will do as a baseline so we can do the tasks beyond that baseline.
- Cath: will say on Sue's behalf, when we've called about an impending funeral, she's never felt uncomfortable with the results. Amy: maybe the work is getting physically hard and she doesn't want to admit it.
- Sanjay: cautioned that based on what we're paying, we should look at replacement cost before issuing an onerous list of expectations.
- There was further discussion on how to balance between paid labor vs volunteer fill-in.
- Cath: Sue L handles routine cleaning of the church. At some future date, we can look into supplementing it if specialized tasks are required.
 - Amy likes this. Outreach does this kind of incremental cleaning before Senior Luncheons, etc. She wonders if it's too much to ask of groups that use the church.
 - Cath: we have to balance it with being hospitable to outside groups.
- Amy: maybe we just show Sue L the list and ask what she can do. Ann: agrees.
 - Cath: but whatever she says she can do may also need doing by someone else sometimes.
 - Ann: if there are 30 things on the list and she can only do 7, this may let her realize this isn't the right fit for her. Sue H: thinks it's good for Sue L to have a gracious way out if she needs it.
- Ann: we don't have cost of a new cleaning arrangement in the budget.

Fundraising Events

- Amy: The last one from conservation committee (Town Clean Up Day) was a great idea but too short notice.
- Cath: thinks the Conservation Committee was on our list of partner organizations from the 250th anniversary event. Can Outreach send out an email to tell them it was a great idea and please reach out to us with their event calendar so we can plan for it?

Covid Guidelines

- Ann: one piece of feedback she got was an adverse reaction to the idea that we might do communion by intinction anytime soon. Cath: we did it at the lake and there are places she's put it in as a reminder of ancient practices. It was a deep feeling.

Faith Formation

- For Children: "Take and Make" Craft with THM
Proposed (to Scouts) Partnering on their "God and Me", "God and Family", "God and Church", "God and Life", "God and Service" Badges (administered by P.R.A.Y)
- The proposal is in the Scouts' hands. They seemed open to it but won't be planning until fall.

Book Study

- Haven't gotten there yet.

Live music

- Ann: Provided the deacons with the names of a few people.
- Jocelyn is willing to come back a little more frequently.
- John P: asked about splitting services between Jocelyn & Yi Fan.

Deacons

- They are meeting next Sunday
- Sue H and anyone else who wants, please plant flowers.
- The haven't talked about the discernment discussion and how things might change. Things like finding lay readers, etc. may change. Cath: is planning Fall worship now so there will be more discussion. She would like to use summer as time to run experiments.
- 2 weeks July/Aug at lake – is this a discussion? Sue: Russell emailed the lake people and they are working out access because they've moved to new access authorization mechanism.

Finance & Treasurer's Report

BCC YTD Financial Summary	Actual Income	Actual Expenses	Income vs Expenses + / -
April	\$23,994	\$33,647	(\$9,654)

Cash Reserves: \$ 56,239.34 (threshold < \$48,362.00)

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Outreach Report

- May 21st Senior Luncheon-Dripped beef sandwiches & Monte Cristo Sliders, pasta salad & cupcakes
- Month of May-Collecting cards & notes for the Military
- Stand Down Event for Veterans Event-Friday, September 23rd. Sponsored by Harbor Homes
 - Opportunity for Homeless or in danger of being homeless Veterans to get a meal, mental health services, employment opportunities, haircuts, clothing and supplies etc.
 - Outreach will contact organizer & ask if there are any items we can collect for this day.
- Inquiring about supplying lunch at a jobsite for Habitat for Humanity
- Southern NH Rescue Mission opening up a women's shelter in Nashua Fall/Winter-In contact with them in case we can help with any donations needed
- Collected \$1,617 for UCC Ukraine Relief fund - Rena to send donation check
- Cards for soldiers are up and we will be asking people to sign cards when they come to events. Cards are provided for people to take.
- Cath: is on military twitter accounts and learned that not everybody in the military likes "Dear Warrior" as the greeting. Would say just "Hi" or something more neutral.

Trustees Report

- Cath: asked Sue how many helpers she had yesterday. Sue: half a person – Russell showed up with tools.
- She trimmed vegetation in the front to keep walkways clear for town.
- The side door is back-ordered so now we're looking at June. The contractor says it's a 1 day or less job.
- Russell finished installation of the cabinet counter top.
- A light in stairwell needs installation.
- Fixed the bathroom leak. She will have someone come and look at traps that may be leaking.
- With fundraisers, they're getting emails about Ghost Train race which is starting to open sign-ups. She will let them know we'll have a spaghetti supper. We don't know the date yet. Like last year, Sue will get a group together to take care of it.
- Ann: do we need to have a church grounds clean-up pot luck or work day?
 - Sue: doesn't know. She doesn't have a truck so she's dumping stuff in her own woods for now.
 - Sue: it would be easier to do Tues/Thu/Sat when dump is open.
 - Cath: as part of experimental church, what if we did a Saturday afternoon church service and coffee hour was a simple cleanup task supported with something easy to cook? Sue: the deacons can talk about it next week.
- Cath: can we rent a truck?
 - John: it's \$150/day.
 - Sue: lots of people here have trucks so it's about coordinating.
 - Amy: it may be more about asking for specific help with a specific date & time so they can make their vehicles available.

Minister's Report: May 2022 (4/4 through 5/1)

Since this goes in the church's record, because of the Covid-19 global pandemic, we continue to offer in-person worships services weekly, which we have been doing since 3/21/2021. That service is recorded, edited and posted for those who aren't able to come to the sanctuary.

- Averaging 26.2 hours/week, which puts me between 42.5 hours under to 40 hours over since Sept. 12. This time last year, I was averaging 27.9 hours/week.

- Pastoral counseling in person & on the phone.
- Second discernment meeting after worship on 5/1.
- Attending Good Friday Vigil.
- Publishing worship plan for May & June.
- Hillsborough Association Annual Meeting (via Zoom).

Services:

- 4/10: Palm/Passion Sunday with reception of new members and reflections on part of the Passion Story from Luke.
- 4/14: Maundy Thursday service in Mason.
- 4/17: Sunrise service: Easter comes because we remember more than Jesus' promise to rise again from the dead.
- 4/17: 10:00am: Rejoice in God's love on Easter because you can rejoice in God's love on all the Good Fridays of your life when you're just looking for an offramp to where you're heading.
- 4/24: Pulpit Supply by Rev. Debbie Gline Allen
- 5/1: Discernment is a skill we can learn that involves asking others what they're hearing in the music of Creation.

Regular Meetings: Cabinet, Clergy Support

- Thanks everyone for pulpit supply Sunday after Easter.
- Was contacted by Smith & Heald to do graveside service 14th for Jesse Delrossi, died young (28).

Publicity:

BCCNH.ORG April 2022

Last month our website had 17 unique visits, this month we had 92!



We are continuing to update the website and facebook at least once per week.

Facebook April 2022

The number on the top is the number of people who clicked on the post, the number on the bottom is the number of people who commented or "liked" the post.

04/29/2022 9:28 AM	 Worship with the band this week! Join us for worship and communion			86		0 5	
04/23/2022 8:20 AM	 Join us for worship Sunday at 10am. Debbie Gline Allen will lead			156		3 9	
04/21/2022 7:01 AM				90		1 4	
04/17/2022 8:05 AM	 Wishing everyone a joyful Easter!			111		1 6	
04/16/2022 8:33 AM	 Join us on the mountain for Sunrise Service at 5:45am. As the sunrise			87		11 5	
04/15/2022 9:03 AM	 Good Friday The church is open from 4:00-9:00 for quiet reflection			114		0 4	
04/14/2022 10:44 AM	 We will join Mason Congregational church for Maundy Thursday			83		1 2	
04/12/2022 8:30 AM				150		0 6	
04/11/2022 9:02 AM	 Details for all services this week are at bccnh.org			181		2 8	
04/08/2022 10:30 PM	 Join us for in person worship Sunday at 10am. The bulletin and			93		0 5	
04/01/2022 10:39 AM	 Join us for in person worship & communion Sunday at 10am. You			24		0 0	

How has our Facebook page grown this month?

Insights

[See all](#)

Last 28 days : Apr 8 - May 5 ▾

People reached

433
▲47%

Post engagements

79
▲65%

Page likes

3
▼25%

New or Other Business:

- Sanjay: received informal feedback about the discernment discussions that we better start acting and not just keeping talking. He wants to know if nobody wants to keep doing this activity. He doesn't want to push it if there's no interest.
- Cath: we're an action-oriented church so there's no concern about action. She's more concerned that we act before we finish thinking. She thinks we don't have as many skills at talking or thinking through things as acting so she thinks we need to invest time in hearing each other. She thinks some of the questions last time were things we haven't talked about before so we should keep going with this. She understands that people want to get going and not just talk.
- Ann: the issue is how much energy Sanjay has for driving things. She thinks there is some action happening as a result of those conversations. Cath: can see why the actions so far may seem like small potatoes.
 - Sanjay: has plenty of energy but concerned that because he likes to have these kinds of conversations, he may be pushing people beyond their interest.
 - Amy: thinks it may be that the meetings are too long. 2 hours is her personal limit, even with customers. Or too many times talking about the same thing. If we're moving forward, it's okay.

- Sanjay noted the need to leverage others to keep things moving to minimize personal conflict between eliciting conversation and maintaining progress.

The meeting was closed in prayer at 9:54 am by Rev Cath.