

Dunbarton Congregational Church
Church Council Meeting via Zoom
May 16, 2021

Present:

Moderator – Linda Morse
Vice Moderator – Scott Leslie
Clerk – Lynn Leslie
Pastor - absent
C/E & Curios – Stephanie Herlihy
Deacons – Marsha McKay, Carol-Ann Jane & Joyce Ray
Missions – Anne Zeller
Stewardship – Linda Morse
Treasurer – *Absent*
Trustees – Addison Chase
Communications – Bob Ray
Music – *Absent*
Members at Large – Barb Bennett
In attendance – Mike Shearin, Tammy Bowne, Susan Johonnett, John Stevens

Opening Prayer: Joyce Ray

April Church Council minutes were approved

Pastor's Report: Absent, Robert's report is attached

Meeting procedure:

- The group decided that decisions would be agreed upon by consensus rather than official vote.

Updates:

Curios:

- Since April, the Curios has made almost \$3,000
- There are new people coming in, several donations have been made and comments from customers saying they are glad it is opened again.
- Thoughts on mask requirements...customers have them on, but when there are no customers, the volunteers are comfortable removing their masks.
- Volunteers are needed, although experienced volunteers are beginning to express interest. Steph is currently working a shift every day the store is open.

Evaluation Committee:

- 47 were mailed out. Carol-Ann has received 19 returned. They will be meeting on Monday and will go over the results with Robert first, then report to the next council meeting.

Deacons:

- A decision was made to stay with outdoor services until indoor worship guidelines are developed at this CC meeting.

Discussion on Covid guidelines for reopening for in-person gatherings:

- The pandemic situation is so fluid that any decisions made by the CC could be modified at any time as state, CDC and other guidelines change.
- Regarding Covid risk in NH, the state is no longer a red zone and, as of the meeting date, had 11.5 cases per 100,000 people. Vaccinations are at 60% having at least one shot.

- The CDC rules regarding activities and gatherings for vaccinated and unvaccinated people were reviewed. CDC guidelines now state that masks are no longer needed for vaccinated people except where required by local communities, businesses etc., although unvaccinated people should remain masked for indoor activities. Social distancing rule is now 3 feet.

Remaining Inclusive:

- Remaining welcoming and inclusive to all as we resume gatherings and activities, especially those with health issues, was a concern. Open and honest communication with those concerned about risk is very important, especially regarding masks. Social distancing is also important for people with health concerns, especially considering the fluid mask guidelines.
- Personal choice regarding masks may soon be the norm, but respect for one another remains a key element of a church.
- Recording or live streaming services would enable a wider audience to participate in worship

Suggestions on reopening for worship services:

- Outdoor services:
 - With masks and socially distance
 - Without masks
- Indoor services:
 - Enter and leave the church with masks. Remove the mask once seated
 - Masked people on one side of the church, unmasked on the other side
 - Mark pews that will not be used in order to maintain distances
 - Socialize outside after service
 - Continue to record and or live stream the service for those who don't feel comfortable to return to in-person worship

Decision: To begin in-person services in the sanctuary starting in June, with the following guidelines:

- Wear a mask when entering and leaving the church and if chatting after the service.
- Mark the pews for seating to maintain distance of at least three to six feet
- Speaking, such as responsive readings will be allowed
- Only electronic or live instrumental music for now. No singing.
- Have hand sanitizer and masks available for use
- The Deacons will coordinate with Robert regarding service details like Communion and offerings
- No food for fellowship yet.
- Mike will explore increasing the internet connectivity with the sanctuary to see if recording or streaming services is possible.

Suggestions on reopening for vestry use:

- Require masks
- Follow CDC guidelines; masks for unvaccinated and no masks needed for vaccinated people
- No rentals for non-church activities
- Masks by choice
- No food (potluck) activities
- Food okay – no different from physical contact while playing games
- Individuals who may be at risk; wear mask, communicate with others their concerns, personal choice to participate

Decision for in-person Vestry use:

- For liability purposes, Mike will write up a notice to post at the church and vestry with the CDC mask guidelines. A similar notice will be displayed at the Curios

- Game Night (potluck) and knitting activities will be allowed keeping in mind respect for others regarding safeguards against Covid-19
- Have hand sanitizer and masks available for use
- No rentals for non-church activities

Next Church Council meeting will be June 13th **IN THE SANCTUARY!**