

Dunbarton Congregational Church
Church Council Meeting via Zoom
May 17, 2020

Present:

- Moderator** – Linda Morse
- Vice Moderator** – Scott Leslie
- Clerk** – Lynn Leslie
- Pastor** Robert Vodra
- C/E & Curios** – Stephanie Herlihy
- Deacons** – Marsha McKay & Bill Zeller & Carol-Ann Jane
- Missions** – Patty Shearin & Anne Zeller
- Stewardship** – Jen Oliver
- Communications** – Bob Ray
- Treasurer** – *Absent*
- Trustees** – Mike Shearin, Tom Bennett
- Open & Affirming** – Joyce Ray
- Music** – Lizz Ferdina
- At Large** – Barb Bennett

Opening Prayer: Joyce Ray

Church council minutes were approved for February and March meetings. There was no meeting in April due to the COVID 19 shutdown.

New Business:

- **SBA PPP loan:**
 - The CARES Act legislation that was signed into law in the month of March contained a provision designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses (including churches) to keep workers employed. This provision, called the Paycheck Protection Program, is administered by the Small Business Administration (SBA). Through the PPP, small businesses are invited to apply for a loan for payroll, rent, mortgage interest and utility expenses for an eight-week period. Once the loan period ends, small businesses are required to demonstrate in a filing that loans have been used for qualified purposes in order to have the loan forgiven.
 - In March, when the framework of the PPP was becoming clear, the DCC Trustees, in consultation with Pastor Robert, decided that it was in the best interest of DCC to apply for the loan promptly. Subsequent to an application prepared by Tom Bennett, our loan request was approved in the amount of approximately \$10,700. We received the funds in the DCC Citizens Bank account at the end of April. The DCC Trustees are now seeking an affirming vote from church membership in keeping with the terms of the Bylaws.
 - A warrant giving the Trustees the authority to handle the loan process will be read during online service and coffee hour. An email will be sent to active members for an approval vote.
 - This process was approved by the church council.

- **Open and Affirming vote:**
 - The ONA committee presented a voting procedure by mailed secret ballot. (Since the church is not open due to Covid 19, ballots must be mailed.) The procedure is as follows:
 - Mail a letter on church letterhead with the warrant, proposed ONA covenant, a ballot and voting instructions to all members and put the warrant in the weekly newsletter for two weeks before voting period.
 - Read the warrant in the YouTube online service and at the Zoom coffee hour 2 Sundays before the voting period which shall last one week, Monday to Sunday. All information sent to members will be available on the website.
 - Votes will be returned by US Postal Service inside a sealed envelope that is placed in an outer mailing envelope that has the DCC member name visible to allow for church member verification.
 - Votes will be processed as follows: At the end of the one week long mail in period, (it was suggested that a post mark date be used for the return "due date") the Church Clerk and the Moderator will verify that each ballot is from a Church member eligible to vote. The outer envelope will be opened, and the inner envelopes will be collected in a box with seal intact.
 - Vote counting will not begin until all ballots are verified and the number of ballots is determined. Ballots will be removed from the box, opened, and counted by the ONA committee and the Pastor. The Clerk and Moderator will act as observers.
 - As in the town election, abstention or blanks will not be counted in the total votes: NO votes will be interpreted as Not Yet votes. The vote will be considered positive if 85% of the total votes received are YES votes.
 - Result of the vote (adopted or not yet adopted) will be posted on the website and in the newsletter.
 - The church council approved this process to be managed by the ONA committee and Pastor Robert.
- **Deacons:**
 - Robert will have a Sunday off in June
 - Blessing of the Animals this year will be a virtual blessing and is planned for June 14. Please send Robert pictures of your animals for a slide show by June 9th.
- **Trustees:**
 - Still no definite date for the sign installation but some work at the site is progressing.
 - The Trustees have submitted a request for an LCHIP grant for steeple work. The grant would cover 50% of the cost of the work.
- **Discussions:**
 - Robert suggested having bi-weekly Zoom meetings focusing on specific topics to discuss such as the Christmas Concert and ideas regarding reopening the church. This would provide an opportunity to do some planning and determine responsibilities for the Concert to be ready if holding one appears to be possible. Anyone interested in the selected topic would be welcome to attend.
 - Robert does not see the church reopening too soon. He wants to be sure the health of the church members are a priority and people feel comfortable and safe upon return.
 - The Spire side is doubtful to open before the end of the year.
 - Robert thanked the deacons for reaching out to members and keeping contact.

The next council meeting will be June 14th via zoom. Time to be determined.