

MINUTES FROM W&M MEETING

TUESDAY AUG 18, 2020

Attendees: Pastor Fred, Judy, Julie, Kevin, Ken, Sheri, Sandy, David, Jill Ryan (guest)

Absent: Lynn, Barbara, Jessie, Shelly

1. DEVOTIONS

2. IN PERSON WORSHIP

- a. As long as we continue to offer digital access, then we could consider in person worship in our sanctuary as an OPTION.
- b. These are a given = All will wear masks, all will be 6' apart. The sanctuary has been "measured" and the maximum number of people in the pews is 24 and this must include the 2 ushers, 2 readers and greeter. The support team cannot be more than 6 (Pastor, Julie, asst. minister, acolyte, AV tech, and 1 other (ex. A musician). That allows us a total of 30 absolute maximum; suggested we stay at 25.
- c. Proposed: have an indoor worship service in our sanctuary on Sunday Sept 20. A lengthy discussion followed (see below) but in the end we agreed to pursue this.
- d. Special Guest Speaker – Jill Ryan, Director Patient Safety Mountainside Hospital was able to give us numerous suggestions and additional COVID safety requirements. These include:
 - i. NJ current rule for houses of worship is a maximum of 100 people or 25% of the stated capacity. Capacity for our sanctuary is ____; so our limit of 25 is probably the best number to run with.
 - ii. She suggested that the spacing we laid out in church would be too complicated – suggests we simply use every other pew. This does not quite guarantee 6' spacing but at 5'9" Jill felt this was sufficient.
 - iii. Obviously, no coffee hour, no cake etc. Need to have people make a "reservation" and we need to keep a list for potential contact tracing etc.
 - iv. We will need to "manage" one way traffic coming in and out of the entry way- it shouldn't be too hard but will probably require a designated person to encourage folks to keep moving. [we had previously decided that the ushers will dismiss folks one family or pew at a time to help with this concern. We could also use the side exit if needed].
 - v. Definitely no choirs and no congregational singing. Too dangerous; there were a few outbreaks in spring that were specifically tracked to choirs and churches so we don't want to go there. We could consider a soloist

as long as there is sufficient space to separate that person. Judy reported that the ELCA guidelines also say no singing AND suggest that wind instruments are also a concern unless there is lots of separation. Pastor Fred said 20' is the synod guideline for a soloist or musician so we would have to figure out what that means in our space.

- vi. Even though it isn't necessary to disinfect the sanctuary when we are only using it every 7 days, Jill suggested that we should do so anyway. It's a matter of public perception and peace of mind as much as anything. Kevin mentioned that we have purchased a "spray gun" for exactly this purpose. The only downside to doing this is that we will have to remove all the hymnals and pew cards – the disinfectant has an adverse effect on any paper product. Judy and Sheri will work on removing these items before 9/20. Julie stated that the organ should NOT be sprayed or touched by anyone but her!! Way too much invested there to take any chances and no one but her should be touching it anyway.
 - vii. We asked Jill for her opinion on having the reader unmask at the mic – with masks the clarity of the readings is not that great. Option 1 = disinfect the mic after each reader. Option 2 = only use 1 reader each Sunday. Let the reader do the prayers of the people just like we used to do not that long ago. Anything the Assisting Minister says should be done without the microphone.
 - viii. We also asked Jill for her opinion on having a meal after Energizer at Germania park? No different than outdoor dining, need to enforce the spacing = can't have anyone at your table who isn't already in your own social circle. Food should not be buffet style but individual servings. [Germania is willing and able to do this; currently under discussion with them and the Fellowship committee.]
 - ix. Last suggestion from Jill – be very, very diligent about the preparations, communications, limits on number of people and the enforcing of the rules!! Yes, it is risky to have worship indoors in our sanctuary but so is going to the grocery store, etc. Need to make sure everyone is completely aware of what we've done to make it as safe as possible so that each person can evaluate the risk for themselves and choose. We must make sure the digital option is always available.
 - x. Julie added that we also need to do as much of the above as we can to ease people's minds about attending so that they get a meaningful worship service and aren't sitting there worrying the whole time about the risk.
- e. The suggested method of managing this at first would be to require people to sign up and request that they not sign up more than once per month. We believe this could allow everyone a chance to be here in person if desired.
 - f. We probably want to hand select the ushers at first since they will be in charge of enforcing the rules for spacing, masks, etc.

- g. Sandy asked about the air circulation in the sanctuary? Kevin stated that Gary T (building committee chair) had looked into this and provided 2 options for the air conditioners = we can purchase HEPA filters or we can install an ultraviolet system. The HEPA filters are more expensive than current filters but far less costly than the ultraviolet. Kevin will advise Gary that we'd like the HEPA filters purchased. [Only 2 of the windows can be opened so that's not a great help and the ceiling fans only move the air around so that won't help either.]

3. REVIEW OF WORSHIP SERVICES

- a. Nearly all feedback of our first Youtube service using the new equipment (8/16) was positive. The outstanding organ music was a huge plus and the flute just was icing on the cake! AWESOME! Thank you Julie and Jenny Schroeder! There was a small issue about the speed of the camera when switching from one preset to the next. Judy stated that she and Katie may have fixed this yesterday.
- b. Katie has put together a complete "users guide" that will be in the next newsletter. It will cover the most frequently asked questions she's been getting and cover the new way of accessing the service from Youtube.
- c. Review outdoor service on 8/9 – feedback was all good
- d. How to do better on 9/13? Start lining up helpers
- e. Need a volunteer to pick hymns for October (Sept completed 8/18; Sheri will send them to Pastor and Julie for review. Once finalized will send to Kathy with copy to Kevin. Sheri will pick for October)
- f. Discuss Energizer Sunday at Germania on 9/13

4. BUDGET

- a. Finance asking for us to submit budget request for 2021
- b. Also can we identify any COVID related expenses? Judy and Sheri will work on this

5. ROUND TABLE

- a. Kevin said he had been approached about opening the sanctuary for individual prayer time? Some folks just want a chance to sit quietly, pray, meditate. Pastor loved this idea! Propose to try it once – Weds Sept 2 maybe, from 1 pm to 3 pm. We will need a person to "chaperone" (make sure everyone is quiet and sits far enough apart) and to disinfect afterwards. Maybe only use 2-3 pews? If it is popular, we could consider adding an evening time slot for those who are working.
- b. Council is requesting WM to have a COVID response plan. Judy has graciously offered to work on this. THANK YOU JUDY!!!
- c. Would it be safe to have a single person singing the hymns (from a safe distance of course) – yes, several places use a Cantor to assist the congregations. Kevin will reach out to the Choral Scholars and see what he can do. If we could have a cantor or an instrument once a month, that would go a long way towards

enhancing our worship. Energizer on 9/13 would be awesome; also consider Reformation on 10/25.

- d. Do we want to have a service at Germania on October 11? After discussion, we decided not to. Hoping instead to be in our sanctuary which is far easier to set up, etc.
- e. For the 9/13 service at Germania, we need someone to help with the sound system as Kevin may be away. (we should have a backup anyway). Kevin and Judy will figure this out in the next few days.
- f. Barbara was unable to make tonight's meeting but asked Judy to discuss masks and sanitizer. Do we have masks available to anyone who shows up without one? Yes, we have LOTS!
- g. Barbara also asked if we were thinking about Christmas yet? Yes, we plan to have Christmas on Friday 12/25– Ha ha! The Decorating committee has met once and is planning to decorate the sanctuary no matter what conditions prevail in December. Decisions about worship services will be on the agenda soon, probably the October meeting. It would be great to have an outdoor hymn sing but a whole lot would have to change by then to make that safe to do.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday Sept 15