

Trinity United Church Leadership Team Meeting
Wednesday, August 26, 2020

The meeting was held in person at Trinity in the lower hall, with members physically distanced.

Present: Angela Mills, Kim Guy, Cindy Curry, Julie Baker, Stephanie Verhoeven, Alan Brown, Pamela Lotun, Donna Matthews, Denise Stairs, Lesia Case (no UCW rep in attendance)

Regrets: Diane Routledge

Thank you notes were prepared as people gathered.

Call to order: 7:00pm

Cindy facilitated a check in and offered a Land acknowledgment
We are all treaty people. As we meet, we remember that we gather on Treaty 1 land. This is the traditional land of the Anishinaabe, Cree, Dene, Dakota, and Oji-Cree nations and is the homeland of the Metis.

Opening Prayer – Julie Baker

Approval of the Minutes

Motion: by Kim Guy Seconded by: Denise Stairs to approve Minutes from meeting June 10, 2020. Carried.

Correspondence

- A letter of support was sent on behalf of the Leadership Team to Minister Stefanson (copied to Danielle Adams & Ian Wishart) re: Repealing enhanced funding for nursery schools; a standard reply was received, as well as further information from Lori Carpenter regarding that reply
- Feedback was received from the Taekwondo group now renting the auditorium twice a week. They used to rent from Stride Place and are very grateful to be able to rent here long-term.
- A health and safety plan from Portage Ukrainian Nursery school was received for information.

Discussion and Decisions:

Regarding re-opening the building for public communal worship, conversations were held regarding the following topics:

Entry: To limit risk regarding multiple touch points, hand sanitizer must be used on the way in. We will limit entry to the Tupper Street doors (ground accessible level and main doors) House group masked volunteers will have spray bottles at each entrance. If people refuse to be sanitized because they just did it in their vehicles before entering – we have to trust them; some may prefer to use their own.

Bulletins/Hymn Books/Cushions – will not be in the pews; those who wish to use them will pick them up at the back; once used, should be left in the pew where they sit so the caretaker can tell which require cleaning. We will not print regular bulletins, to reduce multiple touch items. Large print bulletins require further consideration.

Pews will be okay because of the length of time between services (unless funerals come into the building in which case consideration must be made – i.e. Saturday funeral/Sunday church). Funerals cannot be more than 50 people inside right now. Most funerals happening now are outside.

A/V operators will still be required – needs to be 2 people from the same household, or one person doing double duty. We may need A/V people to wear masks because of where Pam/Zoom person is sitting, although the distance may also be adequate.

Offering – will not be collected during the service; we agreed to place collection plates at the ushers' tables with signage. People can place in it as they walk by coming in or leaving. We will inquire with stewardship about the square reader and ask that they remind our congregation of alternative methods of donation.

Special considerations for counters: count after church as usual and ensure they sanitize before and after.

Contact Tracing – It would be extremely challenging to create a system of pre-registration for worship; there is not a concern about having too many people show up at this time. However, having a way to trace people's participation/location would be wise. It was determined that the best option for this will be to have volunteers with clipboards at the entrance, taking names and telephone numbers. We could experiment by also recording where they sit on a seating chart?

Strategy for social distancing - How do we make sure people are physically distancing themselves. One of the things that's been talked about for September for "former ushers" is to monitor people social distancing – making sure the person who is doing that job can ask people to spread out. Upstairs, every other pew is roped off. Julie has gone through to figure out what the capacity could be – if they come in family groups of one or two. House group volunteers who are chosen for this role of "physical distancing monitor" need to be assertive, yet kind.

Masks - At this point masks are encouraged, but not mandated in public gatherings, provided physical distancing is maintained. It was agreed that house group volunteers should be masked. Consensus is that since we are monitoring physical distancing, we will not mandate masks at this time, but people are welcome to wear them, and they will be available for those who wish, but do not have one.

Leaving protocol – an announcement will be made to encourage people to allow distance as people leave. If we discover that people can not self-direct this option, we may consider directing which section leaves first.

Washrooms – are few but available to be used. We can remind people to keep physical distance and wash their hands. If we put the garbage can outside of the washroom, then people can use their paper towel to open the door and then throw it out.

Online options – Pam Lotun and Julie have developed a plan for offering worship live in person as well as on zoom for those who wish to participate from home. Pam is willing to host the zoom technology on a laptop connected to the sound booth for audio. A laptop and a phone will be used closer to the front of the sanctuary for camera views. We will record via zoom, but only put the sermon portion on youtube.

Singing – Singing is not recommended. Junior choir and senior choir will not be offering leadership in worship this fall. Soloists could sing from the choir loft or chancel, particularly if we had a plexiglass shield. Instrumental music can be live. We could also continue using recorded music as we have for zoom church. We recommend continuing with recording for now. We can re-evaluate as new information becomes available. It is likely easiest to stick with recording.

Children – At this point, we are not ready to offer a Sunday School program. Theme times could be done with the whole congregation, but not a group of children at the front. Activity centre tables aren't really a possibility. We could offer activity packets if we believe any parents/grandparents with small children would attend at this point. A variety of ideas were discussed: We could use an app like "Remind" to communicate with Sunday school students. Kids are so connected to devices and the internet right now. Different age groups have different needs. The goal is to meet/be present to the spiritual needs of children in Trinity that need help. We agreed to re-visit this at our next meeting when some things about school and other activities have started to take shape.

Elevator – We will ask house groups to provide an elevator operator. No one will be going in the elevator with people – it can be operated from the outside. We may need one person at the bottom and one person at the top – can be done by one on the level that the people are coming in.

Communion – will be deferred until at least October to give us time to get some in-person culture sorted out. Majority of leadership team wants to wait until we can come to an agreement on how it can be safely done.

Coffee time – To begin with, we would not offer a coffee social time. Is there a vision of how this could be resumed in a covid-friendly way, or that would fill the need that coffee time provided? Even alternative options may be too tempting for people to not physically distance. More chance of someone getting ill and we do not want to be responsible for some getting sick. At this time we do not have an alternative. We will re-visit this at our next meeting.

Baptism – Two baptism requests have been received, and there may be others who are interested. How do we wish to approach baptism? One factor may be related to numbers of people in attendance at a baptism service. After some discussion it was decided to table the decision at this time because there are too many unknowns. Julie will tell those who ask "not yet".

What happens if our region moves into Orange or Red? (the orange restrictions in Prairie Mountain to not affect the current guidelines for public worship, but do include weddings and funerals) Our district is currently in "yellow." It was agreed that if our region goes to "orange" we stop having in-person church services and have only online services, regardless of public health permission to do otherwise.

Motion: Moved by Donna, Seconded by Kim. Provided public health orders remain the same, that Trinity open the building to public worship on September 13; and that on September 6 worship be held in the building with only the tech and house group support in person to do a practice run. **Carried.**

Pattern of Communication with the congregation

TriniTidings – when should newsletters go out this fall to share information?

It was agreed that our usual pattern of newsletters will not be helpful at this time. A “mini” version of TriniTidings will go out as soon as possible. We may need to have monthly mini-issues this fall, if many things change, or fewer, if things do not change and there is not much to communicate.

Email timings – In the spring, weekly emails were sent. We don’t want to overwhelm people. It’s an effective way for people that use email. It was agreed that emails be sent as necessary – regularly, but ideally, not every week.

Finance Report

Donna shared the financial statements as attached.

The investments have regained many of the losses we experienced early in the year. While our income is down, our expenses are also down, which has helped our financial position.

We have received some income from Canadian Federal Grant programs, and we are applying for further funding. We were given permission to delay payment of UCC assessments, but have decided to pay our May commitment so that we are not too far behind at the end of the year. We do not wish to be assessed penalties in 2021.

Motion: Moved by Donna, seconded by Alan, to approve the financial report as presented. Carried.

M and P Report

Kim reported that they have compiled a list of ministers for emergency services in case Julie becomes ill or is required to self isolate. Pam has agreed to be the tech support person. Denise agreed to be one of those who is trained to do that job. We may also wish to train teenagers for this purpose.

Other Reports and Updates

- Technology upgrades – At this point the plan is to work with the equipment we have to experiment with blended in person/online worship. We expect to learn soon whether we need further technological upgrades.
- Group size and funerals - Restrictions regarding gathering size are gradually lifting. With regards to funerals, this means that private graveside services are happening once again with attendance up to 100 persons. Private indoor services may include up to 50 persons. At this time we have not been asked to use the church sanctuary. Our first pandemic

funeral was Saturday: private graveside, reception at the funeral home, UCW catering for 20 persons.

- Building usage is in flux at the moment. During the summer we have had some new users. Some of our regular users have started again, while others are still not back. Jacquie is coordinating building use and the calendar. Sanitizing between groups is an extra consideration when taking bookings at this time. We need to emphasize that Jacquie is in control of the calendar and must be consulted before assuming any building use.
- Ministry Profile Team, with M & P, have made some plans for staff help this fall including one Sunday of pulpit supply/month, and asking Marg Scott to lead the Friday book study group. Jacquie is in the process of taking on some new responsibilities. The Profile Team is now looking toward a more long term view of resource and personnel deployment. They sent a report of their work to date and are planning to have a fuller report for the October meeting.

Calendar review

We noted that the Girl Guides are planning to be back in September with outdoor programming until the end of October, depending on weather.

Team and Interest Group Updates –

- Structure Support – meeting September 10th. Housegroups b,c & d have agreed to cover January, February and March 2021
- Property – During May and June, Otto was the main contact for property. He was contacted once, but it was a significant issue with the roof which required rental of a boom truck. During July and August, Steve was the main contact. He was contacted for one issue – a window latch in the west wing, which required greater expertise. Ellwood McRorie is fixing, as well as leaky eve and window in the parlour (discovered after a recent rain!) September-October contact is Mitchell Omichinski, and November-December is Waind McDonald. No schedule yet exists for 2021.
- UCW reported to Cindy that other than the recent funeral, UCW has had no activity since our last meeting.
- Stewardship – The Stewardship Team is meeting August 27.
- Sunday School – ????? (as noted above; no plans at this time)
- Study Groups – Faith Formation – As noted above, Marg Scott has agreed to offer leadership for the Friday study group – likely in a different time and place.
- Choirs and Singing – These activities remain on hold due to Covid. It is clear that these groups will be the last to be able to resume any in-person activity.

Membership Status Update:

New members

Deaths

Members:

Adherents/Other:

Margaret Taylor, June 28, 2020

Closing Prayer offered by Julie

Adjourned: 9:42 pm

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 14, 2020

Cindy Curry, Chair

Pam Lotun, Secretary