

First Parish UU Church—Bridgewater
Parish Committee Meeting
7pm– 9:00 pm, Tuesday, March 10, 2020

Attendees: Rev Paul Sprecher, Kat Gillespie, Laurie Lessner, McKayla Hoffman, Eileen Hiney, Sonia D'Alarcao, Deb Posep

Start time: 7:05 PM

End time: 9:0 PM

Here's the link to the members' only side of the website for you to read other committee reports - <https://fpuubridgewater.org/members-content/> username - member The password is Reas0n

Yes, that's the number 0

1. **Chalice lighting, opening words, covenant, check-in** (10 min.)
2. **Approve minutes** of the Feb, 11th 2020 PC meeting (5 min) - [Parish Committee Meeting Minutes February 11 2020 DRAFT](#)
 - a. Motion to accept the February 11 minutes as amended was moved by Sonia and Deb seconded it. It passed unanimously.
 - b. Laurie recommended that we put editable draft versions of minutes into the First Parish Bridgewater Google account (in Google Docs). Discussion ensued about whether this is necessary for the group's access. Laurie decided to keep a copy of the draft version for herself.
3. **Church Management**
 - a. Preparing for a pandemic - checklist to have and do - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/checklist.html>
 - b. Laurie said that the above article was mentioned in the press conference given by the CDC. The Parish Committee went through and created a Best Practices/Emergency Plan document to reference. This document also includes information about church cancellations in case of inclement weather, for example, and emergency contacts, where to post cancellations or emergencies, and to contact the Caring Committee about who might be sick or injured. The idea was discussed about tapping into our healthcare professionals, and it was decided that we should not because they likely will be overstretched.
 - c. These precautions can be taken with anything, including coronavirus.
 - d. Discussion ensued about what medical supplies to get to prevent diseases or viruses from spreading. We need tissues We decided to have a few sanitary medical masks and if someone is exhibiting symptoms, they can get one then. The suggestion was to not ask someone to wear a mask, but to let people know that they can self-advocate for one.
 - e. Rev. Paul asked the sexton to do a deep clean, and he sent him a link to the CDC about how to deep clean and at what frequency.

- f. Discussion ensued about asking people to sanitize as best they can in gathering spaces after gatherings.
- g. It was suggested that ushers encourage visitors and members to sanitize as they walk into worship services. **Deb and Laurie will purchase hand sanitizer, sanitizing wipes, trash receptacles, and gloves.**
- h. The Parish Committee decided to use the same closure procedures used during inclement weather for closures related to coronavirus. This includes a post on the private Facebook page, an email blast, and a message on the answering machine. The criteria for closing is if the town instructs us to close, and encouraging people to decide for themselves whether to come or not to come based on symptoms or fear, and not to feel badly about that. If Rev. Paul or guest ministers are not comfortable preaching, then a closure is appropriate.
- i. The Parish Committee also discussed using conferencing technology to do virtual worship. Rev. Paul has the professional ZOOM account with a capacity of 120 guests. Utilizing Facebook livestream and encouraging ministers and guest preachers to acknowledge those watching are also important steps. Rev. Paul says we will likely be able to do livestream using the BTV camera.
- j. The Parish Committee decided that food should stop being provided at coffee hour and that it only be coffee.
- k. Rev. Paul will put out a formal statement to the congregation, and Laurie will assist.**
- l. Eileen will reach out to Louella to not give food during coffee hour.**
- m. Sonia will contact the RE Committee and Jan to inform them that potluck food will be served by servers during Nights Out.**
- n. Laurie will adapt the snow cancellation protocol for the coronavirus issue to send out.**
- o. Rev. Paul will tell Scott the sexton to deep clean according to CDC guidelines at least twice a week.**
- p. Rev. Paul will set up his ZOOM account so that Committee moderators can access it.**
- q. Laurie will contact all Committee Chairs about how to clean up after a meeting.**
- r. Laurie will reach out to Kate, the upcoming worship leader, and provide bullet points with coronavirus-related announcements to make.**
- s. McKayla will share resources from Meadville and other sources about about how to care for each other during this pandemic.**
- t. Sonia lifted considering not using hymnals during services because they are difficult to clean.

4. Ministerial Search Committee (15 min) - Eileen Hiney & Rev. Paul

- a. Eileen reported on what was done before, and is unsure about what can be done if we cannot secure an interim minister (if it is true that part time ministry models preclude us from being able to secure an interim minister).

- b. Laurie added that Rev. Paul is willing to give up some Sundays so that guest ministers can preach in the pulpit. Laurie recommended that congregation members pay attention to who is in the pulpit to see what they like about them.
- c. Eileen said that the process for securing a new minister must be formal, but might not take 2 years like it did before. Eileen asked if the Worship Committee could focus on securing more guest ministers to get a sense of the selection of ministers as we prepare. Sonia is concerned that there should either be an interim or the search committee should be called immediately.
- d. Discussion ensued about the levels of ministry that are now available, including developmental or contract ministry for a certain amount of time, and there is more flexibility now. The Parish Committee will wait to hear from Rev. Paul about an answer to the question about whether we can qualify to hire an interim minister.

5. **Financial** (20 min - Kat Gillespie)

- a. Kat reported that she is caught up until January with reconciliations. There was a mystery \$8,000 attributed to the Trustees, and that is actually a pledge for the next fiscal year. It will be taken off of the report.
- b. Kat said we are at 101% for paid pledges this year. There are still a few months left to go. The total was \$95,000, and we are at almost \$64,000.
- c. Laurie asked about the First Parish Players and that they owe \$1,700. Kat said we might not get all of that. Susan has emailed Tony to find out their status on that, and Rev. Paul said that they will likely pay \$1,000.
- d. The Finance Committee does not have a complete budget yet, but there are some things that need reevaluation and decisions about whether we can use last year's numbers. Fundraising, First Parish Players contributions, parking numbers, and Trustees distribution (can contribute more) numbers are going to change.
- e. The content manager position was added to the budget for one year, and now we are at the one year mark and we are tight. The net income is \$1,100 but that does not include the fundraising, parking, First Parish Players, or the increase to the Trustees distribution.
- f. Discussion ensued about whether we are meeting payroll amounts based on UUA guidelines. We made a commitment to be mid-range, and the mid-range has moved since we made that decision. Rev. Paul added that these amounts can change based on performance.
- g. Kat said all pledge contributions for the 2019 calendar year have gone out to donating congregants via email.

h. Eileen noted that there was a \$1,000 budget for the Search Committee. Kat will add that.

6. **Religious Education Update** (20 min)

- a. Laurie shared that some ideas have been shared among the RE Committee about hiring a new DRE. Discussion ensued about the role of a DRE, and that in some churches, sometimes it is combined with an outreach component. Kat asked if there is a formal process for finding a DRE, and Sonia shared that it was

advertising the role, interviewing, and hiring (like a regular hire). The RE Committee will spearhead this, and that the job will remain the same in terms of hours and pay to maintain a candidate.

7. Facilities/Safety (10 min)

- a. Laurie reported that there are some inspections, from the town and the alarm company to the fire inspection, and that there is a need to identify who should be present for these. Laurie asked whether this role should be taken on by a staff member or a Committee member, especially when it comes to consistency. Rev. Paul recommended putting these inspections on the calendar so that we can stay on top of being present for these inspections. It was recommended that Scott, the sexton, fulfill this role, and that Jamie should be coordinating scheduling the inspections.

8. Other (5 min)

- a. **Sonia asked if Laurie or Tony can create Facebook events for the BLack Lives Matter film series, and Laurie agreed to do this.**

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Kat, and McKayla seconded. It passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

McKayla Hoffman, Secretary