



GUM CHURCH

Our vision is to actively live the example of Jesus

GOVERNANCE BOARD MEETING

Saturday, September 26, 2020

PRESENT: Amy Schuiling, *Sherri Swanson, Sue Kremkow, *Carol DeWeerd, John Johnson, Dan DeZwaan, Michael Freude, Christine Webster. (* non-voting member)

ABSENT: Jeri Bigler, Kyle Anderson, Craig Brodie

This meeting was held on Zoom. Amy called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. She then shared devotions and a prayer.

COMMITTEE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Reports from Lynette Cole (Adult Choir), Sara Zallar (Young Disciples), and Todd Potter (Trustees) were sent to board members in advance. Additional comments from Todd/Trustees report:

- we can open safely
- schools and other churches are open
- initiate and increase the cleaning and sanitizing process (4 sanitizing stations are located throughout the church)
- practice social distancing
- ALL wear masks
- rope off every other pew
- Trustees have already signed a contract with two cleaning companies
Coverall (cleaning company) and EnviroMaster (bathroom sanitizing company)

A meeting with the Building Use Subcommittee (Amy, Sherri, and Michael) was held prior to this Board meeting to discuss the possibility of allowing small groups (less than 10) to begin meeting in the church. Todd (Trustees) was not able to be at this meeting, but was consulted by email and phone.

PASTOR'S REPORT:

Pastor Sherri reported that it's been a busy summer and included the following:

1. book study held
2. new member class
3. increased meetings with staff

Plans for the fall include:

1. new book study on "Life of Moses" - 13 participating
2. continue with "Coffee with the Pastor" - one virtual meeting (7-8 participants) and one in-person (10-14)

Other comments:

1. PRAYER & PRAISE gathering was very uplifting with 57 attendees total between both services.
2. BAPTISM - last Sunday of Maggie Eastway at the Eastway home
3. STAFF -two part-time employees have been furloughed as of Sept. 16
4. CONTINUING EDUCATION - Sherri has been participating in “Leadership Institute” Good workshop; Adam Hamilton was one presenter
5. PRAYER REQUEST: Brad (Pastor’s husband) has been diagnosed with shingles and an eye infection; and also prayers for Sherri’s father who is in declining health due to a heart condition. Sherri is planning to go to Iowa for a few days during first week of October to be with her parents.

BUILDING USE:

The Board began this discussion by proposing the question: Should we allow small groups of 10 or less to begin using the building? The following comments were noted:

1. The Trustees have hired and started the cleaning with two companies.
2. We need to consider a “cleaning plan” if a small group uses an area.
Christine shared that the plan at the schools is to spray, wipe with rags, ALL use masks, and social distancing. A reported Covid case is immediately sent home and tracing begins by the Ottawa County Health Department.
3. The cost of cleaning needs to be considered (we may levy a cleaning charge on a group from outside the church.)
4. Each group leader will be made aware of the following protocol:
 - ALL wear masks
 - sign-up sheets and health appraisals for all attending
 - no refreshments
 - social distancing
5. SPRC is discussing having a part-time building manager.

The Board agrees that “we need to move forward” but with caution. We, as a governing Board, want the congregation to have confidence in our decisions that we are always looking out for the physical and emotional health of our congregation. The Board felt that we needed to address some issues: we had originally decided to use “Phase 5” from the State as our determining guide; and, we had real concerns regarding who is to “police” a reopening process.

The Board also considered that approximately 50% of UMC churches are opening; the state has not been clear about the status of the Phases; we are losing some in the congregation; and people are hurting.

A **MOTION** was made by Christine Webster:

We will allow small groups (up to 15) at this time to use the church building with the stipulation that use be restricted ONLY to the lounge and the gym; and, that the following protocols be followed:

- safe distancing
- ALL wear masks
- no refreshments
- room/chairs cleaned after with a disinfectant spray and wiped down
- use will be stopped if the infection rates increase in the state
- each chairperson will be given written instructions including sign-up, health appraisals, and cleaning supplies

Amy seconded the motion. Motion was passed with one opposing vote.

Additional comments:

- allow small groups to meet for a few weeks and then entertain reopening for worship
- we will continue to be aware of numbers of infections in the state
- Christine and Michael will be meeting with SPRC before we move to re-introduce staff
- consider some communication with the congregation of these plans

IN-PERSON WORSHIP:

A vote was taken to determine whether we should survey the congregation again about returning to in-person worship, including whether people would be faithful about wearing masks. This vote did not pass.

If we move forward with reopening it was proposed that two services be held with 20% capacity; and, the pews switched between services. At this time we propose to start opening up with small groups and staff in the building. Christine and Michael will be talking to SPRC to collaborate and determine when it will be appropriate to have staff return. The mutual recommendations from SPRC will be brought back to the Board.

JOYS AND CONCERNS:

Please remember prayers for Brad Bartelmay, Sherri's parents, and safe travel to Iowa for Sherri. Prayers too for our country.

ADJOURNMENT:

Michael volunteered to share devotions at the next meeting.

Sherri closed with prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.

NEXT MEETING: DEC. 5, 2020 @ 9:00AM

Respectfully submitted by,
Carol DeWeerd

