

May 12, 2020

Regular Meeting of the Session

First Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, Illinois

The on-line Zoom Session meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by the Rev. Adam Quine. In attendance were Elders Cherie Aper, Cathy Maciariello, Debbie Schweitzer, Paul Kasa, Bob Chamberlain, Jim Alexander, Cathy Tiffany, Stuart Churchill and Clerk Connie Boss. A quorum was declared present.

The May Agenda was approved. Prayer for the evening centered on those working in medical services, a reading of Psalm 66 and the Gospel lesson Matthew 6, verses 7-15.

Please see detailed reports but highlights follow:

Clerk of Session Report -

Attendance: 4/5: 25, 4/9: 25, 4/11: 20, 4/12: 40, 4/26: 56

Baptisms: None. Deaths: None.

Communion was celebrated 4/9, 4/11 and 4/12. There was no home communion because of the pandemic. The Clerk will continue to share Great Rivers Presbytery newsletters with the Session.

Mission Committee –

- The Summer Lunch Program will be held June 1-July 3.
- The Food Pantry continues to serve around 40 families. Food supply is adequate, but items our church provided in the past are still needed such as body wash, shampoo, toothpaste, dishwashing soap, etc. A tote will be placed on the porch for such items, which will then be taken to the Food Pantry.
- Public Resources – it may be beneficial for families to have a list of helpful resources. Adam will reach out to Community Action for more information.
- Encouraged Session members to be thinking how the church can be helpful once stimulus money is gone and needs continue in the coming months; discussed providing a box at end of the CE building sidewalk with useful items, box of crayons for children, theology reading material, etc.
- The Center for Creativity has continued to meet via zoom with Adam, Laura and a few students. Laura's contract ends the end of May. The program will stop the end of May.

Worship Committee –

- The committee agreed to continue with virtual worship, but also discussed how worship will look once our geographic location reaches Phase 4 and Phase 5. Many changes will

need to be made regarding access, physical distancing, communion, prayers of the people, offering etc.

- A small group has been established to research how other churches are using virtual worship; recommend ways to augment or enhance worship experience through technology; identify equipment and/or personnel costs to upgrade our technology capacity; analyze the sanctuary to see how many people can be seated given the physical distancing requirements; consider whether to continue online worship and spiritual formation activities during the summer.
- A team has been established to start searching for a new music director.

Fellowship Committee –

- The drive-bys honoring people in the congregation have been much appreciated.
- Plans are developing to honor Julie Kasa, retiring Choir Director.
- Continue with Kirk Night and Tea At Two via zoom.
- Considering online Saturday coffees and other “social” activities
- Will honor Bernie DePuy’s 99th birthday by sending flowers from the church.

Administration Committee –

- Ramp work will begin August 1; 50% down payment is due July 1. There is a five-year workman warranty. Hilltop wants to meet with Dan Bode to discuss the wrought iron rail. Time frame for completion is 4-6 weeks. The mosaic will be moved and kept. Adam proposed creating a video to explain the different projects – motion was approved.
- Fitzpatrick Construction is being contacted to do all required maintenance projects, including filling in old ventilation (window well) opening; have the water line moved that is located along the ramp; repair the gutter and downspouts near the Ottawa side doors and Pekin side in general anywhere that is needed; moving the water line to another location or capping it off; complete work on the garage ceiling so it can be used for storage.
- Awaiting a quote for sealcoating on the parking lot but have a list of other companies for bids if needed.
- New personnel policies are working well; however, there is concern about the Sexton’s health and may need to look at employing a temporary solution for cleaning the church.
- Work is underway on updating the job description and compensation for Choir Director.
- The committee is gathering information on what might be appropriate for retirement gifts and celebrations of service.

- The Center for Creativity and Community program's future was discussed but several AT members voiced support for the project. Adam is awaiting three monetary grants and is looking to the community to assist with funding for the program.

Treasurer's Report –

On March 20th there was a \$50 expense from IGA charged to Kirk Night. No such expense occurred. Adam will ask Chris to review this entry.

Rev. Quine's report suggested we proceed with caution and—as the Session stated from the beginning—we will make decisions based on the wellbeing of the congregation. The Session discussed -

- (1) Outdoor worship and how that could actually be held (parking situation, sound system).
- (2) Sanctuary seating (organize seating placement if more than 50 people but 9 feet apart).
- (3) Allow sanctuary seating for those without technology while those with technology stay at home
- (4) Greeters (some have health issues themselves which places them in danger). How many in the congregation are at risk?
- (5) Have a hybrid service, but how meaningful is that for those inside the church?
- (6) Choir – how will the choir maintain social distancing?
- (7) If the Pastor were to test positive, what plans would be necessary?
- (8) What sort of liability might incur? Does our insurance provider have required guidelines?

In the meantime while our area remains in Phase 2 of the Governor's State Re-opening Plan; we are possibly approaching Phase 3. However, Adam suggested it might not be safe for us to gather again until our region reaches stage 5. Session will continue to evaluate our approach on a monthly basis. In the meantime, we will move forward by:

- Promoting on-line church services through the media (already being shared on Facebook.)
- Find a way to specifically address joys and concerns of the congregation. (Adam hopes to unmute microphones on Zoom but not sure how it will play out on Facebook.)
- Investigate online technology with other churches and technology people. (Adam is learning from colleagues.)
- Promote use of the phone for those who do not (or cannot) use online resources for worship. At this time 10-12 people are without or choose not to use technology; however, the services are provided through phone connection by just dialing in. We will reach out to those who do not know how to access services through the phone in hopes of increasing their participation.

- Update the church directory and divide it among the Deacons to establish a connection to every member. Continue to stay in touch with members by phone, cards, etc.
- Contact insurance Church Mutual to discuss liabilities and guidelines we must follow to be compliant (Refer to Admin Team, ask opinions of Tracy Olson and Mel Anderson).

After reading several articles, listening to health experts, conversing with other churches and reviewing guidance from the government, it was the consensus to keep the congregation safe and re-enter in-house church services when the area reaches Phase 5.

Motion was made to accept all reports.

New Matters –

The Nominating Committee has a member willing to fill the Elder position of Roger Boss for the remainder of the year. A new Elder must be voted on by the Congregation and installed. Adam will check with Presbytery and colleagues to determine how this can be done when congregations are not gathering in the church.

Suggestion was made that the congregation be provided some of the specific questions asked and conclusions derived in a note to the congregation in the next LINK. Connie and Cathy M. will provide information.

Adam will continue to forward articles and information regarding churches and COVID-19.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. following closing prayer by Jim Alexander.

Motions approved:

Accepted Session minutes of April 21, 2020.

Accepted to extend the shelter-in-place order with no in-person meetings through July 1 and to re-evaluate at the June Session meeting.

Accepted the proposal to continue with online worship during May and June.

Accepted the proposed that Adam create a video on projects planned for the church.

Accepted all Committee Reports.

Accepted the Treasurer's Report.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Boss, Clerk of Session

The Rev. Adam R. Quine, Pastor