

May 26, 2020 Special Council Meeting, held at 5:15 Pm, via ZOOM.

Those present were Jim B., Pastor Pam, Audrey C., Debbie T., Debbie A., Russ L., Jo Ann E., Donna R., Karen K., and Skip B. Pastor Pam led us in prayer.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss under which conditions we could continue with worship in person, in the sanctuary. Currently there have been two services held. Some obstacles arose in the effort to provide a safe worship experience for everyone. One of these is that there were not enough “hands” available to assist Pastor Pam in providing a safe and meaningful worship experience.

The issue is that in spite of our best efforts to provide guidance, some attendees were unable to comply or unaware of the expectations. Potential solutions were brainstormed. Among those are as follows:

1. Having more members available to assure safety. This could involve having persons at the door to provide instruction, to hand out masks, to provide hand sanitizer as needed, and to request social distancing and no singing during the service. Pastor Pam feels that four helpers would be needed to do this. Distributing a brief pamphlet outlining activities necessary to maintain safety of attendees might help as well.
2. Having an “appointment” system in which potential attendees would call ahead. At that time they could be given instruction as to what is expected.
3. Having services outside of the church where more seating would be available. The Roosevelt Center and additional use of Kaleva are potential solutions. One service is already planned at Kaleva on June 7th, 2020.
4. Posting a sign in front of the church explaining safety expectations.
5. Having air filtration and scrubbing equipment installed in the church, with the facilities management ministry making the recommendation as when it would be safe to worship in person.

Potential barriers to the above solutions are as follows:

- a. The large majority of our membership is in the high-risk category for contracting the COVID-19 virus, greatly limiting the number available and willing to assist.
- b. The appearance of being unwelcoming to members, spontaneous attendees, and out of town guests.
- c. The unknown progression of the disease as the weeks and months ahead of us unfold. As things open up, there may be a surge in new cases.
- d. Helpers and Pastor Pam would be at a higher risk of contracting the disease unless we interviewed potential attendees as to whether they had traveled out of state, or had exhibited any symptoms.

After much heartfelt discussion and reflection, the following motion was proposed:

“That we close the sanctuary for worship until further notice. That we continue to offer online worship until further notice. That we hold three outdoor services at Kaleva on June 7th, July 5th, and August 2nd, 2020. Online worship will also be provided on these dates. That we revisit all of these proposals by at least September 1, 2020. That we prepare a public statement outlining what we have decided and why.”

Steve H made to motion, and Audrey C seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Audrey Clark, Recording Secretary.