



GUM CHURCH

Our vision is to actively live the example of Jesus

Governance Board Meeting Agenda January 31, 2022 | 7pm

In attendance: Doug Barry, Dan DeZwaan, Ashley Forton, Kelly Goward, Sue Kremkow, Marie McDonald, Shaun Skibinski, *Sherri Swanson, *Michelle Wood (*non-voting member)

Absent: Karen Strickland

This meeting was held on Zoom.

1. Devotions/Welcome

Each Board member introduced themselves and shared the number of years of service to the Board. Kelly shared a devotion and prayer. She asked the board to ponder the mission of the church and the role of the governance board in keeping with the mission.

2. Pastor's Update

- Pastor Sherri thanked the new board members and shared that she was able to de-stress by going on vacation.
- She has been keeping busy with pastoral care, hospital visits, funerals.
- She will begin a study group on 2/10/22 titled, "Sinning Like A Christian". So far, 4 people have signed up for the class.
- A New Member class was planned for January, but only one person was interested. Decided to wait until more interest in a new member class.

Concern that attendance is impacting ability to attract new people and grow.

3. Filed year end reports with conference:

- 2021 – average in-person attendance was 70 people, however it climbed throughout year.
- There were over 100 people in attendance in Oct., Nov. and Dec. More people attend when bells and choir participate in the service. For reference, the average pre-pandemic was 250.
- Average online views for 2021 is 136 (this includes a multiplication of 1.8 that the conference allows us to account for multiple people in household watching). This number, plus the 70 in-person average, makes the average of worshippers for 2021 a total of 206. For reference, online attendance during first year of pandemic was 282.
- Average in person for January is 67.
- Christmas Eve had biggest crowd since March 2020 – 142 people including 26 children.
- Pastor Sherri shared a quote from The Economist published Jan. 8, 2022: “In a poll of practising Christians in America in 2020 by Barna Group, which conducts worldwide research into religion, 14% had switched churches, 18% were attending more than one church, 35% were attending only their pre-pandemic church and 32% had stopped going to church altogether.”
Sherri did share other UMC churches are experiencing similar experiences.
- Pastor Sherri will be working one hour/month for some coaching through the conference. Hoping to expand thinking and allow opportunity to discuss with others. Will also continue with clergy group.
- Church staff are doing well. SPRC has been assisting with help of filling in for various duties due to open positions. Amy S. has been a tremendous help with the duties of the open positions – many thanks to her.

- Staff will be engaging in some team building based on the book, The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace.

4. Church attendance: survey congregation?

SPRC suggested a survey of congregation to have a sense of where people are with things. Last time the congregation was surveyed was in Summer 2020. Governance Board members discussed how helpful the last survey was for the board. The last survey brought up other concerns and items involving the church – not just reopening procedures with the church. Concerns were brought up that a survey may not be the best avenue, as members may not feel it is confidential and think it may be trackable (it is not).

Discussion about options to leave a comment or share an email were mentioned as a way to help those who feel it may not be confidential; they can only be contacted if sharing their email. What would we want to learn in the survey?

Do you think you'll come back?

How soon?

What will impact a return?

What will this information give us? Just information? Will it allow us to get a pulse on these questions?

In August 2021, 3 people made phone calls and were able to gather some information about attendance. Letters were sent to members before Christmas and Pastor Sherri will be sending letters again before Easter. Concern was brought up about continuing two services once again when there is low attendance. Would there be more people at one service? People like different times and styles.

Discussion that perhaps phone calls to members are more beneficial than a survey. No strong argument from board to move forward with a survey.

Kelly will inform SPRC that the Board does not wish to move forward with a survey to the congregation.

5. Update on Boy Scouts

Decisions that needed to be made have been made. The settlement was negotiated in December and all parties agreed to the parameters and now we are waiting on a judge to approve the settlement. If approved, we cannot be pursued as a charter organization for litigation. At this time, the Marine Corp is chartering the former Boy Scouts that GUM chartered. Charter had expired with GUM in 2021.

6. Review Church Closing Policy (last page) – Reviewed as a Board and Board endorsed the policy for 2022

7. Review current COVID/masking policy (masks be worn in the building for all activities until the positivity rate goes below 10%)

Reviewed as a Board and church attendees have been complying. Board in agreement that nothing should change in the policy.

8. Proposal from Kerri DeZwaan regarding masking at youth events (included)

Proposal to:

1.) Keep masking optional for youth programs (Leaders will take their cues from the kids regarding masking).

2.) Change Masking from Mandatory to Optional for EDGE events as of January 3, 2022 (Leaders will take their cues from the kids regarding masking).

3.) Keep Masking Mandatory for Sunday School (kids and leaders) until 60 days past when the vaccine becomes available for kids ages 3 & 4.

MOTION: Karen A. made the motion to approve after the churchwide mask mandate policy is lifted.

SECONDED: Ashley seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

9. Covid Protocols for Volunteers (included)

Reviewed the protocols adopted by SPRC (derived from the most recent CDC guidelines and are in accordance with the Ottawa County Health Department guidelines). Board reviewed for protocols to be in place for volunteers.

Discussion brought up about boosters and specific masks to wear.

Following amendments were made: Amend policy to state, “close-fitting mask” and policy would apply to any volunteer performing volunteer service within the church building. Amendment made to contact person (to whom you report).

MOTION: Ashley made the motion to accept the COVID protocols for Volunteer Positions.

SECONDED: Shaun seconded the motion.

VOTE: All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

10. Liaisons to Ministry Groups

Liaisons were assigned for open ministry groups:

- Adult Studies: Marie McDonald
- Children’s Music Ministry: Karen Ambs
- Cribbage: Sue Kremkow
- Family Camp: Ashley Forton
- Forever Young: Marie McDonald
- Kitchen Committee: Kelly Goward
- Men’s Basketball: Michelle Wood
- Mom’s Bible Study: Ashley Forton

- Prayer Group: Karen Ambs
- Security: Kelly Goward
- Toys 4 Tots: Kelly Goward
- UMW: Marie McDonald

The intention of ministry liaisons is to check in periodically and report back to Governance Board.

11. Governance Board Contact List

Contacts that needed to be corrected were updated.

12. Vice Chair Nominations

Kelly briefed the board on the purpose of selecting a Vice Chair and asked if anyone was interested in considering. Asked to think about and come to next meeting prepared to nominate.

13. Future Meeting Schedule:

Suggested: May 23 (Mon), July 25 (Mon), Sept 24 (Sat), Nov 19 (Sat)

Board agreed that we can move forward with the schedule as suggested.

Dan offered to bring donuts for the next meeting.

Karen A. volunteered to lead devotions next meeting.

14. Closing Prayer

The meeting was closed with a prayer and adjourned.

Next meeting: Saturday, March 26 at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Wood

Governance Board Secretary

Church Closings Policy

GUMChurch is closed if Jenison Public Schools are closed.

If JPS is not closed, but conditions worsen during the day, then the Pastor or Office Manager will determine if the church should be closed.

On Sundays, service cancelations will be decided by the Pastor and Worship Director.

Church closings will be posted on WoodTV8, WZZM13 and the GUMChurch Facebook page.

Ministry or Group leaders are responsible for letting group members know of closings and meeting cancelations.

(Policy endorsed by Governance Board, January, 2019)

Covid-19 Protocols (Updated 1-31-2022):

This policy applies to all persons performing volunteer service within the church building.

The following protocols were derived from the most recent CDC guidelines and are in accordance with the Ottawa County Health Department guidelines. For the purposes of this guidance, close contact is defined as "within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period"

If you come into close contact with someone who has Covid-19, below are the protocols that Georgetown United Methodist Church staff will follow:

1. Contact the appropriate staff person (to whom you report) and inform them that you are a close contact.
2. If you are **Exposed** and **ARE** up to date on Covid-19 Vaccinations:
 - a. You do not have to quarantine unless you develop symptoms
 - b. Wear a close-fitting mask until 10 full days after exposure
3. If you are **Exposed** and are **NOT** up to date on Covid-19 Vaccinations:
 - a. You must quarantine at least 5 full days.
 - b. Watch for symptoms until 10 days after exposure.
 - c. Wear a close-fitting mask until 10 full days after exposure.
4. If you are **Exposed** and **have had Covid-19 within the past 90 days**:
 - a. You do not have to quarantine unless you develop symptoms.
 - b. Wear a close-fitting mask until 10 full days after exposure.

If **you** receive a positive Covid test, below are the protocols according to Georgetown United Methodist Church:

1. Contact appropriate staff person of your positive Covid test
2. Isolate (if possible) or quarantine until the following conditions are met:
 1. Isolate for 5 days
 2. If you are symptomatic- you must be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND your symptoms are improving.
 3. If you are asymptomatic- you can end isolation after 5 full days.
 4. If you are severely ill or immunocompromised, you must isolate for 10 days
 5. Wear a close-fitting mask until 10 full days after exposure or positive test if exposure is not known.

November 15.2021

Masking Proposal for Young Disciples Ministries

Proposal:

1. Keep Masking optional for all Youth Programs (Leaders will take their cues from the kids regarding masking)
2. Change Masking from Mandatory to Optional for EDGE events as of January 3, 2022 (Leaders will take their cues from the kids regarding masking)
3. Keep Masking Mandatory for Sunday School (kids and leaders) until 60 days past when the vaccine becomes available for kids ages 3 & 4

Rationale:

1. Kids ages 5 and older are all eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine.
2. Following Ottawa County Health Department protocol for Schools, masking is becoming optional on January 3, 2022, for school aged children. Our programs including **only** school aged kids will follow the same guidelines.
3. There are kids in our Sunday School program who are not yet eligible for the vaccine, they must continue to be protected by our protocol, that is why masking in Sunday School should continue to be mandated until our 3- & 4-year-olds can be fully vaccinated.
4. At this point, we have neither the volunteers nor the number of children to divide the children into different age groups. If/when that division can occur, the masking mandate can be amended to reflect those changes.
5. The CDC recommends continued masking, vaccinating all staff/volunteers working in Early Childhood Education settings where children cannot be vaccinated, and continued social distancing. See the link [Here](#).
6. After doing research regarding vaccinations for children ages 2-4. It appears that those vaccinations are on track for release in the first quarter of 2022. Of course, there is no guarantee of that timeline, but that gives us hope that by the end of the school year, our programs may be mask optional for all.

