



# GUM CHURCH

**Our vision is to actively live the example of Jesus**

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## GOVERNANCE BOARD MEETING

Saturday, October 17, 2020

PRESENT: Jeri Bigler, Heather Blaszczyk, Dan DeZwaan, Michael Freude, John Johnson, Sue Kremkow, Amy Schuiling, Christine Webster, \*Pastor Sherri Swanson, \*Carol DeWeerd. (\* Non-voting member)

ABSENT: Craig Brodie, Kyle Anderson

This meeting was held on Zoom. Amy called the meeting to order at 8:33 am. Pastor Sherri shared a prayer.

STAFF REPORTS: Heather Blaszczyk (Communications and Hospitality)  
Heather joined us today for this meeting.

Heather is greatly concerned about the safety of the church (attendees and staff) as we consider re-opening the church. She stated that the number of cases in Ottawa county has continued to rise. Her responsibilities have weighed on her lately as she continues to try to do the best for the church.

She has been planning for the re-opening by recruiting volunteers to help when we re-open. From her calls for volunteers she has had 12 -yes; 22 - no, and 6 did not respond. A minimum of 4 volunteers is needed at a service: 2 at each entrance and 2 to help seat attendees.

Heather suggested that we might consider a survey of the congregation to see how many might return to worship in the sanctuary if we re-open.

The committee thanked Heather for sharing her thoughts and for the great work she is doing to communicate with the congregation.

Pastor Sherri was asked how she feels about re-opening. Sherri expressed great concern for the "health of the church".

One small group has already met in the church. Sherri is aware of the numbers of Covid cases increasing. She is not worried about her own health risk. She is more concerned about older members of the church; but these members have said "let us decide". Some people have expressed to her that "online worship does not feel like worship".

COMMENTS:



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\*Dan responded with a question: For the people who are thinking of leaving, what do they expect the in-person worship will look like? The in-person worship will be the same as the online service and at the same time. Music will be pre-recorded, children's time will be pre-recorded; and, there will be no fellowship. In sum the in-person worship in the sanctuary will not be like it was before Covid.

\*The staff continues to plan for in person worship with improvements in delivery of the service (online and in person). We are getting a new computer and sound board to make the worship experience better!  
(Thanks to Alex and Ryan Malott)

\*It was suggested that perhaps other staff members could be shifted to assume some of the hospitality responsibilities. Heather would continue to train volunteers and set up; and, the head usher could oversee the hospitality duties.

\*It was expressed that the criteria of 20% attendance for in-person worship would be appropriate. "We have to try something – we need to move forward".

\* It is of prime concern that we consider the staff who are put at risk. But if we delay the decision to re-open we continue in this debate "loop" not arriving at any end result.

## MOTION:

Amy and others proposed the following motion:

We will return to in-person "sanctuary limited participation" beginning with one service on November 8, 2020 with 60 attendees who have submitted a reservation and follow the safety rules. A "soft opening" will be held on Nov. 1 with usher teams and several church leaders in attendance.

VOTE: In favor – 6; opposed – 1; absentia – 2

## DISCUSSION:

1. Is this start date enough time for Alex to prepare for in-person worship?
2. Do we need criteria for shutting down? if the schools close we will no longer have in- person worship.
3. Sherri and Amy will work on a system for reservations with Heather being in charge of taking the reservations.
4. It was decided that a mailing will be sent to all members by the end of next week to define exactly what is expected of them for in-person worship; followed by information in the newsletter the following week.



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## COMMUNICATION WITH THE CONGREGATION:

1. Board members are encouraged to connect with their liaison groups to encourage leaders to reach out to their members. Enclosed is a list of liaison assignments.
2. It was suggested that we could send a communication to our church members asking to connect people who need assistance with people who are willing and able to help a fellow GUMC member in need.
3. Re: letter that is being sent home with expectations of attendees at in-person worship:
  - \*"if sick please don't come"
  - \*masks are required during the entire worship and must cover both the nose and mouth
  - \*no coffee available and no personal drinks
  - \*check-in when arrive and pick up a pre-packaged communion packet
  - \*you may be seated in different areas of the church – not your usual spot
  - \*high-risk individuals will be encouraged to worship online
  - \*in-person and online will be offered simultaneously at 10:30 am

## DATES TO REMEMBER:

Charge Conference is scheduled for Nov. 2, 2020

## ADJOURNMENT:

We were adjourned at 9:50 am.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Carol DeWeerd



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