**COUNCIL MINUTES: Saturday, June 20, 2020, 9:00am via Zoom**

Present: Vanessa Deutschmann, Dale Fixsen, Vicki Jenkins-Long, Ken Katzen, Ellen King, Kathy Marshall, Claire Matheny, and Anne Yenchko

Absent: None

Guests: Don Benson, John Brandenburg, Mary Brandenburg, Normale Doyle, Theresa Gale, Ann Ivester, Ellen Leiserson, Bonnie Orrison, Bonnie Personett, Sandy Queen, and Frank Turban

Taking Minutes: Kathy Marshall

**AGENDA**

Vicki led us in prayer.

Ellen thanked the many guests for attending.

Anne provided the jest.

**Affirmations**:

Anne affirmed Don's work at getting FIOS in and running, and Ellen and Vicki joined in affirming Don's extensive tech work for KC. Claire affirmed Ken, Marty Downie, and Martha Lohaus for their work in creating and installing the butterflies in the Sacred Garden. Town Center approved the installation, and Sandy Q. shared that the Town Center Newsletter cover featured a photo of local residents posing in front of the butterflies.

Two items were added to today's Agenda:

--Under the COVID-19 discussion, Don amended the Tech Team list to remove Don Link, and to add Michael Cleveland, Avery Trinh, and Yung Trinh.

--Under Community Life/Vitality, Diversity & Inclusion, Ken added discussion of proposed signage for KC's windows.

**Minutes**:

In the Minutes for May 17, 2020, Vanessa asked for the Vision Team list to be amended to remove Elaine Buderer and Sandy Queen, and add Sandy Gillen.

**MOTION was made and approved to accept the amended Council Minutes for Sunday, May 17, 2020.**

**COVID-19 Discussion**:

Council heard reports from the three groups who are discussing the KC re-entry plan.

Worship Leadership Team/Re-entry Team:

Theresa summarized extensively the report on the WLT Survey on Re-Opening. A significant percentage of worshippers do not plan to return to live worship inside the Carriage House until it deemed safe to do so. The Tech Team will need a great deal of lead time to determine how to proceed most effectively. They certainly will rely on the Maryland and Howard County rules, but KC will make their own determination as to when the re-opening will actually happen. Certainly for now it seems worship will continue to be offered on Zoom but a hybrid of on-line and on-site is being explored, and the possibility of live-streaming is an option for the future. The Tech Team gave their recommendations to the Worship LT, and WLT will prepare and present their re-opening plan at the July Council meeting. The plan will include a “road map” for re-opening, as well as a preliminary budget for any new streaming equipment required. In the meantime, small groups who wish to gather for a shared spiritual experience are welcome to use the Sacred Garden provided they follow the current rules: bring your own chair, wear a mask, keep the six-foot social distancing recommendation in place at all times.

Don Benson will be receiving a respite from his technical obligations due to the volunteers who have offered to be trained to manage the Sunday worship service he has been operating. Thanks to those 4 volunteers, and also to Normale for producing the user's guide to assist in their training.

Tech Team:

Several suggestions from the Survey are being explored. As a result, next Sunday Don will provide 10 minutes of music for a pre-service meditative experience. The suggestion for an opportunity to contribute worshipper commentary after the sharing, or input at prayer time, is still being explored. In order to allow hospitality Zoom to continue once the service is concluded, Sunday School has been assigned their own separate Zoom channel for use at 11:30 on Sundays. An outside worship service is not recommended at this time, but Sandy Q plans to Zoom Sunday School from the Sacred Garden, allowing the children to observe the progress of the flowers they planted earlier in the season. Theresa and Juls plan to test the ability of the new wi-fi to be effective out in the Sacred Garden by sitting outside Sunday morning, and will let Don B and Ellen know the results.

Rental Review Team:

Sandy Q reported that she is attending virtual meetings of the professional wedding organizations to get ideas about how to allow small weddings use of our venue, parking lot, or building. Oakland Manor is allowing events in their outside space at 50% of their normal capacity. She will continue to explore the possibility of allowing the same at KC. She asked for input on the upcoming July 11 wedding on the KC calendar. The parties have informed KC that there would be a maximum of 15 people attending, and that they plan to have the ceremony outside and afterwards, a small carry-out dinner to be held upstairs. Throughout their events they will honor the current guidelines concerning masks, gloves, and social distancing. Discussion followed as to how and when to allow this wedding the use of the building in addition to the garden for this one time. Risk was evaluated. When Don proposed preparing a plan to clean and sanitize the building before and after the event, it was looked upon favorably; and

**MOTION was made and approved by majority to allow the July 11 wedding to proceed, using both the garden and inside the building.**

Except for the July 11 wedding,

**MOTION was made and approved to keep the Carriage House closed for the month of July 2020.**

It was agreed that the July Council meeting will address the possibility of closing the building for the balance of 2020, instead of deciding month by month. The Worship Leadership Team and Building and Grounds Leadership Team will bring their recommendations as well.

Don noted that re-opening will affect how the Worship Task Groups would operate. Zoom currently works well for the worship process. A number of the members of upcoming WTGs are people at risk who would not be comfortable coming into the building again. Ellen reiterated for Don that any plan for returning to indoor worship will require 90 days of lead time to ensure all technical aspects are solidly in place.

FOCUS group re: providing financial help to individuals:

The suggestion has been made that there may be individuals within our worship community who have suffered severe financial loss, and to whom a cash donation from KC would be a sign of the community's care. The Financial Leadership Team members noted that giving money to individuals within the community creates a potential issue with KC’s non-profit status. It is possible for someone in the community to collect money for a particular individual without the money going through KC. These gifts would not be tax-deductible. A sub-group of Ellen, Ann I, Bonnie O, and Claire will explore the issue and report back to the July Council meeting.

**Leadership Team Reports**

**Building and Grounds Leadership Team:**

Ellen thanked the team for continuing to hold monthly workdays to maintain the building. Don B reported that the labyrinth installation is postponed, possibly to the last week of August.

**Community Life Leadership Team:**

Vicki reported the team is discussing how to include the new Zoom visitors in the life of KC. When visitors do not provide personal information, it is difficult to relate and respond to them. Zoom has a break-out room feature, and information can be requested through the Chat Room feature. Vicki and Normale are trying to capture the information, and KC currently has no mechanism or computer program to organize such information. Vanessa reminded Council of the past discussions to investigate buying one of the new versions of church software that have become available, but no action is currently planned. Vicki asked for clarification of the Community Life LT tasks, as she is not clear if CLLT is the correct entity to capture information from new people. Theresa has the lists from the Jubilee event last year, and Ken is willing to work on this as well.

Regarding the current social situation around the Black Lives Matter protests, Ken presented a proposal to add signage to the KC windows visible from the streets to let the surrounding community know that, although the Carriage House is empty, it does not remain silent. He proposed putting a Black Lives Matter sign in the large window, and hanging the Pride Flag in another window to be determined. Ken is willing to create the sign and to affix both sign and flag in an appropriate manner. After discussion,

**MOTION was made and approved by majority to display a Black Lives Matter sign and the KC Pride Flag within the Carriage House, visible to the surrounding community.**

Don will put the Black Lives Matter icon on the KC website. The Pride Flag is already there.

**Finance Leadership Team:**

Dale reviewed with Council the Treasurer's Summary through May 31, 2020. FLT divested a total of $6,500 from restricted investments to fund Mission/Scholarship. As with all investors during this pandemic, KC's restricted investments have been volatile. FLT divested $120,000 from Schwab to Bank of America in May to facilitate moving funds between accounts and to have these funds covered by FDIC insurance. As with all investors during this pandemic, KC's restricted investments have been volatile, so FLT transferred the KC Schwab account to a Bank of America account in order to have the advantage of FDIC insurance.

**Human Resources Leadership Team**

Anne reported that she, Claire, and Amy are together discussing trying to keep records of the people who come and go during the Zoom worship services. Amy has taken over putting the weekly Power Point template for worship services. This relieves Claire from that activity, and helps Amy fill in hours she is scheduled to work. Bonnie O noted that pre-COVID Amy was keeping a time sheet to record and be paid for the hours she actually worked, but post-COVID, per Council's month by month decision, she is currently being paid the full amount she is contracted for. Claire suggested Amy be paid her full amount through 2020, and after discussion,

**MOTION was made and approved unanimously to pay Amy Sens her full salary she is contracted for, through the end of 2020.**

Kaleb has let Don know that he will be attending the University of Maryland College Park in the fall. In the meantime, Building and Grounds LT is eager to have Kaleb continuing to work for KC while he is available, and Kaleb is willing and grateful to perform any of the many tasks that Building and Grounds LT may have available. Don will tell Kaleb of this offer, and that he will be paid $15.00 per hour.

**Spiritual Education Leadership Team:**

Vanessa noted that KC's spiritual life is being tended to by various Zoom activities, having a good impact on KC worshippers during this pandemic.

Wonder Wednesdays are being replaced by Annora Bailey's Zoom book club that will digitally read “Stamped from the Beginning,” by Ibram X. Kendi. The book club happens twice during the week, both sessions identical, one on Wednesdays at 7:00 and the other on Saturdays at 4:00.

Once a month on select Wednesdays, Art Spilkia and Mary Brandenburg are offering Global Spirits, One God, spiritual themed movies exploring other faith traditions and philosophers' teachings.

Mary Brandenburg has had success with the Thursday Poetry/Creative Writing events, so much so that it has been suggested that the creations from the participants be edited into a book. She will report back on the exploration. The potential is there to use the book as a Worship Task Group resource, and to sell the books with proceeds going to KC.

The Friday dinners are winding down.

Normale has organized a group of 5 people who will join her watching movies related to the Black Lives Matter theme. She will discuss with the Community Life Leadership Team.

**Worship Leadership Team:**

Theresa – reported under COVID-19 Discussion subheading earlier.

**Enabling Minister:**

Claire will share more extensively in the quarterly Community Meeting which follows this meeting. She reports she continues her pastoral care to KC virtually, through emails, texts, and phone calls. She prayerfully participates in Black Lives Matter vigils and marches, interacts with other faith entities in our county, and leads the Worship Task Groups. The Howard County Clergy Alliance put out a statement on anti-racism that encouraged faith leaders to add their houses of worship to the PATH statement, and Claire has added KC. She will email the statement to the KC community. Claire continues to practice self-care, and expressed gratitude both for the wonderfully rejuvenating birthday weekend provided for her and her family at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center, and for the upcoming beach week vacation they will experience.

Ken sent emails to KC regarding the re-naming of the building, and will bring the issue up at the subsequent Community Meeting today. He clarified that the issue for the Community Meeting is NOT to make a decision but to decide what process the community would like to use to discuss the possibility of the re-naming. Bonnie P reminded Council that any final re-naming decision would require a vote from Members.

Ellen called to Council's attention the need to have communications going out on the KC emails vetted for clarity by more than just the writer. She always has Vanessa and Claire review anything she creates, and recommends that Council follow a similar practice to ensure clarity of the messages sent to our worshippers and friends on email.

Given the pandemic, Black Lives Matter, and the other major issues that need KC's attention at this time, it is not likely that any action regarding the Coalition for Immigration Justice can be taken. It will be removed from the Parking Lot below, but Vanessa will ask Richard if there is any related action happening through the Indivisible organization that KC should be made aware of.

Ken gave an update on the Butterfly installation. He had great cooperation from the Town Center manager and organization throughout the creation and installation. Though the artwork was heartily welcomed, it is understand by Town Center that this is a temporary structure, to be removed at some future date to be determined by KC..

PARKING LOT:

--Worship LT to present a re-opening plan at July Council meeting

--WLT and B&G LT to advise Council on keeping the building closed for the rest of 2020

--Subgroup to report on the issue of providing financial help to individuals

--Community Life LT and others to continue efforts to capture information from new Zoom participants

Facilitator – Ellen Chaplain – Claire

Jest – Ken Process Observer – Vicki

Timekeeper – Anne Parking Lot – (none assigned)

Executive meeting – TBD if necessary via Zoom

Next Council meeting – Sunday, July 19, at 1:00pm via Zoom

Vicki gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Marshall, Council Secretary