

MINUTES
ST. PHILIP PARISH COUNCIL
Tuesday, August 18, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m.
via ZOOM

Present: Larry Anthony, Karen Van Rheenen, Greg Anctil, Dave Conway, Ken Davidson
Gillian Fosdick, Esther Graham, Sharon Richmond, Jennifer Sharlow

Absent / Regrets: Ged McLean, Raymond Fieltsch.

Christopher is on vacation. He returns to parish work on August 31.

1. Discussion: the ‘whether’ of opening the church – before we proceed to the ‘how’

The ‘Covid situation’ is continually evolving in BC. We are seeing the ‘second wave’ of virus infection now. A few months ago, it seemed that BC had ‘flattened the curve’ and that there were very few cases of the virus on southern Vancouver Island. Numbers appear to be going up again now.

Christopher wrote in an email (July 7th), “My one hope is that we will be ready to offer IB worship in whatever way best serves the needs of our community as soon as Council determines it is **wise and safe** to do so.” He left us, as council, to make this determination in our August meeting, taking into account the current situation with the Covid virus in the province. Parish Council has the responsibility to make sure that we agree that it is **wise and safe** to open the church at this time.

There are 3 separate elements to consider in re-opening:

1. Can we open? Should we open? Do we open?
2. How do we open – what needs to be in place to meet all Diocesan & BCCDC protocols
3. When do we open?

We are making the decision to open in the context of, -- first, sorting out the details of how it will work. There are multiple elements in this equation. Then, once we are clear that we have met all the necessary protocols - we can move forward – with safety – in our decision about the timing to re-open the church for in-building worship.

We have just received copies of the (July 17, 2020) “Guidance for Faith-Based Organizations to Prevent COVID-19 Transmission” from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

Discussion of Risk / Benefit Ratio. What do we perceive as safe?

Defining “safe” is a fraught issue for many. We are following the good & responsible direction from the Diocese - and, continue to press them as changes are reported locally (for instance – on programming for children).

Is ventilation an issue? – There is a huge volume of air in the building - high ceilings. There are fans in the church and the windows along the north side all open.

- Should we be looking at buying a HEPA filter for the furnace?

Distinguishing between the practical issues of opening and the more deeply personal or philosophical aspects of the question.

We have a skilled team working through the points – so we know that we will be *able* to open – the next question is – *should* we?

What hesitations have people expressed in terms of attending in-building worship?

- Families have so many “not optional” activities that they must attend to - some will be reluctant to add a commitment that is purely “optional.”

The decision is both personal and impersonal – ie – will we choose to come to church ourselves? – and – Do we make that option / decision available for others?

Another consideration – is not simply – “will it be safe” – but -- will it be “meaningful” – is there enough left over after we subtract all that needs to change from our earlier known experience of “church” – that we will still call this new incarnation of worship - “church”?

Two step process to re-opening:

1. Get our ‘In-building worship safety plan’ approved by the Diocese
2. Feel satisfied that we have met all those protocols

Larry has circulated the checklist of preparation tasks. Of the 35 tasks identified, most have now been completed or are in an ‘on-going’ stage.

- Dave Conway, Allan Carmichael, Ged McLean are the AV tech folks working on combining live-stream / ZoomChurch with building worship. They have completed the work and Dave (& Allan) participated in Council from St. Philip church. It was a brilliant success!

- Larry Anthony has purchased the hand sanitizer and disposable non-medical face masks.

- Neal Tucker has purchased the spray disinfectant, gloves and cleaning products

- Sharon Richmond has laminated and posted all required signage.

- Ken Davidson has constructed a wonderful base for the table-top plexiglass shield (‘Veru tegumentum’) for distribution of bread at communion. It is a work of great care and beauty. He has done a phenomenal job.

- Marnie Phillips & Gillian Fosdick removed and packed up all the pew books – Bibles, BAS & Hymn books.

- Jenni Jennings has offered to create a roster of volunteers for ‘sanitizing’ before / or after service.

- We will need a tech person running the cameras and streaming for the service whose job would include running the projector. Ian Carmichael and one or two other youth may take on this role.

Neal did say that it may not be advantageous to have the fans on because it could help spread a virus. Jennifer will check with him.

It was mentioned that the furnace could be turned on without heat. We should investigate whether this would assist with ventilation.

MOTION: Gillian Fosdick

Though many of us, (on parish council) will choose to continue with ZoomChurch, we acknowledge that there are folks within the congregation who so miss and long for the opportunity to attend in-building worship. We believe that it is our job to offer options for those who do want to attend church.

We propose that St. Philip move forward to have all re-opening protocols in place and open for in-building worship on **Sunday, September 6, 2020.**

Seconded: Karen Van Rheenen

Vote: Passed. Unanimously.

MOTION: Sharon Richmond

We believe that it is best to 'start small' in our re-opening plans – and propose to begin with **ONE service on Sunday mornings.**

-because it will be easier to scale up – rather than back down, if plans for worship seem too ambitious – and because two services will double any risks – and will also increase our need for volunteers.

Suggested format is an Integrated live-stream/ in-building worship with Zoom church.

Suggested time: 10:00AM.

Seconded: Larry Anthony

Vote: Passed. Unanimously.

Date set for next Zoom Council meeting: Tuesday, September 16, 2020 @ 7:00 pm

We finished with 'The Grace': The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen

(2 Cors. 13:14)