

Meridian Pastoral Charge Board Meeting Sept 21, 2021

This was the first face to face meeting of our Board since November 2020

Roll call: Diane Trudeau, Ron Manness, Jane Manness, Georges Cormier, Michelle Ammeter, Margaret Porter, Julie Ringash, Jamie Scharf, Janice Harrison, Rev. James de Beer. Nancy Langlois phoning in.

Regrets: Judy Manness

Call to order: Chair Diane opened the meeting at 7:02 PM in the basement of Starbuck Lutheran. All agreed it was good to be in person again.

Opening prayer: Rev. James opened in prayer.

MOTION: *That the agenda be adopted as circulated.* Michelle/Georges Carried

MOTION: *That the meeting minutes from MPC April 13th, 2021 be adopted as circulated.* Ron/Michelle Carried

It was noted that the April 13 minutes should now be recirculated without the draft stamp.

MINISTER'S REPORT: Reverend James deBeer

My apologies for the brevity of this report. Although there has been a lot going on in terms of my ministry, much of it has been the same since our last meeting. Suspension of in-person worship continued through the end of June. Online worship continued every Sunday on YouTube, our fellowship on Zoom and mailing out bulletins to some of those who do not have access to online resources.

There have been a few funerals/grave-side services including Mike Brelis, Colleen Norton and her husband and the Boyds of Sanford. A funeral for Veronica Black is currently being arranged for October

July was to be a holiday but on a personal note Daryl's father passed away at the end of June and so providing support and grieving was a big part of my summer.

We resumed in-person worship in Domain outdoors in August. We've now moved in-doors again. The number of in-person attendees remains small no doubt due to summer events still ongoing as well as perhaps a reluctance to return as the pandemic is still ongoing. With kids back in school and things moving in-doors for Fall, we'll have to be vigilant and maintain our flexibility as we watch how the 4th wave unfolds.

Avonlea now has a screen for digital content and Sanford has internet which means I can tap into these tools for worship services.

I'm not sure what the next few months holds for us but we've been pretty flexible and resourceful throughout this pandemic so I have no doubt we will make it through.

WORSHIP REPORT: Michelle Ammeter (chair)

Meridian Annual Worship Committee meeting was held in Sanford August 31, 2021. Members present were: Rev James, Marianne Litster, Jane Manness, Julie Ringash, Barb Kirk, Margaret Porter, and Michelle Ammeter.

2021/2022 dates:

- 1) Scripture readings for the church year are from Year B right now, Year C begins at Advent. A link to the Lectionary is available on the MPC website.
- 2) Communion dates are: October 3 (WWC), November 28 (Advent 1), January 2 (Epiphany), March 6 (1st Lent with Liturgy of Ashes), April 17 (Easter), June 5 (Pentecost).
- 3) Each congregation will schedule their own Recovenanting services, White Gift Sunday, Hanging of the Greens Memory Tree as the timing suits best.
- 4) Inter-church Advent Service event is not scheduled yet.
- 5) MPC Blue Christmas Service is planned for a virtual service again this year.

- 6) Christmas Eve Services are: Starbuck at 5:00 pm (with Rev. James), Avonlea at 7:00pm (with Rev James), and Sanford at 7:30 pm (Pulpit Supply).
- 7) Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - January 16-23.
- 8) Holy Week services are: Maundy Thursday (April 14); Good Friday Avonlea (April 15, 10am); Easter Sunday (April 17) services are Avonlea at 9:30am (with Rev James), Sanford at 11:00am (Rev James) and Starbuck at 11:30 (TBD).
- 9) Union Point service and Interfaith service will be June 26 possibly..

Other Information

- Rev James will pick Advent and Lent readings.
- 1 pulpit supply is available for each congregation annually if needed (for a total of 3 annually). This may not be required each, but could be used for Christmas Eve, Easter Sunday or any other required service as the local board feels is needed.

Service Changes: This year there are changes to the Service, and changes may continue as we adjust to the Public Health orders, work to keep all members safe, and figure out what works and what does not. As much as we may struggle with these changes, we do want to be able to include as many folks as safely possible.

There was a regional P2P meeting Sept 7, to discuss reopening matters. This was not a meeting to set out ground rules but rather to discuss ideas and suggestions. A number of topics were discussed including: capacities, masks, vaccine mandates, singing. While details can be discussed at the MPC meeting, capacities are 50% (or max of 150) with social distancing by households and masks required (clarification required on leader mask requirement). Singing has not been banned and this discussion will be reported on at the meeting, but some congregations are singing (although modified and without choir), some using a soloist, and some have no singing.

Also at the P2P meeting, vaccine mandates were discussed. There are legal implications of such a requirement to attend and many details to consider before implementing such a requirement. There will be more

information at the MPC meeting. There are also clarifications required for this as well.

Service information:

- Rev James will record the service weekly and post it after the service for folks who feel they are unable to attend service.
- There will be bulletins available, the basics put together by Rev James and Hymns and responses added by each congregation.
- Singing of hymns & responses will be decided at the congregation level. Some forms of music are alright, some are not. Choirs, generally, will not work because they must be 2m apart.
- We do have purchased, prepackaged, individual communion servings that Rev James has sourced. These will be used while they last and determined what is required at that point.
- Passing of the peace will not happen
- There will be readers for the first reading.
- Next Worship committee meeting is Aug. 30 2022 @ 7:30 in Sanford

Ministry and Personnel: Julie Ringash (chair)

The Meridian Ministry and Personal Committee met on August 17, 2021 at Sanford United Church. Attendees: Stuart Manness, Judy Cormier, Michele Ammeter, Julie Ringash. Regrets: Ellie Saltess

There was much discussion around church re-opening plans. As on August 7, 2021 the Public Health Restrictions allowed for: **Indoor community, cultural and religious gatherings 150 participants or 50 per cent capacity, whichever is greater.** ...It is realized that this is subject to change at anytime. Trinity Lutheran Church is currently open. Avonlea United Church has been having outdoor services in August.

Service times for the 2021-2022 church year, according to the rotation schedule will be: Avonlea 9:30 am with Rev. James every Sunday, Sanford United at 11:00 am and Starbuck at 11:30 am alternating with Rev. James and lay leaders. Fall services will begin Sunday September 12th. A worship schedule will be developed and circulated. Avonlea will have Rev. James every Sunday. Sanford and Starbuck will have Rev. James on alternating Sundays, except for the second Sunday of the month, when the Starbuck

congregation will worship with the Lutheran congregation. Lay leaders will lead the services on alternating Sundays at Sanford and Starbuck, using an order of service and message provided by Rev. James. Rev. James will also record a service every Sunday to upload to YouTube, for anyone that cannot attend services in person.

Sanford United Church now has an internet connection. Avonlea United Church is interested in exploring the possibilities for live streaming services in 2022-2023.

The Meridian secretary position was paused in 2020, because we were not worshipping in person and did not require prepared bulletins. The primary function of this position is to format the church bulletins. Rev. James did not feel that the secretary position was required at this time. The United Church office on St. Mary's Road in Winnipeg is being closed in the near future. Rev. James is serving on the Prairie to Pine executive board.

Rev. James is planning on having office hours at Sanford United starting in September. He will be available to anyone that wants to come in and visit. Avonlea is also interested in Rev. James having office hours there. In order to make more efficient use of Rev. James' time and to reduce carbon emissions the M & P committee is asking the church boards to consider having Rev. James virtually attend one meeting per year, via Zoom, conference call or Facetime.

Regional Council – Prairie to Pine: Diane Trudeau (Reg 5 rep)

-Communication with Prairie to Pine is via their newsletter.

I attended **the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Prairie to Pine Regional Council** via Zoom on May 28 – May 30. This year's theme was "Our Place in the Rainbow". We started with an uplifting worship service, honoured retirees, covenanted with some Communities of Faith, and celebrated a new Admittand, Christopher Davis. We listened to the Moderator's video and message. For me, the highlight of the meeting was a presentation called "Our Journey as an Indigenous First Nations People" by Gloria Cook, an Indigenous Elder. She works as a Community Capacity Development Coordinator and works along with Indigenous Ministry and

Justice Unit of the United Church of Canada with the Communities Of Faith in Keewatin Circle. She spoke about the Medicine Wheel – a circle divided into 4 sections – each one representing their healing. Section 1 SELF – Who we were. Section 2 – FAMILY – What happened to us. Section 3 – COMMUNITY – how their community is working. Section 4 WORLD – Who we are today. The Indigenous communities use a Matriarchal governance system with Chiefs, Council of Elders who listen to their people then make suggestions to the Chief. The Government of Canada is a Patriarchal governance system – a top down system allowing no freedom of governance. Thus a difficult situation for the First Nation's people.

Leslie Harrison ran a fundraiser for M&S called "The Masked Singers". There were puppets singing and you had to guess who the actual voices were and make a pledge to M&S at the same time. She raised \$8 500

Covid Up-Date: up to 150 people...masks & physical distancing....singing with masks allowed...churches can make additional rules.

Church reports:

Avonlea: Ron Manness (chair)

Covid continues to control our destiny and has greatly curtailed church and community events. James has been instrumental in a gradual return to church services, starting with an outdoor service August 8th at Avonlea. There has been services held since every Sunday except Aug 29th. I have enjoyed the video services greatly because we have been away most weekends and the online services have bridged a connection for many of us. Thanks James.

The Sunday School organizers are planning a kickoff wiener roast Sept 18th and start SS the 19th. It's great to see some enthusiasm around planning again.

The family of Veronica Black are planning a memorial service Oct 15th for Veronica at our church. Our church community will miss her very much.

Let's hope the fourth wave is uneventful and we can get back to some degree of normalcy.

Sanford: Jamie Scharf (chair)

The summer months seemed extra quiet this year as the Covid-19 pandemic added to our normal break from activities. However, we did enjoy one in person outdoor fellowship in the church yard when it was very nice to see some of our members for the first time in a long time. Also, our annual plant sale was another good opportunity to get to see some people in real life.

Our building is still being used as extra space for community events when public health orders allow. JA Cuddy Elementary school has been especially appreciative of the arrangements we have made to do extracurricular activities. The pandemic has taken their space away for things like school pictures, kinderstart program, and piano lessons. As we start into the next school year, it looks like we'll be called upon to do the same. The piano teacher has already decided to do lessons in our sanctuary again.

New this year, we've been contacted by Farpoint films (from Winnipeg) who have interest in using our building as a filming location for some of their work. They have recently spent a day in our building doing filming.

Our fiber internet (from RCML) is now installed at the church and we are excited to use it. As for business, we still haven't selected a date for our 2020 Annual Meeting but I suspect it won't be too much longer before we have that meeting. And we are cautiously optimistic as we return to in-person worship this fall and hope that the Covid-19 situation allows us to enjoy this safely for an extended amount of time.

Starbuck: Margaret Porter (chair)

There is not a lot to report as we have been unable to meet apart from one much enjoyed outdoor service in early summer. We look forward to being able to resume indoor worship this month in whatever form it takes. We continue to be guided by the protocols of the Trinity Lutheran Church as usual. Thanks again to Rev. James for keeping the online connections going so well. Reluctantly a decision was made to remove the dying spruce from the Church site and replacement will take place after discussion. Hoping for more positive news in the future

Meridian Inter-Church Council (Judy Manness rep)

Two \$500 Baccalaureate Service awards were given in June to outstanding students. One from St Hyacinthe - Kylie Lippens and one from Avonlea United - Benjamin Brigg. The new pastor from LSCF has joined the committee - Kevin Dyck. We discussed at our Sept meeting the possibility of increasing our exposure as churches to the community by placing an ad in the Headingly Headliner. Further discussion will continue next meeting. MIC Baseball Tournament has been re-scheduled for Oct 3 at 2 pm. The host diamonds are next to St Paul's Lutheran Church in Brunkild. No BBQ this year. Bring your own snacks and beverages. Need one more team so if anyone is interested in playing let me know.

MOTION: *That the reports be accepted as presented.* Jamie/Jane Carried

Treasurers report: Meridian treasurer Georges Cormier reported balances:

June 30th, 2021..... \$23,616.73

August 31st, 2021.....\$23,259.29

Motion: to accept the financial report as presented. Georges/Ron Carried

OLD BUSINESS:

- *No action on flyers at this point
- *Board of Trustees should meet once a year....no meetings yet
- *2020 Annual meetings temporarily postponed may be extended
- *Julie ordered The Whole People of God SS curriculum
- *Bulletins will be handled by James with each church responsible for printing...Jamie for Sanford, Michelle for Starbuck, Janice for Avonlea

NEW BUSINESS:

- *New concerns re website privacy. Christine has suggested "remove how many hits" and that only James' Google e-mail be on the website. James will forward info as it is received to appropriate church.
 - *Covid info as of today's meeting show a capacity of 50 indoors
 - *United Church advisors recommend following Public Health orders
 - *All people, all masks, all the time
 - *no decision yet re Inter-church Advent event
- Next meeting: Sanford United November 9th @ 7 PM via Zoom
Meeting adjourned at 7:44 by Georges Cormier

Minutes recorded by Janice Harrison Meridian secretary 2021

