

Worship and Music Committee - January 21, 2021

Present (on Zoom): Allison Johnson, Marion Cole, Sonja Demeter, Carol Broderick, Randy Churchill, Mary Kienitz

Staff: Pastor Julie, Carol Browning

Meeting Called to Order with prayer at 1:15 p.m.

Christmas Decorations: Everything looked great. Many people helped.

Pew Removal Recommendation Update: The recommendation of removing one row of pews and replacing it with chairs was approved by Council and carried out by the Property Committee. There have not been objections to this action, so, at the Annual Meeting, the Council will inform the congregation that the metal screws coming up from the floor will be sheared off to remove that hazard.

Budget Requests: The recommended change for the Instrument Maintenance budget request had been approved by email vote following the November meeting.

Worship Review: Randy commented that worship is working very well and that we have a good foundation for our services, including great music that feels connected. It's nice that we can offer our worship in a variety of ways - in-person in both the sanctuary and outside as well as online. Pastor Julie agreed that it's good that we've settled into a pattern and are not trying to figure things out each week. The shortened time for drive-through Communion is working out well.

Some people feel that the singers should not be shown on camera. There are a variety of issues involved, including the equipment we currently have, personal preferences, and a watcher versus participant perspective; Pastor Julie will continue talking with Bill about this.

Allison mentioned that for Christmas Eve, the lights were not darkened enough for "Silent Night." With the stage lights needed for the livestream and lighting the sanctuary, when those lights are turned off, they take ten minutes to come back to power.

Altar Guild: Carol Broderick reported that things are going well. We lost some former Altar Guild members but she is recruiting and may have another training in the spring. She's talking with Vicky Edell and Kris Dawson about having the Altar Guild assignees on the sign-ups, which would mean they would get email reminders when they're scheduled.

Poinsettias/Easter Lilies: We ended up with too many plants for Christmas but it was very difficult to locate a supplier. Randy offered to find out where the Rotary Club gets theirs. For the Easter lilies, it was suggested that we start early getting orders. The timing for both Christmas and Easter flowers is difficult because we have to place our order before we know how many we will sell.

Lent: Ash Wednesday is March 2. Pastor Julie plans to invite various church committees to present the messages at our Holden Evening Prayer series, sharing about the work of their committees in light of a scripture passage and the mission of the church. With the current COVID situation, there will be Soup Suppers but they will be held outside in the pavilion.

Next meeting time: Wednesday, February 16 at 1:15 p.m. (in the pavilion, weather permitting)

Meeting adjourned with prayer at 2:10 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Pastor Julie Morris.

Budget Requests:

Worship and Music Committee - March 16, 2022

Present: Randy Churchill (Chair), Allison Johnson (Council Liaison), Marion Cole, Mary Kienitz

Absent: Carol Broderick, Sonja Demeter

Staff: Pastor Julie, Carol Browning

Meeting Called to Order with prayer at 1:17 p.m.

Epiphany Stars: Marion shared that she has been making the Epiphany/Advent stars that Karen Cherry suggested.

Ash Wednesday and Wednesday Evening Prayers: Randy commented that the 7:00 p.m. worship with St. Columba's was an excellent service. Everyone felt that lots of people were enjoying the Holden Evening Prayers.

Afternoon Chapel: Randy said that it's going well, that there is a nucleus of people who appreciate it, even though the numbers aren't that large. Mary asked whether men were coming; she would like to bring Ric.

Worship Assistants: Randy reported that he had talked with Mike McClary about being the head usher but Mike is not interested. Scott Fajnor might be; Randy will follow up with him. It was also suggested that Vicky might have some ideas about possible head ushers.

The suggestion was made to offer training so that the volunteers know what is expected now that we've returned to regular, in-person worship. We settled on a Saturday morning in May - May 14, as "Spring Training," from 9:00-10:00 a.m. for the ushers & greeters and 10:00-11:00 a.m. for the lectors, assisting ministers, and communion assistants. Randy offered to bring doughnuts and coffee.

A few people expressed concerns about not having enough sign-ups for each Sunday. Things have changed from the way it used to be. People won't commit more than 2 weeks ahead and don't follow up on getting replacements for their spots. The reality is that for many families, they come once a month. Randy asked if there was a time that would work better for families. Pastor Julie shared that Joe had done "listening sessions" with all of the families. We need to understand that what the Spirit is inviting rubs up against structured systems.

Music: After some discussion about CCLI songs and not printed music, it was requested that we add to the bulletin that CCLI doesn't allow the printing of music notation.

Ad Hoc Committee: Randy is part of a new ad hoc committee that is reviewing the use of our facilities, what is needed, where we're going, etc. and they will be interviewing the staff and inviting ideas, suggestions, and comments from the congregation.

Easter Advertising: The *Acorn* now comes out on Saturdays. We'll do one ad for April 9 for our Holy Week worship with St. Columba's, and one on April 16 for Easter worship only. Allison offered to see about getting a banner for the front lawn to advertise to the neighborhood.

Holy Week Worship: Maundy Thursday and Good Friday evening services will be done with St. Columba's, here at Mount Cross, while the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday will be at St. Columba's. For Ash Wednesday, Pastor Julie and Deacon Cecelia joined Fr. Greg for their Noon service. There were about 30 in attendance, with 15 of those being from Mount Cross.

Leadership Retreat: Pastor Julie reminded everyone that the Leadership Retreat was coming up on Sunday, March 27, from Noon to 5:00 p.m., on site.

Next meeting time: Wednesday, April 20, at 1:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 2:43 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Pastor Julie Morris.

Budget Requests:

Worship and Music Committee - April 20, 2022

Present: Randy Churchill (Chair), Allison Johnson (Council Liaison), Sonja Demeter, Mary Kienitz

Absent: Carol Broderick, Marion Cole

Guest: Bill Stoll

Staff: Pastor Julie, Carol Browning

Meeting Called to Order with prayer at 1:16 p.m.

Holy Week Review: Pastor Julie asked people to share what part of Holy Week was particularly special to them. Mary found the Good Friday tenebrae to be very inspirational and meaningful, a different kind of service than she had experienced before. She also appreciated the Easter Vigil. Randy highlighted Easter Sunday, with the joy of having his whole family together in a full church with a great sermon. It was a "good Sunday." Sonja found the Maundy Thursday worship to be a great and moving service. Mary also appreciated the Easter Children's Message with the conga line of unburying the Alleluia. Randy agreed that there was a lot of joy that morning with so many children, lots of Alleluias, and having the choir sing. Pastor Julie was moved by telling the Exodus story at the Easter Vigil by the fire pit.

The suggestion was made that for Easter Sunday next year, we purchase some extra flowers to add to the outdoor cross for those who don't have any in their yard to bring.

Ad Hoc Facilities Committee: Bill Stoll joined us as a representative of the ad hoc facilities committee that Randy had told us about last month. Bill shared that the committee members are meeting with individual committees and staff to solicit feedback on what is needed to best serve where Mount Cross is now and going forward. Their timeline is to gather information in April and May, meet in mid-June to review the ideas and suggestions received, and wrap up by September. He commented that in meeting with the Learning Committee, they would like to see a playground redo as well as a "soft spot" in the church for children, like a "pray ground" area with carpeting, perhaps some rocking chairs available. He asked for ideas from Worship & Music.

A number of brainstorming ideas were shared with Bill to take back to the ad hoc group. We look forward to seeing their final report. Bill thanked everyone for their input and said that the committee is not looking at things from the perspective of available funds but rather putting everything on the table.

"Spring Training": Pastor Julie reminded everyone that our Spring Training for Liturgical Ministers will be Saturday, May 14, from 9:00-10:00 a.m. for Lectors/Assisting Ministers/Communion Ministers and 10:00-11:00 a.m. for Ushers/Greeters. We need to be sure to publicize this event and encourage attendance.

In discussing the lectors, Pastor Julie mentioned that she'd like to see us get a book stand for the large Bible that's on the pulpit and have it displayed in front of the pulpit. Regarding acolytes, Mary wanted to know why the candles are not being extinguished at the end of the service but the current training is to not extinguish them. Allison commented that acolytes don't need to be children; adults can also fill these roles. There was additional discussion about miscellaneous worship items and a request to put offering envelopes back in the pews.

Next meeting time: Wednesday, May 18, at 1:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned with prayer at 3:12 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Pastor Julie Morris.

Worship and Music Committee - May 18, 2022

Present: Randy Churchill (Chair), Allison Johnson (Council Liaison), Marion Cole, Sonja Demeter, Mary Kienitz

Absent: Carol Broderick

Staff: Pastor Julie, Carol Browning

Meeting Called to Order with prayer at 1:28 p.m.

Looking Ahead Post-COVID: Randy started a discussion on what we're working towards in terms of worship post-COVID. He said that people are happy but some want to know where things are going.

Pastor Julie said that she loves what we're doing and has received lots of positive feedback about our worship. With the size of our congregation, she doesn't foresee going to more than one service, unless we run out of room in the sanctuary. In terms of stewardship, we sometimes struggle to come up with enough ministers for one service. It's also great to have a united community where people of all ages and experiences come together. In talking with the new people who are coming, many are from other liturgical traditions or from evangelical churches, some of whom have outgrown their respective positions at those previous churches. Mount Cross has children, families, and enough critical mass of youth that these new families feel welcome and feel that their values are represented here. Randy commented that we have many new families coming because they like what we're doing.

He also said that the recent "Spring Training" for liturgical ministers was a very positive experience. Pastor Julie added that there was a healing spirit and a good energy at the training. We need to refine the training handout, by Advent, if possible. Some previous practices or other ideas were mentioned in terms of possible changes but no items were decided on.

CCLI/Praise & Worship Music: Pastor Julie had contacted CCLI after our last meeting. They have changed their policy and we are now allowed to print notation. However, Carol brought a sample of the kind of music downloads CCLI makes available and they are not anything that we can use in the bulletin. Many of the songs are not a simple verse/refrain format but have verses that use different rhythms, include pre-choruses, etc. If we have a straightforward music JPG, we will include it but many of the songs will still have just words.

Next meeting time: Wednesday, July 13, at 1:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 2:45 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Pastor Julie Morris.

Worship and Music Committee - August 17, 2022

Present: Randy Churchill (Chair), Allison Johnson (Council Liaison), Carol Broderick, Sonja Demeter, Vicky Edell, Mary Kienitz

Absent: Marion Cole

Staff: Pastor Julie, Carol Browning

Meeting Called to Order with prayer at 1:15 p.m.

Praying for Marion Cole: Marion is in a skilled nursing facility, hoping to stay there a little longer for the therapy. She's grateful for our prayers.

Usher Ministry: Vicky Edell, our volunteer co-coordinator, is a welcome addition to the Worship & Music Committee. Everyone expressed their gratitude to Vicky for her hard work and enthusiastic ministry efforts. Randy shared that Scott Fajnor, head usher, has put together an outline and instructions for the greeters and ushers. Vicky and Pastor Julie are going to meet with Scott to review the materials.

Altar Guild: Carol Broderick said that she is recruiting additional members for the Altar Guild and realizes that it's important for her to socialize after worship to get to know new people. She is working with Vicky Edell on SignUps for the Altar Guild assignments.

She raised the question of purchasing distilled water for the font on a regular basis. The water gets dirty and also evaporates quickly and we need to use distilled water so the minerals in plain water don't stain the font. Randy offered to bring Living Source distilled water from his home; thank you to Randy for his generosity.

Masks: There was some discussion about the current masking guidelines, however, the Executive Committee meets monthly and discusses this issue. We are following the Ventura County guidelines of masking being strongly recommended. Pastor Julie urged everyone to follow their own conscience and to celebrate the Body of Christ worshipping together and try to see where God is.

Worship Service: Various opinions about traditional and contemporary worship were shared. Pastor Julie suggested we try the discipline of looking for the Holy Spirit working in our congregation (senior adult ministry, the abundance of young families, etc.). It's easy to go down to a mode of discontent instead of seeing what is positive.

Linda Frantz Bequest: Pastor Julie informed the group that Linda Frantz left over \$8,000 to Mount Cross' Worship & Music. Many ideas for the use of this gift were shared.

Christmas Worship: This year, Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. We'll have one 5:00 p.m. worship on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24, and our regular 9:30 a.m. service on Sunday, December 25 (maybe a Lessons & Carols format).

Next meeting time: Wednesday, October 12, at 1:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 2:32 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Pastor Julie Morris.

Worship and Music Committee – November 16, 2022

Present: Randy Churchill (Chair), Allison Johnson (Council Liaison), Carol Broderick, Sonja Demeter, Mary Kienitz

Absent: Vicky Edell

Staff: Pastor Julie, Carol Browning

Meeting Called to Order with prayer at 1:10 p.m.

Budget Report: Randy noted that he had turned in the Worship & Music Committee 2023 budget request, with input from Pastor Julie and Carol Browning.

Altar Guild: Carol Broderick reported that we need some new linens, which the committee approved; she will order them. She made new washable bags for the chalices which look more professional and will help them stay clean. She is training a couple of new people and has spoken with a few others who are interested. Carol will coordinate with Vicky Edell about any signups from the Time & Talent forms. She also reported that Rick Mann is working with her on setting up and decorating the Advent Wreath.

Altar Platform: Randy said that Cy Johnson is seeking input from the W&M Committee on removing the platform behind the altar. There are some safety concerns and it's not very attractive, however, it is useful for concerts & programs and also allows all the communion ministers to be on the same level. Pastor Julie is in favor of it being removed, mainly for safety reasons, but also reminded everyone that there is a larger question of overall sanctuary design and fuller accessibility. She also said that Cy is hoping the Concert Series Committee would allow using some of their funds to buy a replacement "stage" that's easier to remove and store. Randy will give Cy the W&M Committee's agreement that the platform should be removed but that an option for concerts is important and working on overall safety concerns and sanctuary design needs to occur.

Further Budget Discussion: After the 2023 budget is approved, Randy will provide an accounting of the W&M funds available, including the funds from Linda Frantz. Pastor Julie noted that we need to have an overall vision for the sanctuary and would like to see some of the funds used for a worship architect to advise us. Randy said he had contacted one person and that she's now retired but would be willing to come and consult.

Recognition of Veterans: Mary expressed her disappointment that our veterans were not asked to stand and be recognized on the Sunday nearest Veterans Day. Pastor Julie was away and the visiting pastor, who had designed elements of Mount Cross' worship space, spent quite a bit of time explaining the theology and vision behind the designs. It was not an intentional oversight, just an unfortunate occurrence.

Children in Worship: There were a few comments about children playing or making noise during worship. Pastor Julie reminded everyone that Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." It was mentioned that Family Faith Formation Committee has brought up the possibility of having a "pray ground" or soft space for the children in worship. Our pastoral approach is to lean toward accommodating those with special needs and children fall into that category.

Music Ministry: Carol Browning gave a brief report, stating that the handbell choir had a very successful concert the past Sunday and that the various music ministry groups and soloists were hard at work preparing for the upcoming Advent/Christmas program on December 11.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Julie reported a highlight of this church year was Baptism Sunday on November 6, baptizing four individuals and welcoming seven other individuals through reaffirmation of baptism or transfer of membership. She mentioned that we will have one 5pm service on Christmas Eve (which is a Saturday) and a 9:30am service on Christmas Day, because it falls on a Sunday. We are also planning a service for Epiphany, which falls on a Friday this year and wouldn't be celebrated on a Sunday. She mentioned that the Synod had sent out a marketing campaign promotion for sending postcards to advertise Christmas worship. Randy offered to help with addresses and printing. Allison suggested using a banner. Randy said he would look into putting hooks on an existing sign so that banners could be used for various services and he would try to have something up for Thanksgiving.

Livestreaming: There was a brief discussion about the expense and time for livestreaming our services. This issue is part of the overall discussion of sanctuary design. Sonja moved and Mary seconded that we make a recommendation to the Council that sanctuary design be a priority for them in the new year; all approved.

Next meeting time: Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 1:15 p.m.

Meeting adjourned with prayer at 2:10 p.m.

Notes respectfully submitted by Pastor Julie Morris.