

COVID TASK FORCE – 3/31/2022 5 pm

Present: Scott Hess, Rev. Joan Javier-Duval, Jen Matthews, Leslie Parr, Gale Pekar, Janet Poeton, Peter Thoms, Donia Prince, Liza Earle-Centers

No changes to the minutes

Add to agenda: Joan's notes – in various places

Feedback: We had the most people in attendance at the service on March 27 that we've had since reopening for in-person attendance. All who attended the service and were present at the meeting felt supported and good about how things were structured and how things went during service. One person noted, "We are being conservative and safe. As there were 24 who attended, there is space for more and people are encouraged to attend."

A Facebook post in the Friends of UCM group expressed concern about UCM guidelines compared to the Catholic church in Barre.

Presently there is a pause in the guidelines for participation in in-person worship services by stage. As per Joan's request, the Task Force will talk about the role of metrics.

A discussion followed regarding what the criteria can be for determining our safety guidelines and protocols in lieu of metrics. What are the gray areas? There was a request for a list of sources and reasons as to why the focus would change from strictly metrics.

We discussed our use of facts, science, AND common sense. Some guidance, such as from the CDC, has shifted towards using the number of hospitalizations and deaths. It was noted that there is a lag time in reporting, which is of concern.

We reviewed Joan's revised version of the UCM Covid Safety Policies. The top section is the same. Joan removed the reference to Covid Act Now and the stages. The current in-person guidelines for participation in worship services are aligned with the previous Stage Orange but with restrictions on singing removed.

The guidelines need to continue to be honed and made clear. We can only do what we can and change what we have control over. Ventilation is crucial.

Liza reported there are 19 youth enrolled in OWL ! Simplified sign in process provided.

Families are interested in doing more programs – many outdoor ones will be offered.

This group agrees that ultimately if change is suggested to how we conduct worship services that we need to know if the Worship Team feels OK.

Some thoughts on what can be loosened up: reduce distancing to 3 feet apart? It was suggested that making masks optional should be one of the last changes.

We discussed masking in an empty building. The task force felt that it makes sense to require masking in groups and that masks should not be needed when alone in building. This needs to be communicated to

those in building regularly. A policy should be created, until then use common sense. Go forward with this understanding.

There was a suggestion that the MANAGEMENT TEAM talk about this topic – also general guidelines – if you are not feeling well DO NOT COME to UCM – if there is a vigorous conversation – REV JOAN WILL WRITE A SENTENCE OR TWO AND SHARE WITH STAFF - this should be communicated to all volunteers and it will BE ADDRESSED AT THE NEXT MEETING.

Soloists - - unmasked ? we question – HOW does the worship team feel about this ? Discussion followed: can singing happen when windows are opened ? Possibly move the congregation back a few pews so choir can sing ? check weather forecast regularly ?

ACTION: have Worship Team talk about this . . .then ET . .

Vaccination and testing for staff - information about natural immunity in luau of booster / information needs to be shared - there are articles - Jen and Joan have these resources and will share –

How do we weigh in about the next booster ? ALL resources should be shared – please and thank you

LIZA WILL CREATE A Google Doc

It was requested that there be a MAP OF MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS TO DISCUSS at the next meeting.

What happens when ventilation is possible? What might group activities look like? Revisions to outdoor guidelines?

NEXT MEETING: Thursday April 14 at 5 pm