

Yukon Presbytery Road Region Meeting Minutes

6 October 2020
7-9PM Via Zoom

Meeting Facilitator: Ron Illingworth

Ron Illingworth and Matt Schultz opened the ZOOM meeting with prayer at 7:08 pm.

New Business – Focus on COVID –

Ron took a minute to thank to all pastors for the great job they are doing to keep their congregations connected. We then gave pastors and commissioners time to answer the following questions.

- a. How are you meeting worship needs for your congregation?
- b. What are your plans for session meetings, congregational meetings, elections, ordinations, officer training?
- c. What technology solutions have you implemented?
- d. What technology do you need that you don't have or that would improve your ability to deliver your worship and other meetings?

United Protestant – Leisa said that they are meeting both in person and virtually but mostly virtually. They have musicians present. Their session is meeting, and they are using Virtual Sunday School. With the help of two very knowledgeable young men they have been able to upgrade the equipment and WiFi.

UCPC – Neill reported that they are meeting in person and virtually with social distancing and mask. They have three ways of serving communion. Some meetings are held outside. Session is meeting inside, and some other meetings are being done on ZOOM. The 12 step programs are meeting. They have borrowed equipment and upgraded their WiFi.

New Hope – Curt said that being a union church the Methodist Bishop has prohibited them from in person worshiping and meetings. They have been doing virtual worship via ZOOM. Each week they send a written copy sermon, worship notes and prayer requests via email. On weekdays, Jennifer does a daily morning devotion online. They Will soon be starting a weeknight Bible Study and is currently are doing a Sunday morning Bible Study. Session is not meeting. They do an online fellowship. For Technology that are using what they have available. Curt said that they need a laptop computer for use at the church.

Delta – Richard said that they started worshiping via ZOOM but are now doing. Their technology consists of a Mini-computer, 2 cameras, and big screen tv. At this time, they

are printing a bulletin but are not using hymnals. Communion is being served using host units. They have only had one session meeting via ZOOM and in person.

Wasilla – Henry said that when things were first closed down, they used Facebook live and when some mandates were lifted, they switched to in person and via ZOOM. Everyone signs in and if they do not have masks the church has them available. Attendance has been around 25 to 35 with about eight of those attending being music and tech folks. They have a room set up with mic and camera so we can have in person and ZOOM meetings. He is having in person youth group with outside activities and masks and safe distancing indoors. During worship folks are encouraged to wear masks and not sing. The leadership does sing wearing shields. Thanks to a couple of technical gurus their equipment has been upgraded with many capabilities that haven't been figured out yet. They will be building a podcast studio. Henry does a weekly Soul food worship via Facebook live with songs and scripture. Session has been meeting monthly in person and via ZOOM. At this time, they are saying they do not want to rush back. They are not having fellowship and not doing "meet and greet" in the church. Henry stands in the parking lot after service to talk with folks as they leave.

Eagle River – Piper and Kim said they totally virtual while they continue the reconstruction. Piper has her family room set up for Worshiping. Fortunately, her husband is techy person and makes sure everything is set up and ready to go. They are hoping to be moving the equipment back to the sanctuary in mid-November but is not sure when they will begin worshiping in person. They are having meetings via ZOOM. They had all of the equipment needed to keep contacted. Piper said they tried Sunday School outside but have decided to put that on hold because they aren't sure how safe it is right now. They will re-evaluate in two weeks. The Food pantry has continued throughout with social distancing and masks. AA is back in the church now. They have a young man coming in nightly to clean high touch areas. She has done Training and ordination and the Congregational meeting on ZOOM.

Immanuel – Ellen said that at this time they are virtual only but not live. They post the worship on Facebook and send an email out with a link. Internet and cell service are not good at the church, so they aren't able to try to go live. They are doing meetings via teleconference and ZOOM. They also have ZOOM coffee meetings. The Deacons and Elders are checking in with everyone. They meet with Ellen every couple of weeks and she then sends out a prayer request email. Ellen said the congregation has said this email is the most valuable thing the church is doing at this time. At this time, they don't have the technology or anyone that could run it. Elsie said They did do the church wide cleaning w/ masks and safe distancing. AA group does meet and were required to come up with a plan. Other congregations have not started worshiping in person yet. They are working on plans for a January congregational meeting.

Trinity – Randy and Susan said they are doing virtual but are unable to live stream. They do a simple service with a Song, message, song and children’s message. The worship can be found on their website and Facebook. An email or USPS mail are sent out to the members of the congregation each week with the transcript. They have basic equipment for recording the worship but are getting it figured out. The small groups and prayer groups are all meeting via ZOOM. All meetings are conducted on ZOOM. At 11:30 on Sunday’s there is ZOOM meeting so folks can log on and talk about the message. Their session voted to try to open for service on November 1. They will be upgrading their air handling system. They make communion units available to pick up or be delivered to folks. They have purchased a Vimeo account and video editing software to make it easier to put the service together. At this time there are three groups meeting in the church and they all have litigation plans. The Men's Bible Study is meeting, and Women's Bible study is getting ready to start. They are looking into getting a new camera. Plans are to continue recording the service after they return to meeting in person.

Jewel Lake – Luke, Margorie and Susan said they are using ZOOM for all meetings. For Sunday worship they are putting together a video with musicians, lay leader and pastor in the church for an online platform. Sunday School lessons on done on You Tube and posted to Facebook. They have upgraded lighting in the sanctuary which has helped with videoing. They are trying to figure out some type of live streaming that folks would be interested in watching and are looking into ways to keep folks without internet access involved. They have done some things outside of the church with social distancing.

First Anchorage –Matt and Diana said folks in the congregation have stepped up to do technology so pastors can take care of the worship. Music being recorded and Elizabeth is co-hosting. Most meetings are happening via ZOOM. If there are any in person, they are small groups with social distancing. Matt said he would love to start meeting in person Nov 1, but with things going the way they are it doesn't look good. They are considering a gratitude drive-up for Thanksgiving. Right now, they are trying to figure out how to do things to keep youth groups engaged. Christian education has been doing a lot of things outside with youth from other churches joining. The big question now is how to successfully have an advent season. Dianna encouraged everyone to check with your internet providers to be sure you are getting the best deal you can. She also said this is a great time for churches to share the ZOOM meetings.

The risky business of Singing -

Neill said that they go outside to sing the final hymn and during worship they have 2 or 3 choir members that sing with mics.

Richard said any singing and speaking is done with masks on

Ron mentioned the article about singing in the Sept/Oct 2020 Presbyterians Today magazine starting on p40. The National Association of Teachers of Singing and the American Choral Directors Association have concluded that there is currently no safe way to rehearse or sing together until there is a widely available COVID-19 vaccine and a 95% effective treatment.

Bob Christensen said there will be a presentation on Saturday that will be helpful to all congregations. He also said there is a line item in the budget to help churches get technology that will help them do their virtual worship services.

Meeting closed with prayer at 9pm