

BYM MPC Listening Session on Worship post-pandemic

June 24, 2021

Present: Mackenzie Morgan, Gary Sandman, Eileen S, Frank Taylor, Tim Hunt, Davis Balderston, Bethanie Kashket, Bernie Benson, AD Olson, Larry Reid, Len Williams, Dan Shaw, Sarah B, Jolee Robinson, Inga Erickson, Stephanie Koenig, Michael Richmond, Jabez McC, Tom, Ellen Roanoke, Patti Nesbitt, Georgianna BRM, Somers Knight, Lynn Grutzeck, Reuben Adelphi, Susan Russell, Carole Hoage, Heidi Koring, Kim, Deborah Sandy Spring, Susan Russell, Ann, Monica Shaw, Heather Carter, Bernie Benson, Rebecca Nelson, Len Williamsburg, Lynne Grutzeck

Homewood – remote participation is an accessibility issue for several in meeting, meeting “Owl” with laptop; working reasonable well. Speaker is excellent but person giving message needs to move towards OWL device.

FMW – planning discernment meeting to revisit how things are working since already doing in-person. Evolving safety protocols being more conservative than DC guidelines, accessibility ensured with online. Considering how to create togetherness between Zoom and in-person; using a TV screen with mics.

Adelphi – garden worship outside the entire time with small group, otherwise Zoom with large group but still missing some people; opened for some activities but not worship yet, surveying people on preferences. Some reluctant to try hybrid and outspoken. Many like Zoom for accessibility. RE met outside during Covid.

Langley – some like Zoom and others don’t and not participating, formed Ad Hoc committee, now conducting trials over the summer having started with in-person worship last week and moving towards a hybrid style. Area for masked/social distancing and other area for unmasked in meetingroom; expect people to make decisions responsibility (with handout). Very important to listen to those with different views since they may hold the truth for us.

Richmond –doing Zoom for RE, wondering if teachers should be masked? What about mingling of adults and children? Good attendance on worship during Covid; brought recommendations to meeting, conservative on safety (only vaccinated) but not started in person worship, experiment planned with speakers and adding TV (ideas from Pendle Hill program hosted program on hybrid). Discerning about unvaccinated.

Herndon – doing well with kids, story time, no program in summer generally; in-person but only vaccinated people allowed, no masks; camera in room so most are seen in Zoom; more people in-person than Zoom; ask to address vocal messages to middle of room (not camera); hello at beginning so everyone knows who is on Zoom and end with joys and sorrow; social hour and potlucks started. Kids not vaccinated so not participating but families OK with this plan. No complaints about hybrid.

Maury River – Zoom working with small meeting group including fellowship and Second Hours; keep Zoom going. Some people came and worshiped on their own without “permission” Indoor, outdoor (especially for family inclusion) and Zoom right now. Not asking if visitors are vaccinated and some members may not be vaccinated; masks inside and outside required generally (approval at MfB). RE care packages. Looking at less expensive alternative than OWL. Struggling with mask protocols, seeking patience.

What technology being tried. Speaker/mic from Amazon costs \$130. \$70 camera added to laptop and current hearing system. OWL costs about \$1,000.

State College – in-person started a couple of month ago, also outdoor worship. Just using a laptop/iPad to bring Zoomer into room. Successful RE program with outside invited guests. Friendship groups by Zoom but transitioning to in-person. Thinking about getting the OWL.

Sandy Spring – two meetings on Zoom, in person started a few months ago, have added screen in meeting room with hybrid but some sound quality issues; following Montgomery county guidelines. RE by Zoom or outdoors but away from meetinghouse, number of kids has dropped off. Interested in process of other meetings. Make decisions from love not fear. Memorial services being held with masks while connected to two other sites. Thinking about how meeting starts and ends. Even hard to get folks to walk to standing microphones when delivering vocal ministry.

Stony Run – Group pulled together to help with process (Property, M&C, clerk, RE, etc.); meeting outside for early meeting, hybrid for later meeting with OWL. TV positioned in various way to see Zoomers, done memorial meeting.

Takoma Park – make sure non-zoomer are participating in MfB decisions. Acoustic materials can be applied to walls to help with sound, consulting acoustical Engineers

Can BYM create resource guide or Google doc with what BYM meetings are doing; three meeting already provided to Gary their experiences, welcome other meeting reports.

Tim Hunt