

Parish Committee Minutes
First Parish Unitarian Universalist of Arlington
9/6/2022

Ad Hoc meeting - online
7:30pm start time; 8:16pm end time

Attending: Sara Galantowicz, Anne Quaadgras, Joanna Pushee, Tom Estabrook, Al Tosti, Carolyn Hodges, Marie Meteer, Jeff Keffer, Rev. Marta Flanagan, Rev. Erica Richmond, Tina Schultz - RE Dir., Sara Hidalgo - Office Manager.

Chalice lighting (Rev. Marta) - for the children, for the vitality of the community...may this flame be an ongoing reminder.

Call to order (Sara G.)

Agenda items:

1. Arlington Children House / Adventures In Montessori (AIM) -
Celebration for new tenant: Arlington Children House opened with 14 children, a bouquet of flowers was presented to the new tenant as a welcoming gesture.
2. COVID policy - align with the Town of Arlington (DISCUSSION)

DISCUSSION

- From the staff meeting / retreat - a mask optional policy was discussed and the staff noted they would be comfortable with such a policy (Rev. Marta)
 - In its previous deliberations the Parish Committee has noted that First Parish does not want to be ahead of local policies, nor does it want to be too far behind (balance risk versus people not adhering to any protocols); recognizing Arlington Public Schools are in a mask optional phase
- How different each staff member has thought about COVID; acknowledges fatigue around COVID discussions: be value-focused, be streamlining, clarifying; have policies reflective of our neighbors (Rev. Erica)
- Most people seem comfortable with masks optional policy during office hours; would see the welcoming of that option (Sara H.)
- Rev. Marta on behalf of Jonathan Colby: ready to be mask optional in the choir; also aware that having masks required leads to some members not attending / having masks optional leads to some members not attending.
- Suggestion to align with the Arlington Board of health; note that the Parish Committee is not a public health entity
- Question – does the Town of Arlington have any benchmarks to trigger masking? Anything the CDC would offer as guidelines.
- Concerns: what is the policy when a person meets 1-on-1 with staff. Response: no policy, but all staff ask: would you prefer me to wear a mask?.
- Services...clarifying that aligning with the Town would mean masks optional at services

- Messaging should promote vaccinations, staying home when someone is sick, wearing a mask if not vaccinated (a supply masks is available at the door) or are immunocompromised
- How is our supply of free masks? Sara H ordered N95 masks (there are 300-500 available now)
- Staying home when sick is a kindness. First Parish continues to offer online services, so there is an option to participate remotely.

[Motion 1] I would like to move that we tie our COVID policies to the Town of Arlington and make masking optional throughout all our services (Anne). Marie seconding the motion.

Discussion continues: Nothing clear about what the triggers are in place to cause a move back to masking (infection rates, etc.). Proposal is at this time, to align with Town of Arlington's mask optional policy; if at such time, Arlington should require masks again, First Parish would follow.

Suggested revision to motion" "Tied to and follow the Board of Health's protocol relating to COVID"..

[Revised Motion] I would like to move that FP align with and tie to the Town of Arlington's **COVID protocols**. (Joanna) Seconded by Jeff Keffer. 8 voting in favor (unanimous), none against.

A comment about posters in the meeting house for Ingathering: add paper over existing posterboards to update policies on the posters at the entrances to the meeting house.

[Motion to adjourn]

The meeting adjourned at 8:16pm.

MOTIONS: FP align with and tie to the Town of Arlington's COVID protocols (Joanna). Seconded by Jeff Keffer. 8 voting in favor (unanimous).