

Worship Committee, October 30, 2020

Present: John Sampson, Linda Bogardus, Martha Gallagher, Susie Allen, Bernie Webb, Karen Glass, Annie Scavo

First John asked us how the online service was going, and in particular whether the imagery at the beginning during the meditation was helpful to ground us, to help us achieve a more meditative state. He feels that the imagery is necessary because with Zoom you have a black hole if no images are shown. Having the stillness at the beginning of service was introduced many years ago by Phyllis Buchanan, who felt that it deepened the connection, bringing us to the light.

Various opinions on the type of imagery were offered: moving trees, lit candles, nature, artwork. The overall sense was that the images should be calm and peaceful to bring us into worship and prayer.

Asking us to consider not a particular week but overall, John asked if the balance of music was working. Congregants have given positive feedback for Dave's putting the words of the hymn along the bottom of the screen. Martha suggested that certain hymns seemed too long. John said that the second hymn connects to the Reflection. Bernie offered that perhaps this was the perfect way not to have the Reflection and Offertory be right next to each other: the most recent hymn could be split in two, with the later verses sung in that later transition. Susie reminded us that the audience is God, not us. She felt that having more chant would draw us closer to God.

Regarding Advent and Christmas, Karen updated us on her discussion with Joe Pete Wilson, Keene Town Supervisor. The Town Board is still not ready for people to gather at Marcy Field (public land) and so denied permission for our proposed Christmas Eve candlelight gathering. But Karen suggested that instead we could have a walking procession around the block in Keene Valley, ending at the church parking lot to hum "Silent Night."

John still has not been able to meet with Lynn and Rob to get their musical perspective on the services.

For Christmas Eve, a traditional service will be broadcast on Zoom at 5 PM. If arrangements work out, a candlelight gathering will follow at 8 PM.

Again, a desire was expressed to have something on Christmas Day. Because this year we cannot gather as usual as families and friends, perhaps something non-theological but focused on families could be offered. One suggestion was that the church could have a virtual open house, in which anybody interested could log into Zoom. By being invited into others' homes, we could hear and see from anyone who wanted to take, say, five minutes to share their traditions, showing the tree or other Christmas decorations. If more than 30 people logged in, the breakout room concept could be used. Susie and Karen will work together to spearhead this and work out the details.

Next meeting : January 2021, date TBA

Submitted by Linda Bogardus