Members present: Cynthia Dickman, Grayson Holmes, Candace Larson, Sue Porter, Eric Trott, Patrick Espana, Alan Jacobsen, Marty Howell, Becca Snyder, Linda Penhallegon, Gary Stueckle, Marlon Balauag, Ron Kreizenbeck, Sylvia Cunningham, Bill Price, Rev. Joe Kim

Guests: Rev. Kristin Joyner, Shelly Ainsworth, Dave Orendorff

Eric called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm via Zoom.

Linda offered an opening devotion from John Schroeder and Shane Groth.

Sue provided the finance report. Income for April was very good—a 79% increase over last April. For the year, we are currently about 25% above our expected income to date; however, expenses are still above our goal (93.86% of budget). In April, income greatly exceeded expenses, though it was the opposite in January to March. To date in May, we have received about $52,000. In addition, we received $81,800 from the PPP loan on May 1. Gary clarified that we are only allowed to spend the money on compensation and utilities. If we spend the money by June 26 and our FTE is 75% of our pre-PPP level, then the amount will be completely refundable. Based on our current spending, it is not clear that we will meet that amount, which would mean we would have to pay back some portion of the loan. The finance team will keep monitoring things and provide the board with an update next month.

Sue brought forward a motion to change the church’s fiscal year from January 1 through December 31 to July 1 through June 30. Benefits of this shift include that it would align more closely with ministering year, would create more accurate budgeting and improved control, would provide a more effective annual giving appeal in January and February, and would relieve the pressure of budgeting during Advent. Candace asked how this would affect this year’s budget. Pastor Joe said that we would largely rely on the existing budget and account for known changes—such as not having an associate pastor salary after July 1. Pastor Joe and Pastor Dave will work with the finance team to figure out a new budget cap. It was generally agreed that we should not consider the PPP money in setting that cap. Shelly noted that we may not have sufficient information to estimate benefits mid-year because benefits normally operate on a calendar year basis. Alan said that other churches had also changed the tenure of officers to correspond to the mid-year dates. He did not think that this discrepancy would significantly affect BUMC, but it could mean that incoming team leaders would have to deal with a budget they were not involved in creating for the first six months of their tenure. It was suggested that we remain open to switching the dates for leadership changeovers if that proves necessary. Sue also said that we may need to consider changing when we do our stewardship campaign.
The board unanimously approved the following motion: Does the Governing Board approve a shift in Bothell UMC’s fiscal year from Jan. 1 thru Dec. 31 to July 1 thru June 30? This change, if approved, will become effective July 1, 2020.

Linda gave a trustees update. They received 3-4 applications for the church’s college scholarships and are currently reviewing the applications. They also have developed a landscaping plan for the south side of the church, where there are currently tarps placed (not by the church). They are not planning to start implementing that plan yet, but may do so in a month or two. Linda also said that the gas bills are considerably higher than what we had budgeted for. In past years, we had budgeted about $6500/year for gas, but we had budgeted only $1000 this year. Sue said that PSE had messed up the billing in 2018, so the church was paying inordinately low amounts that year, which then affected the amount that was budgeted. The trustees team is working on how to address that. Shelly noted that the PPP loan can help cover utilities in the short-term. Linda suggested that we should use the $6500 figure to help set the budget cap for the new budget. Sue said that the numbers from last fall would also be a good guide.

Pastor Kristin provided a Bothell Urban update. The sale of the church parcel is progressing along. The team is currently resolving a boundary revision with the City. The team had a Zoom call on April 22 with five agencies interested in submitting Requests for Proposals for the downtown location. The agencies were ones that we had previously identified or were suggested to us. The RFPs were due on May 15; however, we did not get any proposals that day. The primary reason why we received no RFPs is because of the uncertainty caused by COVID-19, which makes the agencies very reluctant to commit to long-term projects. The agencies were all very complimentary of our proposal and most of them have indicated that they might like to work with us in the future; however, they were not willing to commit right now. They are looking at shovel-ready projects, i.e., ones where we would have the land already purchased and would be ready to begin shortly. The team is trying to figure out options going forward, including buying land without a partner, conducting a feasibility study, or buying land with the City without investing capital at this point. Kristin noted that there are a couple of properties the team is considering—one is a property adjacent to Bothell City Hall and the other is near Pop Keeney Stadium. In either case, the acquisition would involve only a portion of the parcel. The Bothell Urban team may need to come back to the Board as they get closer to finalizing the sale to see what makes sense for the church going forward. Also, the Bothell Urban team has added two people—Marty Penhallegon and Nicole Dormer.

The group then had a Q&A with Pastor Joe. He said that overall the church has transitioned well to an online existence, though people are starting to experience a little quarantine fatigue. He mentioned that the church will be starting a mid-week Beacon service this summer, which will be a more contemplative, meditative time together, similar to the vibe of the River service. He also identified five priorities for the upcoming summer “season”:

1. Stay committed to “Becoming Christ in the Community”
2. Connection - so that no one “feels alone”

3. Compassion - identify and meet the needs of our greater community (like partnering with Northshore Senior Center)

4. Communications - Everyone knows what’s going on, we will set clear and short-term timelines

5. Look around the corner - see what might be coming

Marlon asked Joe what the church is doing to help less tech-savvy church members stay connected. Joe said that we currently have call-in availability for Sunday services and other church meetings. Currently about 10 people call in on Sunday mornings, and staff is exploring ways to increase that total. The church also is distributing about 100 paper copies of the Witness to those who need it and also providing copies to nursing homes. The staff is trying to track attendance postings and comments on the Facebook videos to see who is able to attend. They also are regularly checking in on widowers and senior citizens to make sure they are taken care of and are continuing to explore ways to increase connections.

Joe also mentioned that he is almost finished identifying a transition team to help figure out questions about when and how the church should reopen. The list of members will be published soon, along with bios of the members.

Becca then briefly discussed plans for the board to do a visioning exercise at our next meeting. A survey will be sent out to board members with open-ended questions to help guide a discussion about how the church should address the future. The hope is that these questions will get people thinking and will help the group identify big themes and values—and to then use those concepts to identify what actions we want to take in alignment with those themes/values.

The meeting then went into private session to discuss SPR matters (per the Book of Discipline).

Linda closed the meeting with a prayer.