

A Healthy Church Team (HCT) as required for all churches in a letter from District Superintendent Jeff Mickle, has been created for Cranford UMC. The purpose is to coordinate with Pastor, staff, volunteers and the District Superintendent, on issues, and to help prepare plans for the time when the church will eventually resume in-person worship. Lauren sent (via E-mail) a list of members invited to be on Cranford's HCT to each one on the list, plus copies of DS Mickle's letter and a video from the Bishop.

The Bishop set the requirements for worship in three stages. After reading the detailed requirements and guidelines for each stage, some Team members' thoughts are as follows.

Stage #1: One of the options suggested was conducting online services, devotions and conferences. Cranford Church has been doing this now for several weeks. The congregation has been enjoying services and are grateful to those members who are making it possible. The HCT is in agreement that our virtual services are enlightening and working well.

Stage #2: Timeline TBD by the Bishop and subsequent to the Governor's announcement moving into phase 2. The options are much the same as Stage #1 which also included Drive-In Worship and possible meetings using gatherings of 50 or less. HCT Members responding felt that both these options would be premature, impractical or ineffective for Cranford UMC.

Some concerns brought up were: (1) Congregation has many elderly with compromised health issues and any gatherings now would increase risks of catching COVID-19; (2) Strict enforcement of social distancing would be too difficult, especially for the youth; (3) The cost of frequent and stringent cleaning and disinfecting would be too high; (4) Our liability insurance could be at risk if all requirements were not being followed and a visitor or member contracted the virus; (5) Effort and time needed to conform to mandates would put a lot of burden and work on the congregation.

Stage #3: Churches Open and Resume Worship. Timeline TBD by the Bishop and subsequent to the Governor's announcement moving into phase 3. (New Normal Protocol).

The consensus is that there is no need to change what is being done at Cranford until the statistics of the COVID-19 improve. Stage 3 will be considered when appropriate.

Verna
Chair, Administration Council