



King's Chapel 2020-2021 Retreat
Sunday, September 13th
12:00 – 1:30 PM

AGENDA

- 12:00** **Welcome and Opening Prayer**
- 12:10** **Planning in the Age of COVID: Priorities for 2020-2021**
- 12:30** **Group Discussion of Priorities, Initiatives and Strategies**
- 1:15** **Group Reports and Suggestions**
- 1:30** **Next Steps and Closing Prayer**

Thank You for Contributing to the Year Ahead!

See you at Homecoming!

King's Chapel State of the Parish

As we plan for the year ahead during these unprecedented times it is perhaps fitting that we pause to consider where we are at this moment in time. Our current roster lists 221 members with another 22 prospective members and 107 friends. It is this base of members, prospects and friends that has shown its outstanding commitment to King's Chapel this year, exceeding our stewardship target of \$206,000 handsomely.

Within our virtual world, we have 201 YouTube subscribers, a figure which has doubled in the last six months. Each month we average 129 viewers, with the average duration of each visit increasing as we move forward. Moreover, over 60 viewers are participating in our worship services, a figure that serves as a testament both to the engagement of our parish and to the continuing enhancements in the services themselves. To be sure, it has been a challenge – not one we sought, but one we are meeting nonetheless!

Complementing our virtual delivery since the pandemic hit is a strong emphasis on pastoral care. Cynthia Perkins is now leading the Prayer Circle which is an active group of parishioners reaching out to those who have requested contact. Additionally, the entire King's Chapel staff has accepted the challenge of contacting every parishioner to extend the hand of fellowship and provide essential support. This personal outreach effort was complemented virtually with the development of *Coffee with the Ministers* and the *Block Party* each held weekly. And now, as we move into the new church year, Joy Fallon and Cynthia Perkins have initiated an extensive training program to prepare select parishioners to assist in the delivery of pastoral care, expanding access to individual contact throughout the parish. At the same time, work has also begun on the development of a new sermon series and on the delivery of a new Spiritual Autobiography class for interested parishioners, both led by the Ministers, as Theology on Tap continues to pose questions of interest, albeit virtually, at the direction of David Waters.

These pastoral services are complemented by an increasing level of engagement in a host of opportunities to learn, to share, and to take action! Our Adult Religious Education Committee has provided support for the ongoing weekly Bible Study led by Tim Nelson-Hoy and the growing Environmental Initiative led by Kent Wittenberg, Gary Riccio, Julie Hyde, Dorie Seavey, now working intensively to get people to the polls. Our Community Action Committee has expanded the involvement of parishioners in its work with Common Cathedral, the Louis D. Brown Peach Institute, and the UU Urban Ministry even as our Ministers have provided discretionary funding to assist them during the current crisis. And finally, our History program continues to draw both interested parishioners and other from as far away as California into weekly programs on architecture, theology, and early church members, an effort that is instrumental to our continuing efforts to honor those enslaved, with Cliff Allen, Miguel Gomez Ibanez, Dean Denniston, and David Waters leading the effort. In combination with the election of a new Parish Council Chair, the appointment of a new Chancel Committee Chair and heroic efforts to identify a new Hospitality Chair, our church community is finding opportunities to thrive in our new reality even as the Trustees invest in the restoration of our church exterior and we contemplate internal improvements in air quality and circulation in the sanctuary itself.

Priorities for Kings Chapel 2020-2021 Fellowship and Spiritual Nourishment

Priority One: Enhance Spiritual Connection with God and One Another

Worship

- **Expand lay engagement in worship leadership and reading**
- **Promote the creation of meaningful musical portions of virtual services**
- **Refine virtual services with improved technology and technique**
- **Engage with the larger faith community of the City**

Pastoral Outreach

- **Support personal outreach by clergy and lay pastoral care providers***
- **Expand prayer ministry**
- **Increase contact with Boston area members**
- **Increase informal opportunities to meet with clergy and other members in casual settings to increase fellowship and reduce isolation**

Education

- **Develop a New Spiritual Autobiography group***
- **Create small groups for targeted interests**
- **Promote lay-led religious education and dialogue**
- **Expand History programs regarding race and our spiritual traditions**

Priority Two: Advance Congregational Engagement

Build Beloved Community

- **Increase participation in church school through families**
- **Make significant progress on the slavery project with living and physical memorials***
- **Expand funding for Community Action to reflect our values**
- **Build Membership and Stewardship**

Energize Parish Governance

- **Expand participation and opportunities for leadership**
- **Promote collaboration across Vestry, Parish Council and Staff**
- **Encourage initiatives with identifiable parish involvement**
- **Invite broad participation in the realization of parish priorities**
- **Build cohesion through a variety of engaging events**

Asterisk (*) Indicates Work in Progress

King's Chapel Reopening Task Force
Interim Statement
September 9, 2020

In light of the ongoing pandemic, it is incumbent upon the leadership of King's Chapel to address what conditions will warrant a reasonably safe return to our beloved physical space for in-person worship. To that end the Wardens have asked a task force consisting of Stephen Courtney, Heinrich Christensen, Gretchen Horton, Alison La Rosa, Cathy Price and Dan Taylor to consider this and make recommendations to the Vestry. While we value the virtual services and especially the great effort put into these by our ministers and staff, we have our eyes on what conditions need to be in place to reopen with reasonable safety and in a way that will inspire confidence in parishioners again attending. We are clear that it is not feasible to go down two tracks with the ministers and staff preparing for both in-person and virtual worship.

We are pursuing how we might reopen in phases. Massachusetts and other states have taken measured steps toward an ultimate goal and we believe that will serve King's Chapel well. To date, Heinrich and Alison have tested singing while masked with the immediate purpose of inviting up to four choir members, masked and socially distanced in the choir loft, to be present for up to an hour at a time to record music and chants for later video presentation. We support this. We are also working toward upgraded internet access allowing live streaming of worship services at the chapel. This is important until we can reopen and will continue to be important in the future as we expand our congregation to those living remotely from our church who wish to be nourished by our church services. It will also serve the needs of parishioners at special coronavirus risk who Massachusetts recommends be given the option of not being present physically when possible. Finally, with Stephen's help we are considering the professional literature addressing aerosols and the mitigating effects of better air circulation and related measures. Coincidentally, we are in the process of significantly upgrading current air circulation in the chapel. This offers the opportunity to reduce the risk of aerosol exposure to coronavirus as well as to flu and other viruses. Aerosols as a transmission vector for coronavirus are more problematic. Professional opinion on this is divided and at the moment no safe and effective ultra-violet aerosol treatment for occupied spaces like ours exists. Given this we are considering one additional reopening condition being the availability of a safe and effective vaccine.

The approach we are embarked on focuses first on in-person worship in the chapel. This will be followed by considering worship in the little chapel and related in-person activities such as regular on-site staff work in the parish house, use of the garden, concerts, guide activities, group meetings and rentals. Our focus is on thoughtful principles to guide each of these, certainly including government guidance, but not specific dates or unique individual preferences or fears.

We are also considering the following in addition to those mentioned above:

- What protocols should be circulated to the congregation for attending in-person?
- What PPE and social distancing must be provided?
- What disinfection is required?
- How can we safely resume singing and chanting by all?
- What accommodations are required for communion and after-service fellowship?

Summary of Fall 2020 Worship and Communications Survey

Introduction

Since the onset of the COVID crisis in mid-March, the clergy and staff of King’s Chapel have been working hard to keep communications open, to provide an expanded array of enriching virtual gatherings, and to learn the new technology needed to provide weekly Morning Prayer videos and live Morning Light Zoom services.

In early August, the staff, working with leadership and clergy, created a survey so that they could get a wider and deeper understanding from members of how their efforts are working and how they might improve. The purposes of the survey were:

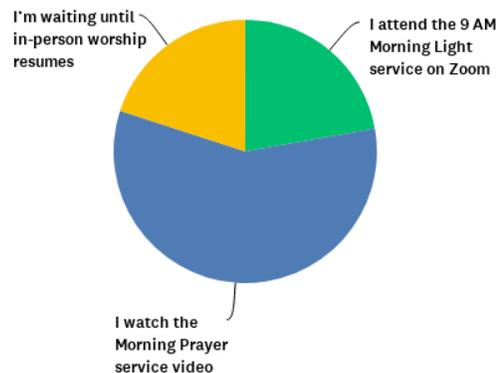
1. Assess what’s working and what’s not with the current “Worship from Home” offerings: the Morning Light Zoom service and the Morning Prayer worship service video.
2. Attain a better understanding of how members have been engaging with other “King’s Chapel from Home” offerings. What virtual events do they attend? What communications outlets (website, Between Sundays, social media, YouTube, etc.) do they actively use or follow? Are there other offerings they wish we were providing?
3. Advertise the variety of offerings already in place while King’s Chapel remains “Physically Closed, but Spiritually Open.”

The 10 survey questions were created by and primarily meant for staff and clergy use, to help them move forward in the fall season better informed about how to expand or improve worship services, virtual offerings, and communication.

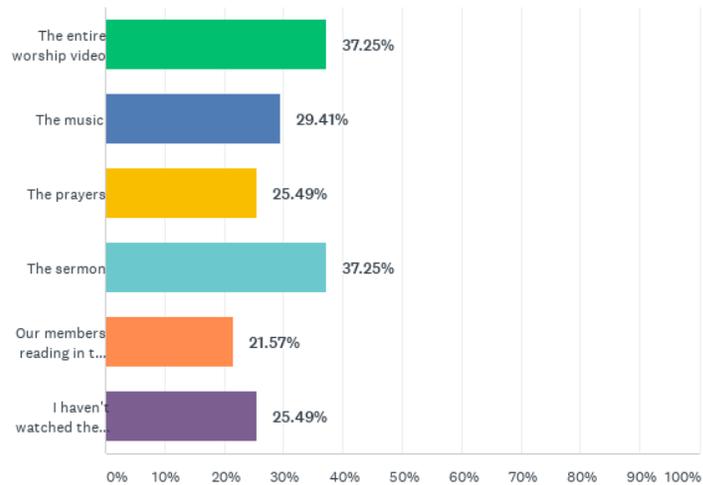
The survey was created using SurveyMonkey and consisted of ten questions: 9 quantitative multiple-choice questions and 1 open-ended question for additional comments. It was emailed to 190 persons on the church membership list on August 4th, and again on August 8th, to those for whom the first email was unopened. When the survey was closed on August 17th, 61 persons had responded. All but one was submitted anonymously. Some active members have since indicated that they did not see the survey and would be willing to respond belatedly (this is not an option currently).

Substantive Data Results

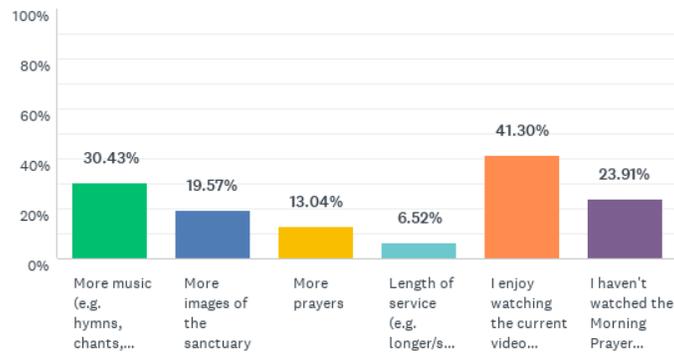
Q1 Worship Services from Home How do you worship with us?



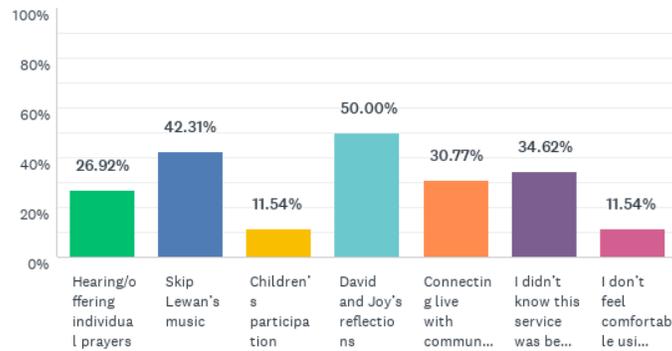
Q2 If applicable, what part(s) of the Morning Prayer worship video is most meaningful for you? (check all that apply)



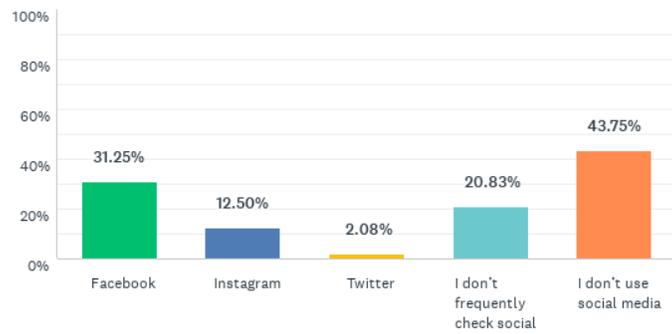
Q3 Because it remains unsafe for the clergy and music staff to film together from our historic sanctuary, how else do you feel we could improve our Morning Prayer worship videos? (check all that apply)



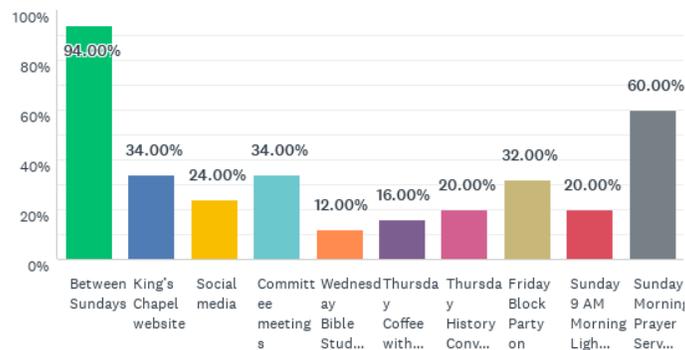
Q4 If applicable, which aspect(s) of our 9 AM Morning Light service on Zoom are most meaningful to you? (check all that apply)



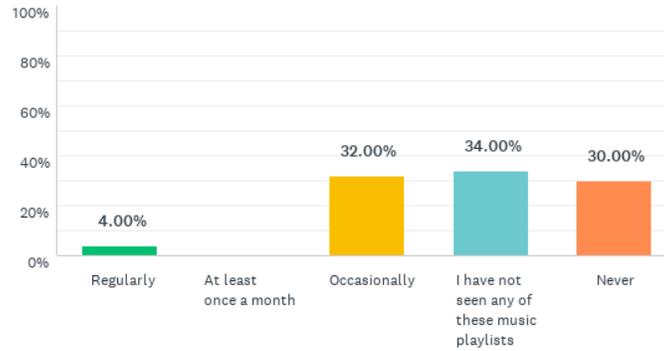
Q5 Communications & Community from Home Do you follow King's Chapel on social media? (check all that apply)



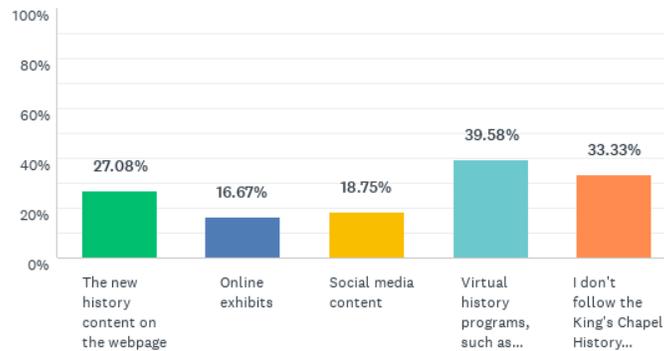
Q6 How do you stay connected with King's Chapel while we are "Physically Closed but Spiritually Open?" (check all that apply)



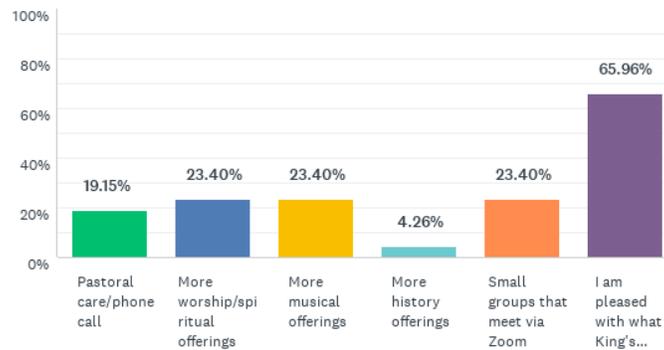
Q7 Have you watched any of the virtual music offerings, such as the Voices of Women Virtual Concert (YouTube Playlist) or the weekly Meditation Monday music videos (YouTube & social media playlist)?



Q8 What virtual offerings have you engaged with the History Program?



Q9 What would you like to see more of from King's Chapel while we remain Physically Closed but Spiritually Open? (check all that apply)



Summary of Survey Comments & Staff Takeaways

Overall, the results were encouraging that we are going in the right direction while we remain “Physically Closed by Spiritually Open”: $\frac{2}{3}$ report that they are pleased with our current worship and programmatic offerings; approximately 60% of respondents are staying in touch with us through our Morning Prayer videos, and another 20% through the 9 AM Morning Light zoom service, while 94% stay in touch with our weekly e-newsletter Between Sundays. New offerings, such from the History Program, which began in April, have been accessed by 40% of respondents.

On the other hand, nearly a quarter of respondents report that they are not using online worship services, and are awaiting the time until they can return to in person worship. The newer offerings we began in June have gotten less traction, probably because fewer people are aware of them (this includes a number of our new musical offerings). We also learned that nearly 43% report that they don’t engage with social media (facebook, instagram, twitter) and 21% don’t frequently check it.

Not surprisingly, when we inquired about our worship services, our constituency has varied opinions about how these should be led and which elements of the services should be increased. The worship team will continue to evaluate these and respond to feedback. We hope that the Leadership Meeting on September 13 will have time to address this question about the preferred style of worship recordings for Morning Prayer.

We are agreed on finding new ways to have our signature choir and Music Director featured, and are grateful to Heinrich for the new technical skills which he is personally acquiring to enable this. Also, in response to the desire for musical offerings, Heinrich also will begin a new half hour presentation on various aspects of music using the time slot in which concerts have traditionally been held, on Tuesdays, 12:15 - 12:45 PM, beginning on September 15.

Finally, we are mindful that simply by sending out the survey, we have prompted some to become more aware of the many offerings now available, and we hope that they will be curious enough to explore those.