

Church of the Holy Spirit
Parish Council 9/6/16 Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Fr. Jim Schwartz, Fr. Justin Miller, Joe Sakmyster, Shari Magagnoli, Marc Magagnoli, Pat Schichler, Brian Weaver, Gabe Pellegrino, Bob Quinn, Cathy Brill, Michael Lynch, Bill Keenan

Excused: Eric Willing, Patrick Vogt, Dcn. Ray Garbach and Mike Schifano

Guests: Carmen Pellegrino, Doug Mandelaro

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Meeting began with Benediction in the church.

Bill shared reasons why he accepted Fr. Jim's invitation to serve on the council, and invited others to express what they hope the council will accomplish in the coming year.

Hoped-for Accomplishments in the Coming Year

Cathy: That programs and events will bring families together. A priority for her is having a nursery, and also having a program or activity for parents to participate in on Sundays while children are in the faith formation classes.

Pat: Increased communication within the parish and bringing our faith formation program for young children back to Holy Spirit.

Brian: Improved communication. Expressed concern that he (and probably other parents of youngsters, too) did not receive a call or letter inviting him to sign up for faith formation for his children, even though they were in the program last year. He also said the council should focus on just a few things and implement them well rather than trying to focus on many items.

Gabe: Improve the parish center ("Don't let the roof collapse!"). He also would like to recruit a children's choir leader.

Shari: Get more people to read the bulletin so that we can have improved communication.

Marc: Would like help with our stewardship campaign.

Michael: Spiritual renewal and greater promotion of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

Bob: Greater outreach to bring in more parishioners (identify retirees and former parishioners and invite them back).

Joe: Plan family activities and coordinate these activities with the Knights of Columbus. Joe will act as a liaison between the Council and the Knights.

Fr. Miller: Articulate/sort out roles within the parish to better organize our activities; emphasis on RCIA, adult ed and outreach.

Pastor's remarks

1. Stewardship:

Fr. Jim's priority is for our parish to embrace a spirituality of stewardship so that parishioners will see we are blessed and are called to be good stewards of our blessings.

He noted that the parish will mail out stewardship information the weekend of October 24, inviting parishioners to respond with their stewardship commitments for the coming year.

On the weekend of October 30 parishioners will be presented with witness talks by fellow parishioners, perhaps in the form of a video. We also will hold a ministry fair in the church hall.

On November 6 we will observe Stewardship Commitment Sunday that will include a parish picnic. The goal for this Sunday is for parishioners to see themselves not so much as volunteers but as stewards, and for each parishioner to fill out a commitment card.

2. Faith Formation:

Fr. Jim also announced Stacey Plouffe's resignation as our religious ed coordinator for young children, and noted that we will be looking to hire someone to fill her position.

During the opening remarks a few members noted the breakdown in communication pertaining to our religious ed program and announcements regarding meeting and sign-up dates. Fr. Jim noted that staff had tried to advertise a meeting to discuss our program, but only few attended. Last year we had 15-17 children in the K-5 program, and that we had similar numbers on Monday afternoons two years ago. Fr. Jim noted that the program has been moved to St. Joseph's and will be held on Wednesday evenings at 6:15 pm beginning September 14. A Mass will be included on these evenings. He moved our program to St. Joseph's this year (hopefully it will return to Holy Spirit next year) so that our children will have the best experience possible. He noted that this might not have been possible at Holy Spirit with such small a small number of children enrolled. FYI: Jean Mooney is the Faith Formation Director at St. Joseph's.

Fr. Jim also noted that we will continue our "Home Family" program for parents and children on 9/20/16. This monthly program will be led by clergy.

3. Parish Governance:

Lastly, Fr. Jim said he sees the governance of the parish consisting of the Parish Council, the Finance Council and the Parish Leadership Teams. Regarding the latter, he wants to form strong leadership teams at Holy Spirit in six areas: Worship, Faith Formation, Community Building, Stewardship and Operations. We hope to direct our attention to one of these areas at each of this year's upcoming Parish Council meetings.

Below are meeting dates that have been scheduled for the Parish Council for the remainder of this year:

October 11
November 8
January 10
February 14
March 7
May 16

Doug Mandelaro, Diocesan Director of Stewardship and Communications: Reflections on the Spirituality of Stewardship

- Stewardship is not just about money but is rather a whole way of discipleship. It's being grateful and using our gifts to further the Kingdom.
- Takes a full year to turn a parish into a stewardship parish.
- It's not just the pastor's responsibility.
- Scriptural roots go back to Adam being a steward of his garden, and Timothy admonishing us to "Guard through the Holy Spirit the treasures that have been entrusted to us" (note: "entrusted," not "given").
- God expects to increase our gifts, too.
- A stewardship parish draws young families to the parish. Also, food draws people to stewardship fairs!
- We need to be able to report to parishioners what we've done with the money they donated. We can look at the annual reports of St. Joseph's and St. John of Rochester churches for ideas about reporting back to parishioners. We also can consider the quarterly newsletter produced by St. Catherine of Siena parish. We perhaps can consider a legacy wall with names of parish donors on it.
- We also might want to include a volunteer recognition section in the bulletin: testimonies of what volunteering does for me, why I do it.
- Successful stewardship parishes usually have a Hospitality Committee, a volunteer recognition banquet, a new parishioner welcome packet and lay witness talks.
- The Diocese has many stewardship resources available for parishes, including a stewardship binder, planned giving brochures and a youth stewardship book. Also, the Diocese can help design and print brochures for us.

Other Business

Joe gave an update on the upcoming Notre Dame retreats for both men and women. We currently have seven women and four men planning on attending, with three of the women being new and one of the men being new.

Joe also showed us third-class relics of St. Theresa of Calcutta and invited us to venerate them.

Next Meeting

Bill asked for feedback on the usefulness of tonight's meeting and suggestions for agenda items for next month's meeting.

- Council members agreed that we should put "Communication" on every meeting agenda so that we can focus on it and can approach it from different angles.
- Cathy wanted to make sure that whatever we focus on at our meetings is worthwhile to our pastor. She also commented that it was good having a guest at our meeting.
- Pat said she would like us to generate ideas at our meetings, not just so that we can include them in the minutes, but so that we can develop some forward momentum.
- Fr. Jim said he would like it if we would hold ourselves accountable for things we agree upon at our meetings.
- Bill said that he will try to include on our upcoming agendas a review of action items from the previous meeting.
- Bob noted that Fr. Jim deserves a pat on the back for not lording his role as pastor over us but instead treating us as peers at our meetings.

Fr. Jim closed the meeting with a prayer.

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2016, 7:15 pm