

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 17, 2021

In Attendance:

Robert Bourque (Disabilities Ministry representative), Jennee Chin, Loren Lavoy (Boy Scouts of America representative), Bob & Carol Martin (Stewardship Committee representatives), Brian McAllister, James Parsons (CYO representative), Guillermo Rivero, Joseph Smith (Home School Association Representative), Ginger Thompson, Rita Thompson (Girl Scouts of America representative), Wayne Williams, Rev. Mark L. Smith, Pastor, Marie Winterson, Parish Secretary

Not in Attendance:

Cathy Buffington, David Cutler, Jim Hudson, Katherine Hunter (Pro-Life Issues), Celia Lewis, Millie Vega

1. Review of recent church activities and events

- Still maintaining a safe, clean environment for those comfortable attending Mass in person.
- Still recording the Vigil Mass and posting it each Sunday morning. These online Masses are close captioned so you can read along with the Mass. We are hearing that some elderly parishioners are having trouble navigating the internet to watch the Mass. Most seem to be finding the Mass online or on TV somewhere though.
- We have celebrated our First Confession, First Communion and (Fr. Mark stood in for the bishop for the) Confirmation this year. Each went really well. Families were very adaptive and cooperative.
- We are continuing to stay in touch and care for the homebound to the degree they are comfortable. They seem to appreciate the monthly newsletter we mail them with updates on parish life here.
- The momentum seems to be heading in the right direction. Now vaccinated, many parishioners are returning to Mass. Attendance is on the upswing (see Safety Sensor handout/attachment).
- Building usage is still limited to school activities, office work and Masses for the most part. Scouts, athletics have not resumed indoor meetings/games as of yet.

2. Ministries – expected changes - what activities will return to previous procedures, what will not. In particular, how will music participation increase and when?

- We are still working closely with the state, county, and the Archdiocese of Washington as they provide guidelines for safe operations.
- Music- We hope to resume our regular music program September. Meanwhile, David is doing a great job with cantors at all Masses, and a quartet at the 10 AM Mass.
- We want to make sure we maintain some of the new practices we implemented to get us through the quarantine that have been helpful. Some have proven to be quite efficient.
- To address: altar servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion...
- Question for PC: How can we better serve our ministers/ministries so they serve better?
 - Liturgical: EMHC, Lectors, Altar Servers, Music, Altar Guild and Flowers

- Faith formation/education: HRS, SOR, RCIA, Sacramental Prep, NFP
- Service: Bereavement, Ministry to sick and homebound, Disabilities Ministry, Stewardship, Community Sundays, Pro-Life, Safe Haven, Spirituality Committee, (Yet to be formed Welcome Committee)
- Groups: KofC, Scouts, CYO, Woman's Group, High School Bible Study
- Harvest Bazaar: Chairs, Crafters, Quilters, Kitchen Crew
- Councils: Parish Council, Finance Council

We are waiting on new guidelines from the Archdiocese of Washington in light of the relaxing of Covid restrictions in the state and in the county.

If we were to find ourselves in another pandemic/lockdown, we would follow the same plan we have followed in the past year.

3. School

- Virtual classes are offered for all classes. At this point, 131 out of 196 students, though, are back to 'in person' school.
- Pre-K – 3rd graders are attending full days Monday – Friday.
- 4th-8th are attending full days Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
- At this point, 155 out of 177 current school families have reenrolled for next year.
- We expect the enrollment to reach 200 students for this upcoming school year. Current enrollment is 196. Capacity is 250 students. We had been at 225 for a stretch before the last 2 school years.
- We have taken a non-traditional approach to increase our enrollment. We have contracted with a well-established Catholic marketing firm to market our school. They will focus on improving our social media presence so that we get 'tons of leads and turn them into lots of new enrollments.'

In general, parents are very happy to have their kids back in school and to relinquish the homeschooling necessitated by the pandemic.

4. Finances

- The financial support for the parish from our parishioners has been astounding. Our Offertory remains strong, so we are doing ok financially.
- An area of concern: We are having trouble applying for forgiveness for the Payroll Protection Program Loan we received last year. We are using the bank's online application procedure, which has had some problems. Our first two attempts were not successful. We are working with the bank representatives, who are slow to respond. We hope our third attempt has worked and are just waiting for final confirmation that they have sent our application onto the Small Business Administration for forgiveness.

5. Church calendar – As we wrap up this school year, we head into a lighter summer schedule around the parish. We are currently working on the calendar for the fall season. Hopefully, it will resemble a normal year.

6. Church projects

Completed:

- Renovated Fealy Hall
- Final fix to church sound system
- Installed light indicators, nameplates, and soundproofing doors to confessionals
- Upgraded lighting throughout building to new LED
- Built rack to hold assisted hearing units in vestibule of church
- Painted/sealed Fealy Hall roof
- Painted Parish Office
- Installed Exterior Sign for church
- Resealed school roof
- Repaired/replaced Church Roof to address leaking
- Stripped and re-stained church exterior entrance doors: front main and Mezz
- Installed an AC unit in church choir loft to maintain a constant temp for organ
- Repaired school Computer Room ceiling and lights
- Hung new framed prints of the Evangelist, installed new credenza and 'nursing chair' in vestibule side room. (see picture)
- Stripped and re-stained interior doors from church to Mezz and sacristy, tinted the windows and installed new hardware and locks (these are not new doors)
- Made the Mezzanine interior doorway to church more prominent with new sconces, new trim treatment, and new HR church sign above the door
- Made the Mezzanine more welcoming: painted walls/trim/ceiling/iron railings, replaced carpet and entry way floor matt
- Added signs to Mezz doorways: Parish Office, Mezzanine, Four Seasons Room, Holy Redeemer School
- Complete renovation of Music Room; to be used by school and choir
- Updated rectory chapel and residence office. Added to built-in bookshelves, painted, replaced carpet and lighting
- Stripped and repainted outdoor iron railings, pressure washed bricks and cement

Currently underway:

- Memorial Pathway
- Paint Pastor Suite in Rectory (final rooms to be painted in rectory)
- Replace main church/school sign

Future Projects of Note:

- Buy bronze flower/plant stands for sanctuary?? (see attachment)
- Install parking and other directional signs around property
- Fealy Hall Kitchen upgrade
- Four Season's Kitchen upgrade
- Repave parking lot

- Accessibility: wheelchair pew, vestibule bathroom? elevator?
- Clean up Pre-K playground
- Paint exterior wood trim on Fealy Hall, repair broken boards under rear eave
- Address rusty rectory water pipes
- Have someone look at sloping floor on rectory second story to see if we have a foundation issue.
- Paint school exterior doors?
- Upgrade school main entrance?

The consensus is that the potential structural and plumbing issues in the Rectory need to be addresses as a priority.

The bronze flower/plant stands to match the floor length candlesticks would be a nice addition, but the Rectory should take priority. Robert Bourque messaged that he would be willing to chip in a bit for them.

7. Church attendance

- Sunday Mass: on the incline (see attachment)
- Weekday: attendance is robust. Usually over 30 people. Attendance for the Holy Hour before Mass is strong too. Many UMD students
- Other: We have had funerals with a full church
- Virtual Masses: views are on decline

8. Committee reports

- Status and plans of each committee not mentioned above
- Stewardship and others

Bob & Carol Martin, Stewardship Committee representatives, received approval for their mission statement. They requested and received permission to work with the parish ministry heads on updating their particular page of our parish website. Then they would work together on presenting ministry opportunities to the parish at large. Marie Winterson will assist them with providing contact information. Fr. Mark will approve and sign a letter that will come from them to the ministry heads and then the parish at large.

Additionally, Bob & Carol Martin are interested in enlisting the help of the Finance Council to present a seminar on financial literacy to the parish at large in the future.

It was stated in the meeting we do not have any committee members at this time and will need support in this matter. This will be further addressed in the next meeting.

With regards to comments please add that

Finally, Bob & Carol Martin, offered some suggestions for April, Abuse Prevention Month, for us to consider for 2022 and beyond. The PC was supportive of the number and depth of their ideas and count on Bob, Carol and their committee to continue their close work with the Council as they implement these ideas. Ginger Thompson and Rita Thompson welcomed addressing abuse prevention to Holy Redeemer during the month of April as proposed by the Archdiocese of Washington which was noted in the Stewardship Report.

9. Comments by individual attendees.

- Parish Feast Day; September 14th: Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Ginger Thompson - It is very nice being back to Mass. The church looks so good.

Wayne Williams - Advises to the Stewardship Committee representatives presenting their information in small doses in summary form so as not to overwhelm their audience.

10. Closing comments by Father Mark.

Enjoy the summer. Next meeting is in September.

Please think of who else in the parish who would be a good addition to this council. Feel free to ask them if they are willing to serve and let Fr. Mark know.