

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

St. Bridget's Parish Council Meeting was held on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 8:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Ryan Miller, Chairperson. Fr. Jerry said an opening prayer.

The following is a list of who was present at the meeting:

Linda Romberg, Bob Casey, Jesse Gilles, Fr. Jerry Harris, Fr. Rich, Ryan Miller, Lola Higgins, Tom Westerhaus, Debbie Cernohous, Sue Steckbauer, Vicki Cobian, Ron Giles, Roxanne Lovell-Olson.

Approval of Minutes and Agenda: The minutes from the October 9, 2018 Parish Council meeting were reviewed and several changes were needed. On page 1 in the Finance Committee paragraph, fourth line, should say – “. . . November 16th that several people from St. Bridget will be attending including representation from the pastors, church staff, trustees, and finance council.” On page 1 in the Strategic Planning Committee, first line, should say – Delete the sentence starting with “Scott Lindall” and ending with “progressing”. After the sentence “Scott stated . . . committee.”, add – “Sue suggested they meet with the past members to review what they put together and get their opinion of how things are progressing.” On page 2, first paragraph, sixth line, correct name should be “Dunrovin Christian Brothers Retreat Center”. Page 2, second bullet item, third sentence changed to – “Sue commented that regarding the Strategic Plan we went deeper than what the author stated and shared that we need to look past that 22 percent of people that we are reaching with conventional methods.” Page 3, Discussion Items, second line dollar amount should be “\$1,850” instead of \$1,860. Debbie Cernohous made a motion to approve the corrected October 9, 2018 meeting minutes. Lola Higgins made a second to the motion. It was the unanimous decision of the Parish Council to approve the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Bob Casey gave a report for the committee. The adult envelope contributions are behind a fairly substantial amount to put us in a caution stage. The contribution amount will be watched in December and looked at closer after the first of the year. It was noted that all collection amounts are down. The committee approved proposed audit procedures and worksheet to be used. They will be randomly looking at 36 checks per quarter, approximately 12 per month, to audit the transaction and match it with the bank statement and invoice.

Social Justice Committee: Katy Pupungatoa was absent but had sent information to Ryan Miller, Father Harris and Sue Steckbauer: They recommended approving the following tithe which was presented by Ryan:

Angels on Earth (formerly the Giving Tree) program at St. Bridget's - \$1,000

MOTION – A motion was made by Tom Westerhaus to approve the tithe recommendation of \$1,000 to Angels on Earth. Ron Giles made a second to the motion. It was the unanimous decision of the Parish Council to approve this motion.

Strategic Planning Committee: Jesse Gilles gave a report for the committee. They went thru the list of items to be completed from the Strategic Plan making note of things still needing to be done and steps to complete them. Everything will be done in time. They discussed what has been the biggest impact of the plan and it has been improved communication and soliciting volunteers. They prioritized the remaining items to be done. A couple of things that were important three years ago are not a priority now, such as comparing our attendance numbers, etc. to other parishes. One item discussed was how to do a “learning mass” for the parish. Fr. Jerry commented we use to do “dry masses” for kids to teach them about the different parts of mass. They would like to do this without interrupting mass. The committee is excited about what has been done and what will be worked on completing.

Facilities Planning Committee: Ron Giles reported the committee did not meet.

School Committee (Education Committee): Tom Westerhaus gave a report for the committee. Jeanne is working hard on marketing. Everyone is focused on the mission statement. They talked about the Gala planned for February 23, 2019 and hope to see many people attend. Jeanne reported that staffing is still an issue and need art and music teachers. The kitchen help has been hired and the custodian position is in transition. We did have teachers in place but the public school ends up short staffed so our people goes to the public school because they can offer more pay. Tom commented that Jeanne is good for our school. She is mission driven and making St. Bridget a strong academic school.

Liturgy Committee: Deb Cernohous gave a report for the committee. There will be an Advent prayer service held on December 2nd at 5 pm. It will have the theme “Make Your Home in Me” and will have music and reflections. People have been volunteering for decorating the church. We have a database program to use now for ministry scheduling. There have been volunteers coming forth to be readers, dancers, and even four adults have volunteered to be servers. The River Falls cable television company is shutting down but people will be able to watch mass on our church website. The committee is looking at doing a ministry fair hopefully before Lent, in one of the meeting rooms, maybe after masses. John will be doing a workshop for St. Mary’s and our readers. Sue commented that one goal of the Strategic Plan was to have everyone be part of a ministry and this sounds like it is slowly happening.

Religious Education/Faith Formation Committee: Vicki Cobian gave a report for the committee. Diane and Tessa reported they are very happy with the excellent catechists this year. They have a lot of enthusiasm and the students are very engaged. Diane commented they will need one more volunteer to help with the Wednesday supper. There have been 60 – 100 people attending each week and Diane and Tessa will take care of ordering food but another volunteer is needed for meal preparation starting at 1 or 2 pm. They discussed plans for the Christmas program on Wednesday evening, December 19th.

Spirituality/Stewardship Committee: Lola Higgins gave a report for the committee. The committee discussed the ARISE program that is being paid for using Joany funds. There will be a trial run tentatively during Lent season. They hope to start the program in fall 2019. There will be Small Christian Community groups meeting in homes next year. Jodi is planning an Advent series. There will be a Life in the Spirit Seminar held in January 2019 using Joany funds.

Pastor/Administrator Report and Discussion Items

- We Lack For Nothing Book (Chapter 2) – Fr. Jerry asked the group if anything popped out at them in this chapter. Jesse quoted from the last page of chapter, “Belonging leads to believing”. Several people commented they had also highlighted that sentence. Tom commented that our Strategic Plan feels like part of our mission. The reality is we have to have priorities. Vicki commented about page 20 and the church committees going back and forth discussing a dress code. This reminded her and everyone about the Liturgy Committee’s discussion last year trying to make a dress code. It came down to the fact that if we are too strict with minor details, we will drive people away from the church. Fr. Jerry commented that at the end of the book it states that every member of church is a disciple. We are empowering people with the mission of the church. Lay people are taking a more active role and being disciples. This is different than the church telling you what to do. Tom commented that discipleship means to welcome the stranger. Fr. Jerry stated that yes, we have had people join our church because they felt welcome. Tom said he likes the message of the book – that we have it all but that is hard to remember now days.
- FORMED subscription – Sue and Fr. Rich reported about the new program. The account is set up and will start the first weekend of Advent, December 1st and 2nd. We live in a digital world and this is the way to go. Fr. Rich stated the program will have a list of saints for each day with suggested material to watch. This is being paid for by the Joany Fund as a gift to the parish. It is a good program for kids and adults with study guides, bible studies, etc. There was a concern about older people having access to the FORMED program but statistics show a significant number of smart phones are owned by the older generation. Fr. Rich commented on a series on FORMED about marriage that would be excellent for the marriage preparation program – reason for having wedding rings, why to wear white, etc. They are videos by Brother Francis that are very catchy. Lola commented this would be a wonderful idea for bible studies and she has been doing this with other websites. The FORMED program has been up and running for maybe eight years.
- Solar Panel Update – Fr. Jerry, Sue Steckbauer, Gary Senn and Tony Jilek met with Ben from ClearView Construction who was involved with the installation of the church roof in 2006. He recommended that we do not install solar panels at this time because we are on year 12 of the 15 year warranty on the roof. If we put solar on now, it would maybe need to be taken off five years from now to repair the roof. We believe in solar panels but not at this time – maybe when we repair or get a new roof. This information will be passed on to the solar committee when they meet this week. The church will look at other additional ways to be energy efficient.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Sue reminded the Parish Council members that our group will be in charge of fellowship on November 18th after the 9:30 am and 11:00 am masses. Sue will organize the fellowship and get the treats; she just needs people to help serve coffee and welcome people after masses.

Upcoming Parish Events:

- November 17 – Rake a Difference
- November 18 – Heartstrings Recital
- **November 18 – Parish Council Members Fellowship After Mass**
- November 20 – Soup and Bread
- November 20 – Eucharistic Holy Hour for Peace
- November 21 – Community Thanksgiving Meal
- November 22 – Thanksgiving; Church Office and School Closed
- November 23 – Church Office and School Closed
- December 1 – Holiday Happenings
- December 2 – 1st Sunday of Advent
- December 2 – “Make Your Home in Me – An Advent Night of Reflection with Song and Spoken Word”

The next Parish Council Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, December 11, 2018. Fr. Jerry ended the meeting with prayer.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Lovell-Olson, Recording Secretary