

MINUTES OF THE HOLY REDEEMER PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

January 8, 2024



All Council members were present: Dianne Connelly, Amanda Constant, Janet Holden, Linore Dudik Jones, George Lane, Liz McCarte (Council Secretary), Beth Norcross, Rita Shields, Ron Weishaar (Council Chair), Deacon Art LaChance and Father John Sullivan.

- A. The meeting started at 5:30 PM. Father Sullivan shared Bishop Barron's insights on the Magi for reflection. He also led the group in an opening prayer.
- B. The Council voted unanimously and without discussion to accept the October 4, 2023 meeting minutes.
- C. The team responsible for evaluation of the Parish Bulletin, Rita Shields, Ron Weishaar, and Linore Dudik Jones, reported on their work. They conducted a series of meetings to review the current bulletin, research options and develop recommendations. A draft of the revised bulletin was provided which had been previously approved by Father Sullivan. The team concluded:
 - The current bulletin contains all the needed information.
 - Reorganizing the current content and adding visuals will make the bulletin a bit more appealing. Two changes are proposed. First, devote the entire front cover to a theme and include the mission statement. Second, arrange the content by page by category, similar to a newspaper format. For example, "Our Support and services" etc. The bulletin will be 6 pages.
 - The bulletin cost would increase by approximately \$300. Father Sullivan indicated this is not a concern.
 - Beth met with the bulletin representative about advertisements. There is room for additional advertisers as the half page can be made into a full page. The Council is invited to provide prospective vendor names to Ron and Beth. The prospective vendors will be contacted by the bulletin rep.
 - Any input from the Council on the draft would be appreciated.
 - Rollout is expected in February.
- D. An update on the three-year pastoral plan was presented by Ron. He and George reviewed the plan and think there has been good progress on fulfilling the objectives. Some of the highlights:
 - Sacraments and Worship –
 - Objective 1 -Music Program. The music program is very effective and of particular note are the soloists. Each Church season is well visualized in words and music
 - Object 2 -Liturgical Experience. Training for all roles could be enhanced. Deacon Art offered to provide training and give context for each role. Father Sullivan encouraged the Council to think about creative ways to enhance the liturgical experience and make Mass more welcoming during high Mass participation times such as July 4th. He challenged the Council to be creative to make the Mass around the 4th special.

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- Objective 3 -Welcoming Environment. The Council indicated that the Hospitality Committee is well established and creates a very welcoming environment with activities such as Mass greeters and after Mass coffee. The Parish staff responds timely to inquiries. Holy Redeemer has participated in a number of community activities including the Thanksgiving Ecumenical service and a November donation to the Chatham Childrens Fund. There may be additional opportunities for community involvement when the Church reopens by inviting the community to an opening concert or Mass.
 - Education and Formation - George observed that an “extra effort” could be made with children by creating a “Children’s Ministry.” The Children’s Mass and blessing during Mass is a great start. However, he suggested a leader and committee members be established to create an annual plan with events. The Council discussed the challenge with Chatham’s small year-round population that then expands considerably in the summer. Deacon spoke about the Fidelis and Fraternus program at Corpus Christi. The Council agreed to revisit the topic at the next meeting.
- E. George spoke about the “Day of Reflection and Faith Sharing” scheduled on 2/17/24. The event will start at 9 AM with a continental breakfast. Speaker, Allison Gingras, will help us reflect on small group faith sharing. Lunch will be included and the session will conclude by 3:30 PM for Mass attendance. The Council agreed to support this initiative by participating in the session and inviting friends and family, including non-Catholics, to attend. An expected outcome is the formation of small faith sharing groups. George has extra handouts and registration cards, if needed. So far 38 people have signed up.
- F. A review of the Council election process and schedule was conducted. Council members can only serve 2 consecutive 3-year terms. There are 3 positions to be filled in this year’s election: George, Janet and an open position (formerly held by Lorraine Cocolis). Nominations will be made in May with the election in June. New members will join the Council in September and attend the October meeting. In 2025 Ron, Amanda and Rita will have completed their first 3-year term. Father Sullivan discussed communicating the nominations and election via Flock notes with a potential “e-vote”.
- G. Father Sullivan stated the renovation of Holy Redeemer is proceeding well with no unplanned surprises. The Finance Committee recently had a walk through of the church which is in more of a destruction versus construction status at this time. It appears Memorial Day will be the occupancy date.
- H. Ron reported that Holy Redeemer’s “adopted seminarian”, Bryan Bangs, will not be able to join us in January due to conflicts. Hopefully he will be able to visit at a later date. The Knights of Columbus generously donated \$500 to his educational costs.

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- I. Father Sullivan described an initiative the Diocese is sponsoring; “Our Priests Make a Difference: Stories of Positive Impact by Our Priests.” The Diocese is looking for stories on the positive impact priests have made on people’s lives. Information on how to submit stories will be announced in next week’s bulletin and is on the Holy Redeemer website.

- J. Father Sullivan concluded the meeting with a prayer. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Liz McCarte
Council Secretary