

8/22/23 Pastoral Council Meeting

In attendance: Fr. Robert Barnell, Cindy Robinson, Karen O'Rourke, Debbie White, Jake Kerger, Dan Young, Kate Brockman, Katie Early, Bryan Back, Abby Simon, Dennis Jones.

Absent: Patrick Parris, Aaron Thompson, Teague Ridge, Laura Ridge

Fr. Robert opened the meeting with prayer at 7:00.

The council reviewed and approved the Minutes from the June 27 meeting. They also reviewed the Special Meeting minutes, no need for approval.

The council welcomed Dennis Jones as liaison for Building and Grounds.

The Council reviewed the Duties and Responsibilities for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. Elections were held for those three positions. Cindy Robinson is to remain as Chair, Karen O'Rourke as Vice-Chair, and Debbie White as Secretary.

We decided we needed to save time in reviewing the previous meeting's minutes. Debbie will e-mail a copy of the minutes to everyone for their review prior to the next meeting.

There is still an At-Large vacancy on the Council. Dennis and Dan will reach out to Anne Ewing and Josh Hartman to see if they are interested in the position. Both indicated they were interested on their Stewardship Form.

Dennis brought up the Conflict of Interest of Council Members with other committees they may be part of, to be mindful of said conflict while voting. He questioned if Conflict of Interest was still part of the Bylaws. Last time this was addressed was around 1998. Cindy will ask Patrick to find a current copy of Bylaws.

Pastor Update:

Fr. Robert stated he was accustomed to At-Large Members only at Pastoral Council Meetings. Possibly consider Committee Chairs only at select meetings.

Fr. Robert announced some staffing changes. Eddie Jarboe is replacing Tasha Gordon. Eddie's emphasis will be the children's faith and sacramental events, and if there is time, some Youth Ministry. Nancy Marx is replacing Becky Miles as the bookkeeper.

Fr. Robert also questioned if we wanted a Pictorial Directory, the last one was ten years ago. All were in favor.

Fr. Robert and Karen reported on the upcoming Weekend School Mass. The first student-led Mass will be on Saturday September 30 at 4 p.m. There will be food trucks in the parking lot after Mass. Fr. Robert said we would try this and if successful maybe repeat monthly or quarterly.

Karen said Laura Ridge joined the Worship Committee to be a liaison between school and church. Previously, there was no one on the Worship Committee with children currently in the school. Laura will help coordinate activities between the church and school.

Talgrace Marketing is interested in producing a monthly podcast with Fr. Robert and Terry Mulaney to promote the church and school.

Katie Eberwein is Ascension's Communication/Outreach Director. Dennis asked if she will be the clearinghouse for both the church and school's social media platforms. This is to make sure the information is consistent across both. Abby replied the two platforms are linked so the information posts on both.

Fr. Robert said the Precious Blood will be offered at all Masses. There will be seven Ministers to allow for three chalices. Two Ministers will go to the back of the church at the beginning of Communion. The others will remain at the front. Flynn Mudd is updating the guidelines for the Eucharistic Ministers and Sacristans.

Announcements are now at the beginning of Mass. Try to select Parishioners not normally seen to read them.

Department Reports:

Bryan Back, School Board Chair, reported there are 162-163 students enrolled in the school. There are still openings. Putting a physical sign at the house on Lincoln Road which is directly across from Greathouse Shryock Traditional Elementary School was discussed. This would be in addition to advertising on social media. Because of the JCPS school bus issues, there may be parents interested in sending their children to Ascension.

The School Board held their first meeting. They had a good two hour conversation on good things to do and how to make the school more personal. They are finalizing more ideas for the Open House in October. The focus is on solidifying the foundation of who we are and the great things we have to offer. The new vision/mission statement is close to finalization.

Abby Simon, PTO Chair, said September 12 is the first PTO meeting. She reported that the PTO is trying to keep the parishioners in the loop about happenings in the School. She created a PTO "Year in Review" brochure and passed it out at Masses last weekend. There will be more brochures available in the back of the church. She also stated that the PTO is taking out a ¼ page ad for PTO activities in the bulletin.

Abby also reported there were 16-18 teams at the Corn Hole Tournament. The turnout was not as good as last year, but the tournament moved indoors due to the heat.

Abby also reported there were 24 teams for the Golf Scramble, and the PTO cleared \$7,000.

Abby also reported there is a Back-to-school Pool Party on Monday August 28 at Upper Highlands Swim Club.

Abby also reported The Easy Money Sweepstakes will be starting soon. Students will be selling tickets after the masses. Last year the PTO made \$50,000.

Karen O'Rourke, Worship Committee Chair, already reported on the Worship Committee.

In an effort for greater transparency, Kate Brockman, Member-at-Large, suggested the Pastoral Council At-Large members' names be posted in the bulletin. Fr. Robert could have the members stand and be recognized at Mass. Another suggestion was to put the minutes in the bulletin. It is difficult to find the current minutes on the Ascension website.

Dennis Jones stated he was happy to be part of the Pastoral Council. He wants the Pastoral Council's input and final approval on all projects. He reported a lot is finished in the library. The ceiling tiles, carpet, and new paint, the Star tables, technology tables, long tables, and chairs are finished. By Friday all dove gray metal shelves used in the technology area should arrive. The librarian, Barbara Wagner, is clearing out some of the books to make room. The workstation and the wood shelves are scheduled to arrive mid-October, hopefully sooner. He said there are still some finishing touches, such as words and graphics will be added to the walls to grab attention.

Dennis wants to get "Excuse our Mess" signs to create interest in campus projects. He said the exterior of the buildings were power washed in preparation, however it is too hot to paint. The front of the school will get primed and have two coats of paint. Once the painting is complete, irrigation and landscaping are next.

Currently, one of the air conditioning units is down, it should be repaired by the 3rd week of September. The unit is still under warranty, he is trying to get labor covered as well. In October, the oldest unit, installed in 1982, will be replaced. It has a bad heat exchanger. It currently cools, so not an immediate concern, the replacement can wait until heat is needed.

The damaged fence will be replaced since the insurance claim filed with Catholic Mutual settled.

There are several more projects on the horizon. Dennis is putting together a report for long term projects, 1-10 years out. The short term project is to plant flowers and shrubs, which could be a great service project for students or another way for parishioners to work together as a community.

No Pastoral Updates since Patrick was absent.

Fr. Robert asked for prayer requests. The meeting closed with prayer.

The next meeting is September 26. Upcoming dates: October 24 and November 28. There is no meeting in December.

