

St. Michael's Parish Council Meeting

January 26, 2021

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

President Sheila Schreiner called the meeting to order.
Fr. Braun led everyone in praying the Our Father.

II. Organizational & Routine Matters

- Lori Swinney was welcomed as the new Bridge Builders representative.
- **Roll Call: Present:** Fr. Braun, Sheila Schreiner, Holly Brown-Borg, Kevin Fruhwirth, Jeri Anderson, Judy Jahnke, Kevin Boehm, Craig Pfau, Tom Helbling, Lori Swinney, Mary Ann Whalen
Absent: Jennifer Modeen, Jennifer Loraas
- **Approval of Minutes:** Holly Brown-Borg motioned to approve the minutes of the last meeting (Nov. 17). Seconded by Kevin Fruhwirth. Motion passed and minutes approved.

III. Reports of Representing Organizations

- **Altar Society:** Judy Jahnke said the Altar Society had not met so there was nothing to report. Fr. Braun said that the funeral of Dorothy Kulas was coming up on Thursday. Dorothy had been a long-time member of the Altar Society & its funeral committee. Although the Altar Society has not been making funeral lunches now because of the coronavirus, lunch was going to be catered in after this funeral. One or two members of the Altar Society would be in the basement to coordinate this.
- **Men's Club:** Kevin Boehm reported the Men's Club won't meet until April. They hope to restructure the organization. Right now most members are elderly and not active. There will be no fish fry this Lent.
- **Knights of Columbus:** Craig Pfau reported one new member came to their meeting. They had their food drive on Jan. 17. The coloring contest winners were chosen. Jeff McGee had the "Family of the Month" for Dec. and Mark & Sarah Williamson are the "Family of the Month" for Jan. The Meat Raffle drawing will be on May 16. The KC's will next meet in Feb.
- **Bridge Builders:** Lori Swinney reported the Bridge Builders last met in November. Members had spoken at Masses before the Tree of Lights which was held Dec. 3. The Bridge Builders had sent out a new brochure and also a postcard about the Tree of Lights. There was no dinner last year nor will there be one this year because of the coronavirus.

IV. Reports from Parish Boards and Councils

- **Education Board:** No report. Fr. Braun was away when the Education Board met in January. However, he said the school is doing well—still having classes face-to-face. Principal Sara Dudley has scheduled a few more days for teacher planning. Catholic Schools Week starts this Sunday, Jan. 31—but there will be no breakfast.
- **Finance Council:** Business manager Tom Helbling went through the December financial statement. Envelopes are down \$2000 from last year and the plate is down \$3000. We made \$5682 this quarter from the Catholic Development Fund. The Altar Society gave the parish \$10,000 in Dec. With Jesse Zyskowski gone, there hasn't been a lot of fund-raising for the high school RE.

The school has received hot-lunch reimbursement from a federal program.

Parish expenses have been normal.

The elevator is now working. Tom got the hourly labor rate expense for the elevator down from \$495/hr. to \$200/hr.

The “Income – Expense” total for Dec. came to \$171,080 compared to \$104,287 last year.

At the Parish Council meeting, it was requested that the business manager send out the monthly financial statement to members earlier—maybe a week in advance-- so members can have time to review it before the day of the meeting.

- **Pastor’s Report:**

1. **Stained Glass Windows:** A brochure was put in the bulletin just this past weekend about the Stained Glass Window & Sanctuary Beautification Project. This brochure will also go out in the Lenten mailing. This “soft” campaign will match the \$150,000 from the Harry Bushaw estate. Another \$40,000 from the estate will go toward the window replacement in the original school building. Money for the stained glass windows was also raised from the “reverse auction” at our 2019 Winter Gala. The parish is currently seeking a 2nd & 3rd estimate for the stained glass windows.

2. **Religious Education (students/adults):**

Fr. Grossman continues to lead the RCIA classes.

First Reconciliation will be held Feb. 13. Confirmation & First Communion is scheduled for March 5.

However, the students won’t have their retreats this year because of the coronavirus.

Another Bible Study will be starting in Lent led by Deacon John Bredemeier.

Fr. Braun is doing his “sanctuary chats” again—approximately one a week.

3. **Mass Attendance:** Christmas Mass attendance was low. The basement wasn’t needed at all for an overflow. We’ll be doing another Mass count on Sunday, Feb. 1. How many will come back to church when the pandemic is over? Fr. Braun said the Spiritual Communion Prayer at Mass was earlier discontinued because we want people to come to church, but some people complained so it was started up again. However, it’s not in the actual rubric. The question was asked if we’re going to continue to live-stream the Mass after the coronavirus? Some council members said there are elderly & disabled parishioners who really depend on it.

V. Old & Current Business:

- **Parish Long-Range Planning:** The stained glass windows & sanctuary beautification has been a part of our long-range plan. We’re still working on getting people more involved in the parish. A council member remarked that social activities at church can be really important. It’s important to be friendly and do acts of kindness. A council member said one could feel it’s a privileged honor to be a Catholic because we’re involved in so much more than just going to church. Other council members remarked that we’re still having trouble getting greeters/ushers. Many times they don’t show up when scheduled.
- **Christmas Eve Dinner:** Because of concerns with the coronavirus and safety precautions needed for the volunteers, the annual Christmas Eve Dinner was prepared at the Northlands Rescue Mission this year rather than at St. Michael’s. Just under 800 meals were prepared at the Mission with their paid employees. Volunteer drivers then delivered 374 of the meals in 142 stops and the rest were picked up. Fr. Braun had stopped over there at the Mission on that day and personally thanked

executive director (& parishioner) Sue Shirek and other Mission staff for helping us out this year. At the Parish Council meeting, members also wanted to go on record as being very appreciative of the Northlands Mission.

VI. New Business:

- **Therapy Dog:** Fr. Braun reported a person had asked if she could bring her therapy dog to church to welcome people. He's reticent about this. For example, some people are scared of dogs or allergic to them. Fr. Braun asked the Parish Council members for their input. Some council members were familiar with therapy dogs and said they are very well-trained. They said it might be worthwhile. Perhaps downstairs would be better than at an entrance? Some council members said maybe this should be considered on a trial basis. For example, do it at just one Mass and put it in the bulletin ahead of time.

VII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

- Fr. Braun asked if we should forgo the scheduled Feb. 16 meeting since it was only three weeks away. (The Finance Council had decided not to meet in Feb.) However, Parish Council members decided to go ahead with the Feb. 16 meeting. There being no further business, Craig Pfau motioned for adjournment. Seconded by Kevin Fruhwirth. Motion carried and meeting closed. Fr. Braun led the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Whalen