

St. Michael's Parish Council Meeting

March 16, 2021

I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer

Fr. Braun ran the meeting in the absence of the President & Vice-President.
It was the first meeting in person rather than by Zoom in over a year.
He led everyone in saying the Our Father.

II. Organizational & Routine Matters

- **Roll Call: Present:** Fr. Braun, Kevin Fruhwirth, Jeri Anderson, Kevin Boehm, Craig Pfau, Lori Swinney, Tom Helbling, Mary Ann Whalen
Absent: Sheila Schreiner, Holly Brown-Borg, Jennifer Modeen, Judy Jahnke, Jennifer Loraas
- **Approval of Minutes:** Jeri Anderson motioned to approve the Feb. minutes. Seconded by Kevin Boehm. Motion carried.

III. Reports of Representing Organizations

- **Altar Society:** The Altar Society still has not met. The question was asked if there would be a general church cleaning before Holy Week. Mary Ann Whalen will check with the Altar Society. Things have been different this past year due to the virus and there might not be enough time to organize this.
- **Men's Club:** Kevin Boehm reported the Men's Club has not met yet. They hope to meet the 2nd or 3rd Monday in April (after Easter).
- **Knights of Columbus:** Craig Pfau reported the KC Meat Raffle will begin ticket sales shortly. They will have another membership drive on Sunday, March 22. The KC State Convention will be in mid-April. Holy Family Parish will sponsor the Silver Rosary this year—a devotional program involving saying the rosary and right-to-life.
- **Bridge Builders:** Lori Swinney reported the Bridge Builders Board met by Zoom on Feb. 18. Instead of a dinner, their annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, May 2. It will be an ice cream & dessert social and Fr. Braun will make homemade ice cream. Bridge Builder members will be wearing nametags and T-shirts. Their spring newsletter will be coming out soon. Board member Jamie Worden has put together a Facebook Page for the Bridge Builders. The 2020 Tree of Lights did very well raising funds. Principal Sara Dudley is very grateful for the support of the Bridge Builders for the school. Recently, the Bridge Builders purchased library books to replace ones that weren't returned last year.

IV. Reports from Parish Boards and Councils

- **Education Board:** Fr. Braun reported that Principal Dudley has applied for a grant to replace the playground equipment to bring it up to code. The cost might be \$60,000. Also, the playground might be extended about five feet.
It's been a challenging year, but the school has kept up with in-person classes. Next year the two third-grades might be consolidated into one. The music teacher, Jeremy Schmaltz, has resigned. A pre-kindergarten teacher is leaving, also.
- **Finance Council:** The Finance Council had met earlier that day. Tom Helbling gave out to Parish Council members the February Statement of Activities. Envelopes are down \$6000 compared to last Feb. Liturgy & Music income & expenses are both down from last year. We gave \$3925 to St. Joseph's Social Care in Feb. The Bridge Builders paid \$12,846 for iPads and some other items. The Home & School Association

had a SCRIP Raffle that took in \$9045. We received a Federal reimbursement for the Hot Lunch Program. The parish gives \$30,000 a year as our Catholic School Subsidy to Sacred Heart to help subsidize the 41 students from St. Mike's who attend Sacred Heart. We have no Youth Minister this year so those expenses are less. All in all, we're in good shape.

- **Pastor's Report**

- 1. Challenges of Covid-19 for our Parish at Large**

- Mass attendance this past fall was down to 40% but we are seeing numbers slowly increase--a rough estimate would put us at around 55-60 %. . Live-streaming will continue indefinitely, praying that people will not default to staying home. Technology is not able to replace the sacraments which are to be received in person.
 - Liturgical ministry scheduling has been challenging and we need to try to enlist new parish members to step forward to help serve on Sundays. We will do this next fall, and hopefully this year in later spring.
 - All social events have been curtailed or diminished: Altar Society meals, breakfasts, Men's Club Fish Fries, Winter Gala, funeral receptions, Bridge Builders and School events, Knights of Columbus, et al.
 - Our Altar Society and Men's Club need shoring up with new members to help carry the load of the parish community ministries.

- 2. Liturgical Worship & Devotional Life**

- **Memorial Right to Life Mass** celebrated by Bishop Folda on Fri., Jan. 22. The Mass was well-attended. It was sponsored by the Knights of Columbus in our parish.
 - **Parish Lenten Mailing** was sent out with a devotional scriptural booklet and Lenten events calendar
 - **Parish Lenten Mission** was held March 1-3 with Fr. Kyle Metzger. It was well-attended with roughly 200 people on the first evening. Followed up with encouragement to view live-stream.
 - **Parish Consecration to St. Joseph** to be held Fri., March 19 at both daily Masses. There will also be personal consecration for all who wish to partake in the devotion during the "Year of St. Joseph."
 - **Bible Study**—a 10-week study began March 8 with Deacon Bredemeier: "Jesus, the Way the Truth and the Life"
 - **God's Mercy Retreat**—led by Ron Vasek on Sat. morning, March 20
 - **Confirmation & First Communion** was celebrated by Bishop Folda March 5 for 36 students
 - **Lenten Penance Service:** held at St. Michael's on Sun., March 29
 - **Diocesan Chrism Mass:** Tues., March 30—St. Mary's Cathedral: Blessing of Sacred Oils
 - **Easter Vigil:** We have 6 candidates either being baptized or confirmed in the Catholic Faith. Three young people will also be confirmed.
 - **Divine Mercy Sunday**—April 11: Devotions with Confessions in the afternoon
 - **Parish Healing Mass:** Sat., April 17—celebrating the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
 - **Therapy Dogs** are now featured as a warm welcome to help with the return to Mass after 7:30 am to 9 am
 - **Ongoing Devotions** during Lent:
 - Eucharistic Adoration Tuesdays from 8 am to 9 pm
 - Daily Rosary prior to morning Mass & Chaplet after Mass. Rosary prior to Sunday Masses.
 - Friday Stations of the Cross before noon & in the evening

- 3. St. Michael's immediate and long-term goals of Brick & Mortar Projects put forth in the fall of 2019**

- Refurbishing the original 1906 school building
 - Church refurbishment projects
 - Church Stained Glass Windows
 - Installing a Loop Field hearing system and new aisle carpeting
 - Refurbishing the Sanctuary
 - Finish renovating the 3rd floor of Pastoral Ctr
 - Additional minor projects to be accomplished as part of the annual maintenance budget, i.e.

- East parking lot lighting across N. 5th St.
- Spot tuck-pointing areas of the church and school
- Landscaping improvements to flower beds on the east side of 1950 school

4. Progress Report on the Windows

- We contracted with A & L Siding to replace all of the windows in the original school building. Work will commence this summer and should take from 3 to 4 weeks. Funding for the window replacement comes from an Engelstad grant and the Harry Bushaw estate. The cost of the project is running approximately \$170,000.
- We're negotiating a contract with a firm for the refurbishment of the church's stained glass windows. The firm is Classic Glass of Fargo and they did work at the St. James Basilica in Jamestown & NDSU's Newman Ctr. This includes replacing the exterior plastic Lex-a-Lite with tempered glass. Funding for this project comes from the Harry Bushaw estate and donations from parishioners from our *Matching Grant Brochure* sent out in Feb. 2021 along with donations given at the 2019 Winter Gala reverse auction. The cost of refurbishing the stained glass windows is approximated \$160,000.

5. Parish Finance Report

- Lake Property Sale: An email was sent out Thurs. of last week. We are looking for final payment of the loan this spring.
- Diocesan God's Gift Appeal is underway. Our goal is \$151,600. Currently 154 of 1493 families have responded, pledging \$52,933. The average gift is \$343.
- Sunday collections are slightly behind our budget goal, but the parish is doing well overall. We are greatly indebted to the Gov't PPP loan program which enabled us to pay our faculty and staff last spring and summer.
- Pastoral Center Campaign is completed. The five-year campaign to raise funds for the renovation of the Pastoral Center concluded at the end of Dec. 2020. The emblems have not yet been placed on the donor "Memorial Tree" but we hope to start this project soon.
- **SCRIP** sales have fallen solely on the parish office due to curtailing of selling after our Sunday Masses. This will need further discussion considering we have new office personnel beginning orientation. Volunteers are technically required to run this program, not paid staff. We hope to build up a volunteer base to begin selling after Masses again.

6. Walking with Moms in Need: a new diocesan, nationwide effort to come to the aid of women in need.

Pregnant & parenting moms in need are in our parishes and neighborhoods. As Pope Francis reminds us, our parishes need to be "islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference." Everyone in our parish community should know where to refer a pregnant woman in need. In order to assess, expand, and better communicate resources to local pregnant moms and families in need, our parish is joining a nationwide effort from March 19, 2021 to March 19, 2022, entitled "Walking with Moms in Need: A Year of Service." (Website: www.walkingwithmoms.com) Fr. Grossman will be working with members of the parish to help develop an action plan for St. Michael's Parish.

7. Parish Summer Picnic is set for Wed., July 21, Lincoln Park.

8. Church Basement Sound System & LCD Projector: We have invited HP Sound & Light to review our LCD projection system and sound for the church basement. The current arrangement has become cumbersome to operate. We are needing to update and simplify the process.

9. A Family Holy Hour with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will be offered once a month.

Families with children may find this more welcoming. The first one will be Mon., March 22: 9-10am.

10. Staff Changes: Jackie Simon has been hired as a new secretary in the Parish Office now that Lori Beckstead is retiring. Jackie started March 15. Chris Langowski is resigning June 1. (She was a part-time custodian and cooked meals for the priests twice a week.) The parish will start advertising for a part-time custodian in April.

V. Old & Current Business:

- **Parish Long-Range Planning:** Under *New Business*

VI. New Business:

- **Covid-19 Virus Protocol Update from the Bishop:**

- While social distancing is to be maintained by individuals and clusters, pews need not be blocked off.

St. Michael's will retain alternating spacing of pews on one side of the church. The other side will be open.

- Pastors should continue to use prudence by following local health guidelines and mandates.
- The dispensation of the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is still in place.
- The Eucharist is not distributed under the form of the cup/chalice.
- The Sign of Peace is to be curtailed; however, we ask people to exchange *from a distance*
- St. Michael's now has Holy Water in the fonts. It is changed out Mondays & Fridays.
- Regarding questions and concerns about the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. Bishop Folda does not plan to make a statement on it at this time. The USCCB has put out a well-written, clear statement on the new vaccine: [U.S. Bishop Chairmen for Doctrine and for Pro-Life Address the Use of the Johnson & Johnson Covid-19 Vaccine \(constantcontact.com\)](https://www.usccb.org/bishops/statement-usccb-bishops-johnson-johnson-covid-19-vaccine)

- **Brainstorming of Ideas for Long-Range Planning & Goals:**

A discussion was held about how to rejuvenate our Parish Community—especially with the challenge of this past year with the Coronavirus. Liturgical ministries, Altar Society, & Men's Club among others all need people to volunteer. It was mentioned that we have a lot of young families and we want to get them & others involved. We should start this spring rather than waiting until fall. Should we do another Time & Talent survey? Although staff could put one together, we really need input from the parish organizations and the parishioners themselves. It was decided to set up a meeting for Monday, March 22--**The Parish Engagement Brainstorm Meeting**. The meeting will be held at 7 pm in the Pastoral Center. Parish Council members as well as representatives of the different organizations are invited.

- **Upcoming Parish Council Election**

The Parish Council & Education Board elections are set for the weekend of April 25.

The candidates' pictures & bios need to be sent to the parish office by Mon., April 12.

We need three people to run for Parish Council seats: the seats currently held by Sheila Schreiner & Holly Brown-Borg (three-year terms) and the seat of resigned member Dennis Feist (a two-year term). Maybe we should do a straw poll in the pews to get names of people as possible candidates.

Fr. Braun will talk to Jennifer Modeen (the current vice-president) about coming up with candidates;

VII. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

- There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.
- Fr. Braun led everyone in saying the Hail Mary.
- Next meeting: April 20

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Whalen