CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

NOVEMBER 17, 2021       6:30 PM

AN OPEN ASSEMBLY OF CATHOLIC BELIEVERS OF THE DIOCESE OF RICHMOND.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD OF GOD       CELEBRATING THE EUCHARIST

SERVING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

ATTENDANCE

Present:
Bill Rockwell, Valerie Rockwell, Joe Burke, Amy Petersen, Fr. Daniel, Lisa Liedl, Bridgette Passauer, Mike Anders, Deacon Gary Harmeyer, Jim Fowler, Tom Steffens, Ruth Brogan, Kathy Hevey, John Maiorana, Aaron Banyai, Jon Szewczak

Not Present:
Deacon Tom McFeely, Deacon Jim Ahearn, Grace Shaw, Mark Shaw, John Sokolowksi, Janet Jones, Diana Banyai, Madlyn Scott

MEETING START

The meeting was called to order by Amy Petersen, Chairperson at 6:30 p.m. EDT. The PC session’s opening reflection and prayer was prepared and presented by John Maiorana. Members recited the Parish Mission statement together.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Amy Petersen introduced Jon Szewczak as the PC Secretary for the 2021-2022 year.
2. October 2021 minutes were presented to the PC by Amy Petersen. No additions or amendments were submitted by attendees; therefore, a vote was called to accept/approve the minutes. It was passed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **50th Anniversary Subcommittee – Tom Steffens**
   Tom Steffens briefed the PC regarding past 50th Anniversary Celebration events with statistics highlighting attendance and participation. He brought with him a poster board listing the events for everyone to follow along with.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prequel Sandals Sunday Picnic</td>
<td>318 (Attending)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kickoff Sunday Masses</td>
<td>429 (Attending)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 Years Of Sacraments</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Saints Children’s Mass</td>
<td>56 Kids/322 Adults (Participating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Souls Day - Families Fm 2021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Boards - Signatures</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Board Photo</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salute To Vet &amp; Flagpole</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Upcoming Events
Thanksgiving For 50 Mass
Lighting Of Advent Candles
   Rainbow & YOA Member To Light The First Advent Candle Together

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS - 50th Anniversary Events Will Be Paused
Knights Of Columbus Spaghetti Dinner - January 15th
   Presale Of Tickets In December (Date TBD)
   Tickets Sold 1st Two Weeks Of January

50th Anniv Gala Dinner 40 + 200
Launching Of Vision
Lent And Easter 50 Hours Adoration
Mary’s Garden Dedication/Opening - May 1
Parish Office Ribbon Cutting - May
YOA Time Capsule
May 22 Bishop's Mass
   Planning For an Attendance Of 1000

Tom Steffens called out many who were instrumental in executing the successful completion of the listed events, especially: Bill Rockwell for coordinating and leading the Salute to Veteran’s and Flagpole rededication and Flag Retirement; and Bridgette Passauer for taking charge with the 50 Years of Ascension Thank You Notes.

2. Growing Into Our Future Campaign Update – Ken Levins
Ken Levins briefed the PC about the progress of the Growing Into Our Future Campaign. The Campaign exceeded the advertised goal of $1.5 M. The current tally is at $1.614 M with 374 families participating. Ken mentioned a final call tree effort targeting past contributors who haven’t yet committed to the Campaign will be pushed off until 2022 due to the upcoming Advent and Christmas seasons.

Ken Levins, with additional input from Lisa Liedl, stated that the Parish Office is 100% funded. The contract amendments and negotiations are in the final phases. Once the contract is signed then materials can be ordered, and timelines can be established. It is estimated that the construction will take an approximate of 245 days from the first day of on-site construction. There is a 6-month lead time on some metal construction materials which will affect the start date.

3. Parish Visioning Update – Kathy Hevey
Kathy Hevey again spoke with the PC about the Visioning process and where the parish is in it. She clarified to the PC that their ownership of the Vision moving into the future was not sole. The parish enjoys a shared leadership structure between the PC, Staff and Department Heads, and the Clergy. All of leadership will own the Vision, its care, and its implementation.
The parish is currently still in Phase 1 of the process which is *understanding* it. There will be an electronic/online worksheet given out to PC (and other leadership) that will guide the PC in understanding the Themes of the Vision. It was originally planned to be sent to PC members in early January 2022 for completion and submission by January 10. The hope was to have all input finalized and compiled for the January PC meeting. Amy Petersen suggested that getting the worksheet out to the PC members as soon as possible with a return date of December 15, would be a better tactic to make sure the effort was not lost. The suggestion was universally agreed with.

Kathy shared a rough timeline of the Vision introduction to the parish community and how it fits in with and around the planned 50th Anniversary events:

1. **November 16:** Introduce an exercise for PC, clergy, and staff to being to explore the impact of the Vision Themes.
2. **Early January:** The Vision Team will meet with all the clergy to talk about the Vision, answer any questions, share how one might use the language of the Vision going forward, and anything else related to it.
3. **January or February:** Meet with all the staff for discussion of the Vision and their role in sharing and implementing the Vision and answer questions.
4. **In January the Vision team will provide YOA with Vision materials for the Time Capsule project:**
   - A copy of the Vision Document and Community Input Documents
   - The “100 Years Blessed” banner used at the Vision Retreat.
   - A Holy Spirit pin given to participants in the Vision process.
5. **January 19 PC Meeting:** Process the answer to the exercise described in November
6. **Easter, April 17:** Easter is a time of new beginnings. The Vision is new. Use the first four Sundays of Easter to introduce the Vision to the parish community. The next three Sundays a PC member would talk about a different Vision Theme.
7. **May 22:** The 50th Anniversary Mass with the Bishop. Send the Bishop a copy of the homily from the dedication of the building and the 2072 Vision document as part of the coordination with his office for the Mass.
8. **TBD:** Host Vision meeting with the parish community after the 50th Anniversary celebrations for open dialog and questions.

**Pastoral Plan Review Document Review – Joe Burke**

Joe Burke talked about the Pastoral Plan. The Plan was a document that was published a year ago, and it covered the next three years of parish goals and activities. The Plan laid out five major initiatives with 25 supporting tasks. Joe briefed the PC that he has put together a “template” update document that outlines the 5 major initiatives and the 25 tasks in order layout out how to measure the progress of each. The “template” is currently filled with numbers, or statues, that Joe came up with on his own, from his own observations and experiences. In December, Joe and John Maiorana will be meeting with the owners of each of the 25 supporting tasks to get real input and data regarding the status of each task. The results of the meeting will be compiled and hopefully be ready to share by the January PC meeting.

The Plan and the “template” highlight just how much is being done by the Church of the Ascension parish. Even under adverse circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, progress and momentum was not halted. The majority of the tasks are still on track for completion by the end of the three-year period. The idea of celebrating the successes of the parish with respect to the initiatives of the Pastoral Plan have been put on hold until after the 50th Anniversary celebrations are completed.
The Pastoral Plan has been posted to the parish website since it’s publishing a year ago. However, the issue that there may be many in the parish community that do not know of it was raised. Lisa Liedl agreed that communication of the Plan is a challenge that has no easy answer. More thought and input are requested on coming up with a satisfactory method of getting the word out.

5. **Update on Parish Involvement in Synod – Lisa Liedl / Fr. Daniel**
   Father Daniel, with additional input from Lisa Liedl, briefed the PC about information coming from the diocese regarding the Synod. The diocese has developed a plan and outline for each parish to follow. The diocesan plan will be released on November 30, 2021. On December 1, 2021, there will be a diocesan meeting will be held with all clergy and staff, to review the released plan and guidelines. The bulk of the December PC meeting will be dedicated to the diocesan information for the Synod.

6. **Update on the Afghan Family Resettlement Project – Ruth Brogan**
   Ruth Brogan updated the PC on the progress of the Afghan Family Resettlement Project. A lot of things have been moving forward quickly over the last couple of weeks. Ruth and others underwent training with Catholic Charities of the Commonwealth. The parish is now assisting two families.

   The first family is a couple. The husband is a Civil Engineer. Through assistance from the Mosque community, he already has several job offers. Our assistance will probably minimal.

   The second is a family of four. They arrived in the USA on Sunday, November 13, 2021.

   Ruth has been able to secure two apartments in the Independence Blvd / North Hampton area. It is within walking distance of a bus stop.

7. **Report on Recent Deanery Meeting – Amy Petersen**
   Amy Petersen reported on her experience at the latest Deanery meeting. She reported that this was the first meeting of all nine Virginia Beach parishes in two years. The attendants were grouped together by function within the parish. They were able to review what was going on over the past years – what has gone well and what hasn’t. The presiding Dean, Father Steve, felt that overall, he observed that the parishes made themselves available to their parishioners, were flexible, and adaptable. Amy related that it was a good experience to be able to share with people around the city.

   Lisa Liedl then took time to explain what the Deanery is, what the Dean is, and what his function is. She was able to provide much needed context for those in attendance who were not aware of the Deanery.

8. **PC December Plans – Amy Petersen**
   Amy Petersen then reviewed the plans for the PC in the month of December along with a few important events.

   - The PC meeting on December 15 will be a ZOOM meeting.
   - December 20 will be the parish Reconciliation service.
   - Joe and Diane Burke have offered to host a “pot luck” social for the PC members and their “plus one”. Amy presented a choice of three dates in December, 10 December was chosen. More information will follow.
9. Q & A / Staff & Department Head Reports / Comments
There were no other questions or concerns raised by the Staff in attendance. Staff and Department Head reports are uploaded to the Parish Drop Box account for all to review.

PASTOR’S COMMENTS – FATHER DANIEL

Father Daniel’s closing comments focused on his thankfulness. He thanked John Maiorana for presenting the spiritual prayers of Vespers as the opening.

“…Need to join hands to help each other. God has given what you have and wants you to utilize it. Make use of what God has given to make a difference…we are here to reflect and respond to what has been given. Each one has something to contribute…Ascension is because of everyone…the family. Family that embrace(s) Love, Service, Perseverance.”

He gave thanks for the Vision and the promise and hope that it will bring.

INTRODUCTION OF GOALS GROUPS AND BREAKOUTS

Staff was dismissed after closing prayer. PC members stayed to break into Goals groups for Newcomers and Parish Representation, recap, planning, and discussion.

MEETING END

Father Daniel offered the closing prayers. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m. EST.

PRAYERFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

JON SZEWCZAK
SECRETARY

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on December 15, 2021 via ZOOM. The Reflection will be given by Mike Anders.

FUTURE MEETINGS 2021-2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Reflection By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 Dec 2021</td>
<td>Mike Anders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Jan 2022</td>
<td>Ken Levins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Feb 2022</td>
<td>Valerie Rockwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Mar 2022</td>
<td>Bill Rockwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 April 2022</td>
<td>Grace Shaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 May 2022</td>
<td>Mark Shaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Jun 2022</td>
<td>Tom Steffens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Jul 2022</td>
<td>Jon Szewczak</td>
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