

THE PARISH OF ST. EUGENE PASTORAL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – August 9, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE: Mechelle Kobar, Lynn Harvey Heth, Karen Bradley, Rick Lober, Vicki Ransom, James Greene, Ed Korte, Linda Robinson, Jesus Gamez, Ashley Torres

NOT PRESENT: Deacon Mike, Nancy Maldonado, Raul Cervantes

GUESTS: Sue Koesters

- Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with an opening prayer by Karen.
- July minutes were approved and seconded.
- **Covid-19 & the Delta Variant:** Rick reported that the Delta Variant has impacted Buncombe County with positivity testing rates increasing from under 2% to almost 8% in the last month. Hospitalizations due to Covid have also increased from 7 to 99 as of August 9th, causing the CDC to identify Buncombe county as a county of High Transmission Rate. Children have been more susceptible to this variant than prior Covid viruses. Discussion followed regarding parish response to protect parishioners and the community. Council recommended that St. Eugene parish require masks in the sanctuary beginning August 14th. The day chapel (social distancing in effect) and social hall will be mask optional areas. The narthex will also be a mask required area. Rick to work with Father on a video and email announcement to be made prior to 8/14.
- **Finance Report:** FY closed 6/30 with much positivity: purchase of 40 Culvern Street, new rectory, 2.5M addition to the school and parish exceeded \$650,000 offertory budget numbers.
 - Father stated that the parish will be soliciting more pledges to pay off school debt.
 - Our current loan is 1.5 million, 10-year debt.
 - In near future the diocese to speak to St. Eugene on importance of estate planning. Church often doesn't know it is in someone's will until after the parishioner passes away. In the event of >\$50,000 donation, unless otherwise stated in a will, the donation is split between regular donation and endowment fund.
 - Endowments in our parish can assure a strong future. Parish endowments have tripled in the last 10 years and 33 parishioners have remembered St. Eugene in their wills.
 - Ideally 2 or 3 parishioners should be part of a parish estate planning/stewardship committee
- **Music Ministry:** Rachel will be taking a personal sabbatical from August 16-December 31. Interim music director will be parish choir member Susan Linton. Fr. Pat and council recognized the excellent work Rachel has done and recognized the difficulty of working during the pandemic and hopes she will return to St. Eugene at year's end.
- **Assignments of Commissions:** PC members were each assigned to one of our 6 parish commissions. This communication and support between the commissions and PC will facilitate the parish long term strategic planning.
 - **Liturgy & Worship**-Rick and Raul
 - **Parish Life**-Karen and Linda
 - **Outreach (Ecumenism)**-Ashley and Jesus
 - **Evangelization & Communication**-James and Nancy
 - **Education & Formation**-Vicki and Ed
 - **Buildings and Facilities**-Lynn
 - PC members will partner with the ministries of the commission; become familiar with their goals and activities, serve as their advocate and representative to parish council.
 - PC members will encourage each ministry within their commission to develop a succession plan with chair and vice chair.
 - PC members will gather information following the template/process sent to members by Lynn, submit information to Father Pat for review and present to PC for voting.
- **Racial and Ethnic Equity Ministry:** Sue Koesters presented information on a proposed ministry, an outgrowth of the Peace and Justice Committee, to look at racism in the Catholic church, educate parish on racial issues. Group still working to develop plans. Council voted to approve this new ministry.

- **Secular Franciscans:** Group has been meeting at parish during Pandemic, has asked to continue meeting here. Unsure whether they want to become a parish ministry or just continue to use our facilities. Parish does want to offer support, may be able to tie in with Respect Life Ministry. Father Pat will follow-up & give more definitive information at the next meeting.
- **Care of Creation:** Vicki Ransom reported that Bill Maloney presented a solar panel funding request at masses on August 7/8. Bridget Keppler has agreed to take charge of the Friendship Garden. Connie Mitchell is recognized for her past work as leader. Two new volunteers have also come forward. Produce is being harvested and donated to Catholic Charities. The Friendship Garden is a great place for groups to meet. Informative parish recycling bins are installed in the gathering space and cost less than \$600. Donations to be accepted to defray cost.
- **Arts & Environment:** Sabine Dieringer has faithfully led this group, would like to pass on the baton. Father said this ministry changes altar cloths for each liturgical season and can include changing whole altar environment to reflect and enhance the season. For now, Sabine will continue to lead until a replacement can be found.
- **Ministry Fair:** Father will not schedule the fair this year, but noted that various ministries are highlighted on Facebook and parish council can send updated ministry information via e-blast. A suggestion was made to put ministry information in weekly bulletin in addition to postings already done on FB and the parish website.
- **Picnic Update:** Ashley presented information about the picnic: August 29, 1-5 pm at Camp Rockmont. New parish families will be especially recognized and welcomed. K of C will provide parking assistance. School families will be invited as well. Attendees will bring their own food and drink and a dessert to share. Clean up help needed. No organized games, but all activities will be available. Reminder will be made to use recycled products and be as green as possible.
- **Suggestion Box:** box with paper/pen installed in gathering space. Mechelle to publicize church email address for suggestions as well.
- **Church Directory:** 3 sets of photo session dates will be available, with last one at end of September. Currently 129 families have scheduled. Some ministries such as Parish Council, may do group pictures.
- **Parish Handbook:** Ed Korte will assist Lynn with updating parish handbook.
- **Virtus Training:** most parish council members have completed training with only 2 left to finish.
- **Faith Formation:** Father hopes our faith formation rebounds this year back to pre-pandemic levels. Meeting for grades 6-12 will be on Monday evenings at the school and SEY House, Pre-K-grade 6 will meet on Sunday mornings from 10:15-11:15 am.
- Meeting was adjourned with a prayer by Father at 8:15 pm
- Next meeting: Monday, September 13. Place TBD.

Minutes prepared and respectfully submitted by Karen Bradley. *If you have any questions or need additional information about anything in the minutes, please reach out to a Parish Council member. All Parish Council members' information is posted on the wall in the Fellowship Hall.*