

THE PARISH OF ST. EUGENE PASTORAL COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES – March 14, 2022

IN ATTENDANCE- Deacon Mike Zboyovski, Deacon John Langlois, Karen Bradley, Vicki Ransom, Rick Lober, Pat Irmen, Nancy Maldonado, Ashley Torres, James Greene, Raul Cervantes

NOT PRESENT- Father Pat, Lynn Harvey Heth, Ed Korte, Jesus Gamez, Mechelle Kobar

GUESTS- Mary Selby, Bill Maloney

- Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Vice Chair Nancy Maldonado with an opening prayer by Deacon Mike.
 - March 14 meeting minutes were approved.
 - **Parish Council By-Laws-** Rick briefly commented on the substantive changes made to the By-Laws, such as increasing PC membership to 12, nomination and selection process for new members and elected officers, and clarifying attendance requirements (per Article V, Section 5, Fr. Pat can remove a member for 3 unexcused absences, and it is at his discretion to determine what is considered excused vs unexcused). The word “leading” from Article 11 has been removed. After discussion, members voted unanimously to accept the proposed changes and Rick will send the recommended changes to Father Pat for his approval.
 - **Report on Activities & Events in the Hispanic Community-** Nancy shared the history and background of the Base Communities in the region, which unite the regional Hispanic communities with fellowship, Bible study, and prayer as well as helping with sacramental questions, and encouraging church attendance. Regional group leaders gather periodically to share. They also help each other with food, clothing, repairs, childcare, and other needs. It would be helpful for a priest to attend a meeting periodically to show support of the church as well as answer and explain theological issues that arise. Meetings were paused or held via phone/video calls during COVID, groups just starting to get back together. Discussion about gathering both Hispanics and Anglos in church activities once again as well as Anglos learning more about Hispanic cultural activities at church. Maybe Hispanic Coordinator for the western region Antonio Garcia could be a resource.
 - **Report on Afghan Refugee Response-** James reported the St. Eugene Circle of Welcome is working with the Lutheran Services to meet the daily need of refugees, under the leadership of Monica Blankenship and Fr. Pat. Help is needed for short term activities such as providing transportation to medical appts or mosque, babysitting, etc. Refugees are taking English classes at AB Tech. Biggest issues are permanent housing and language barriers. Volunteers will receive language apps to facilitate communication.
 - **Report from Peace and Justice Care of Creation-** Vicki shared that the two committees voted to merge, and will be called Peace, Justice and Care of Creation during the transition time. Steve Thomas and Sue Koesters were elected as Co-Chairs, with Connie Mitchell and Vicki Ransom serving as Co-Secretaries. Budget of both groups will be combined, with a separate budget for the Friendship Garden. Catholic Committee of Appalachia is planning a fund raiser for September and is sponsoring a Lenten activity- Cross in the Mountains, this year to be held in the Friendship Garden. The Greener Lent (greenerlent.org) announcement has been in the bulletin as well as the Rice Bowl Project (Catholic Relief Services). Sister Angela Reed, RSM, earth and human rights activist will speak at church in October. Parish Council will be asked to support the event.
 - **Update on Liturgy Commission-** Deacon Mike shared the proposed Liturgy Commission Guidelines which he submitted to Father Pat. It lists the purpose, membership, and functions of the commission, which includes the pastoral staff, representatives of the liturgical ministries, as well as representatives from resident and student parishioners, and parish council. He asks members to review questions regarding number of members for the commission, practical and spiritual training of ministers, and commission meetings, for a future discussion. He noted that the various committees offer many volunteer opportunities and chances for the parish to work together. Father will prioritize what ministries to strengthen and reestablish.
- Path to Synodality-** After Bill lead the council in a rousing rendition of “Sign Me Up for the Synod”, Mary stated that already there have been some substantive results to share regarding parish practices that were suspended during COVID. Mary shared that the first listening session on 3/6 was well attended by 39 parishioners. The next meeting dates of 3/14 and 3/20 are for the youth synodal gathering, and 3/26 and 3/31 are the next 2 parish gathering dates. A parish wide gathering in Spanish will be 3/29, and 4/3 is reserved as a snow date. There will be an ecumenical gathering with Sts. Mary, Mark, and Paul churches on 4/8. Later on, a survey will be sent to the home bound and estranged from our parish. Results will be tallied and presented to parish council followed by the

parish, and then, to the diocese by May 7th. From there results will be sent to the USCCB and finally the Pope. It is hoped that the results can be presented to the parish with a social event after each weekend Mass, possibly sometime in May. Pat offered that the Knights would be willing to offer some support at this event. It was also noted that the parish strategic planning can begin once the results of the Path to Synodality are known.

- Suggestion Box-small janitorial issue that Karen reported directly to Mechelle.
- Suggestion on Distribution of Communion Using Hands or Mouth-discussion revolved on these comments: current lower transmission and hospitalization rates in Buncombe County, finding that COVID is spread through respiratory means rather than surfaces, understanding of the cultural significance of communion on tongue for some, desire not to separate or divide parishioners, and trend that COVID is becoming endemic, rather than being pandemic.
- Other Business-
 - Lynn reports that the Women's Guild has accepted the task of creating an "All are Welcome" banner, and covering the expenses.
 - Frank Dosier of Sound and Technology reports that all volunteer spots have been filled.
 - Clarification of distribution policy for parish directory- those who had pictures taken are entitled to a free directory. Parish will have very limited number of extra copies for sale. Comment made that new parishioners should receive a copy as a welcome gift. Also noted was that many of the names listed in the directory are no longer parishioners. Possibility of on-line version?
 - Status of vacant chair positions for two ministries-Faithful Friends (?) and Virtual Job Board- still vacant
 - Search for new music minister- search and transition process has begun- not much info to share in Father Pat's absence, no changes until after Easter.
 - Discussion on creating new ministries to create/foster other groups such as ACS Parents/ Parents with Children Group/Youth/High School Group, Interfaith Group, etc. -Ashley shared that ACS is creating a Catholic Parents Group, more information to be shared at a later date. Need and director for these possible groups may spring out of the synod results.
 - Bill shared this information regarding the church building- There are noticed leaks in the ceiling of our large hall. These were NOT caused by our solar panels installed in 2015, but by a raccoon who lived below them. On 03/14/22 MB Haynes removed 30 panels to inspect the area, finding a large bare plywood area with shingles completely gone – ripped or chewed off – with the solar rack mounts intact. Once animal control finds a new home for our guest and the roof is repaired, the panels will be re-installed and go back to making electricity and donating to the Parish around \$6,000/year.

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.*