

St. Vincent de Paul Church

Parish Council Meeting

January 12, 2016 Minutes

Present: Fr. Richard Lawrence (Pastor); Joe Yingling, President (9:30); Peter LaCount, Vice President (9:30); Colleen McCahill, Secretary (9:30); Mike Jacko (9:30); Bob Betta (Facilities); Denny and Rita McMullin (Education & Enrichment); Michael Keating (Outreach and Engagement); Peggy Meyer (Social Action); Graham Yearley (Corporator); Anne Freeburger (Corporator); Matt Hill (Liturgy); Mark Palmer (Finance); Pat Ball (PA Search Committee)

Absent: John Kober (7:15) Denise Hamilton (11:45);

President Joe Yingling called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm.

We opened with a prayer from Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si*.

Pastor's Report

Christmas. Fr Lawrence reported all four Christmas liturgies went well (5:30 family, 8:30 with choir, midnight, and noon). Overall mass attendance – lower than average for the family mass and midnight mass – was greater than last year. Offertory giving was also higher than last year.

Pastoral Associate hired. The PA Search committee completed their process and offered Colleen McCahill the position; she accepted. Fr Lawrence and the Council welcomed Colleen to the staff. She begins work on January 19. The staff will begin re-ordering staff duties.

Council agenda items for 2016. Fr Lawrence proposed:

- Continued attention & parish response to Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si*.
- A parish response to the Pope's declaration of an extraordinary jubilee year. Staff and others will be encouraged to read *The Name of God is Mercy* (text of interviews with the Pope on the topic). The theme will be addressed particularly during Lent.
- The 175th anniversary of St Vincent's opening/dedication. Archbishop Lori is scheduled to say mass on November 6th, 2016. Other celebrations to be decided.
- The Archdiocesan parish planning process. St. V's parishioners were very responsive in completing the archdiocesan survey: 98% of average mass attendance. The average response rate across the Archdiocese is 20%. Rita McMullin noted a parishioner who may not have taken the survey; she will check on this.
 - Michael Keating asked: is the goal of the planning process evangelization or consolidation? Fr Lawrence responded: both issues are the Archdiocese's concern. If our current cluster stays together, we could envision a future scenario of one priest for the Basilica/St. Alphonsus and one for St. V's/Corpus Christi, with Jesuits staffing St. Ignatius (currently with two priests).
 - Joe Yingling suggested our cloud-based database (ParishSoft, required by Archdiocese) will likely have a role in archdiocesan decisions re: parish planning/organization.

Audit complete. The archdiocesan auditors provided their recommendations for changes in the administration of the parish. Fr Lawrence reviewed these recommendations with staff and met with the auditors to discuss the report. He proposed some changes that will be made and requested moderation on some items. A final report will be sent from the auditors.

Pastoral Associate Search Committee Report

Pat Ball, chair of the PA search committee, said there were many responses to the job posting, and a number of qualified applicants. Some applications are still coming in, including from as far away as Africa and the Philippines. Pat reported a good response from parishioners on the decision to hire Colleen McCahill for the position.

Some parishioners have asked for further transparency regarding the limitations of the PA role (i.e. this position won't lead to Pastoral Life Director). Joe Yingling noted it was known that these issues were the same for Chris McCullough, and parishioners were informed of this.

Michael Keating asked if the Council has any constitutional responsibility for a periodic parish-wide meeting. Joe Yingling clarified it does not, but said the constitution does call for the Council president to present an annual report. Pat Ball asked if the PA job description is still posted on the website (as it has been since November). It is not. Colleen McCahill said all parishioners are welcome to come to her with concerns.

Joe Yingling thanked Pat for her efficient, prompt, and thoughtful chairing of the Search Committee. The Council applauded her work.

Parish Council Changes

Joe Yingling and the Council welcomed Lee Krempel, who (by parishioner vote last May) will now serve as a 9:30 mass representative (Colleen is no longer eligible to serve as an elected Parish Council representative).

Volunteers were sought to be the Council secretary (Colleen's role). Anne Freeburger's offer was discussed re: whether officers needed to be from among elected representatives. Anne said she'd previously been Council secretary. Joe asked if there were any mass representatives who would volunteer; Mike Jacko's offer to serve was accepted.

Joe asked Colleen if she plans to continue with the previous pattern of giving a monthly Pastoral Associate's report to the Council. Colleen replied that for now, if she wishes to give a PA report, she'll request time on the agenda.

Ministry to Youth

Pat noted that at least one applicant for the PA position said he'd be interested, if the parish resumes plans (tabled since last summer) to hire a Youth Minister (or similar staff).

Rita McMullin noted a volunteer parishioner, John Moore, has been working with the teens. Colleen reported that Mr. Moore, very generous with his time, has just had surgery. After talking with Mr. Moore, and with Minister for Children's Faith Formation Anne Gibson, and after meeting with some of the teens, Colleen will lead the teen group for the balance of the academic year.

Fr. Lawrence said any action on hiring another new staff person needs to be deferred for the present, while we discern the scope of the Pastoral Associate's responsibilities.

Audio-Visual Audit

Michael Keating reported that John Rhodes, Director of Technical Services at MICA, came to several masses and noted our A/V needs. His preliminary suggestions include updating the ceiling speaker, adding a couple of smaller speakers along the sides of the church, and getting a new projector for the church.

Michael also noted: a) Joe Organ, Music Minister, had requested a multi-mic volume switch he could control from the choir, b) further discussion and a re-visit by John Rhodes are planned, c) to include particular attention to the camera/projection for baptisms.

Mr. Rhodes (informed that the parish is willing to pay for his services) has not yet requested any consulting fee. Michael asked Fr Lawrence to give ballpark indication of a budget for A-V improvements. After some discussion, Fr Lawrence said we can consider up to \$10,000 as available, with a hope that A-V needs would come in well below that figure. Michael said he would give another report at the February Council meeting.

Michael reminded us of the need for an "A/V Club" of parishioners trained to run the equipment. He said he'd had a limited response. Mike Jacko, Colleen McCahill and Peter La Count noted the need for standardizing both the systems and the processes.

There was some discussion about Jerome Bird's readiness to step away from A/V and other tech responsibilities. Concerns were raised that he is not entirely ready. Michael said he plans to speak personally to Jerome. Peggy Meyer noted that the parish ought to plan a ceremony to recognize Jerome for all he has done in this arena for St. Vincent's.

Church Library

Rita gave a brief report on the status of the church library. Parishioner Helen German is coming in on Thursdays to organize books in that room. Some are donations by parishioners.

Many of those present did not know anything about a planned church library. Fr Lawrence said it may have been Chris McCullough's initiative. It may have stemmed from an insurance company statement that Fr. Lawrence's previous bedroom (where his personal library occupied shelving on all four walls) would not be re-occupied as a bedroom.

Since this project is not troublesome to the parish (unless large numbers of books of questionable value are being donated, which is not known) discussion was shelved, to be taken up at another time.

Financial Report

Mark Palmer reported. The offertory for the last six months is down 2% as compared with the same period last year. Actual mass attendance is down by 8%, but per-person giving is up. November & December mass attendance is considerably down from 2014 (20% lower), although those months in 2014 had unusually high attendance.

In general, we are financially stable, with revenue greater than budgeted (due in part to some grants received for church restoration and the Resource Exchange). Our church maintenance costs are higher than budgeted, due largely to park expenses, some costly repairs and maintenance to the undercroft, and HVAC repairs. The Historic Trust Fund provided us with a grant of \$87,000 to be used for church restoration/renovation.

Rita McMullin said she hadn't known that parishioners can make directed donations to St. Vincent's Historic Trust Fund. Fr Lawrence said this is quite possible. He also noted we have a number of dedicated funds. He noted, for instance, that the auditors (see Pastor's Report) recommend we establish a \$500,000 endowment for the preservation of St. Vincent DePaul Cemetery. (Fr Lawrence's written response indicated we could seed such a fund and request donations, but \$500,000 is a considerable sum both for this parish and for the stated purpose).

Graham Yearley noted, and Mark and Fr Lawrence affirmed, our attendance, which is continuing to drop, is of concern for reasons besides just financial.

Final Notes

Graham Yearley asked about the status of the pipe and undercroft water-damage repair. Bob Betta reported the pipe work was completed by parishioner Lou Mank. There is not yet a final decision on whether to re-plaster the interior of the foundation wall in the undercroft.

Joe asked about the status of the new doors planned for the undercroft. We received monies in fall 2014 from the Johns Hopkins University *Project Connect* for this project. Bob Betta reported Great Bear construction, already paid in full, have been unresponsive to Superintendent Jim Dimmer's efforts to contact them. Jim is continuing to pursue the contractors. Bob will report further when we know more.

Mark asked about the status of the Jesuit Volunteer Corps application. Colleen said the application is complete and she expects to hear whether we are accepted as a site placement in late February. Colleen is in contact with JVC representative Katy Caldwell about our application.

We recited the Lord's Prayer together and the meeting adjourned at 9:21pm.

The next Parish council meeting is Tuesday, February 9 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen McCahill

Committees of the Parish Council

Meeting Minutes and Reports

January 2016

Outreach and Engagement Committee

The O&E committee met on January 13. No minutes or report available at this time. See O&E Chair Michael Keating's report to the Parish Council in Council minutes.

Liturgy Committee Meeting Minutes

January 09, 2016

In attendance: Matt Hill (Chair), Fr. Dick Lawrence, Colleen McCahill, Janice Bonner, Valerie Rolandelli, Geri Sicola, Anne Maura English, Audrey Rogers

Excused: Joe Organ, Peggy Meyer, Amber Brubaker, Pat Ball

Matt opened the meeting with a prayer and reflection.

1. Advent and Christmastide

We evaluated these services. The committee thought the theme worked well, the banners were striking, and Fr. Dick beautifully incorporated the theme into the Advent homilies. The Reconciliation Service was good and Lessons and Carols was well received and attended. The committee did not have the actual attendance figures for the four Christmas masses although the Children's Mass was reported to have good attendance (almost full church); 8:30 had approximately 120 people, and midnight had approximately 35-36. No one could report on Christmas Day (Fr. Dick was not yet present). In all 471 people attended Christmas Mass at St V.

NOTE: The order of Lessons at the Children's Mass should start with bell-ringing and a full church hymn. This past Christmas, the service started with a child's solo which was lost because people were still noisily greeting each other.

As in previous years, physical setup and takedown of Christmas decorations has been left to a few and most of these are aging and unable to manage all the tasks involved. The committee discussed that recruitment is made by Mass announcements or the email tree, both of which may be noted but soon forgotten.

2. Update on *Laudato Si* New Year Initiative

Janice noted that this initiative planned for the Advent and Christmas season had not been fully implemented. It was decided to print more postcards, have Fr. Dick speak about it, and continue the bulletin announcements, place a basket to receive completed postcards on the Gathering Space Table, and extend the initiative through January at a minimum.

The committee also decided to continue - at the liturgy planner's discretion - petitions around the encyclical until Lent when the focus will shift to the Year of Mercy proclaimed by Pope Francis.

3. Baptismal Ritual Survey Results

Matt noted that the committee decision last meeting was to propose no change in the ritual itself; however, there were three recommendations to address the concerns expressed by some in the survey.

- a. There should be some music played to diminish the awkwardness of the process to and from the Gathering Space which felt disruptive to many; **Joe** will be asked to do this.
- b. There be attention paid to where on the bema the parents and godparents stand so as to provide a full view of the ceremony to the congregation; **Geri Sicola** will speak to Barbara Hodnett about showing them where to stand.

- c. While no change was suggested to the ceremony at the font, it was strongly encouraged that optimum function of the camera take place so that the congregation can be part of the ceremony.

Note: Colleen offered that a AV consultation is underway to assist the parish in the use of existing technology and recommend new methods if possible

4. Repeating Bulletin Q &A about St V Practices

Anne Maura will retrieve the questions/answers printed in the past and update them for review by the committee in preparation for Ordinary Time after Eastertide.

5. Recruiting new, younger Liturgy Planners, Lectors, and Eucharistic Ministers

The committee generated a list of possible candidates. **Janice** will contact them and will ask for help if she needs it from other committee members.

Fr. Dick said Barbara Hodnett will provide another Eucharistic Minister training if candidates are identified. **Janice** will reach out to potential EMs mentioned.

6. The Liturgy Committee Manual is finalized.

7. Fr. Dick finalized the Cycle C Lectionary Readings and these were distributed on 1/10/16. **Fr. Dick** will also look up the readings for Ordinary Sundays 9-12 in Cycle B so that the Binder may be paginated and new copies made.

8. Lent/Easter Planning -- Cycle C

How to coordinate with Education and Enrichment Committee

a. Theme Reflection: Reflecting God's Mercy

The reflection will be printed in the bulletin for each Lenten Sunday with an excerpt from Pope Francis' new book *The Name of God is Mercy*. **Anne Maura** will identify these excerpts, and send to Lauren Brunelli for the bulletin and website.

b. Banner: **Janice Bonner** will develop the banner using the word *mercy* in multiple languages.

c. Assignments

(1) Ash Wednesday: (Feb 10) **Janice** will ask Jim Lochner to read Gospel.

(2) Stations of the Cross (TBA) **Audrey** will ask Lee Krempel. *Confirmed.*

(3) Reconciliation (TBA) St Ignatius or Corpus Christi. **Colleen** will confirm place/date

(4) Palm Sunday (March 20) **Matt** will ask Amber Brubaker.

(5) Tenebrae (March 23) **Audrey** will ask Graham Yearley. *Confirmed.*

(6) Holy Thursday (March 24) **Audrey** will ask Susan and Peter LaCount. *Confirmed.*

(7) Good Friday (March 25) Anne Maura English. *Confirmed.*

(8) Vigil (March 26-27) **Valerie and Colleen McCahell** will ask Jack Gohn to coordinate; Colleen McCahill will thread. There needs to be a reordering of the hours to follow the Jewish scriptures more closely and ensuring that critical readings are included.

E&E—**Colleen** will talk to Rita and Denny about Liturgy Committee plans

Matt closed the meeting at 12 noon with a prayer.

Next Meeting: Saturday, March 5 at 10 am.

Education & Enrichment Committee

The Education and Enrichment Committee has not met since the last Parish Council meeting.

The only changes since then are:

- 1) The committee has decided not to go ahead with the Lenten discussion groups on Arthur Jones's recent book *M. Scott Peck Guided Millions but Lost Himself on the Road Less Traveled*. We will probably do a film series instead on the Wednesday evenings not covered by the Liturgy Committee.
- 2) Via Fr. Lawrence's encouragement, there will be a half-day retreat on February 27th at St. Anthony's in Ellicott City.

Rita McMullin

Facilities Committee

We have not had a meeting of the Facilities Committee since the last Parish council meeting. Below is a status report on the ongoing projects. Bob Betta

Facilities Committee Update Jan. 9, 2016

- Church Gutters were cleaned out by Breckenridge painting, also he is going to seal/line the gutters with a coating to protect the metal and water-tight the seam work.
- The lower bathrooms as well as the Church main bath have been fitted with new dispensers (soap, toilet paper and hand towels) they seem to be doing pretty well.
- Four new lampposts were installed in the park. We are waiting for BGE to hook them up to power.
- We are waiting to hear back from Bear Construction concerning a time-table for the installation of the new doors for the undercroft. They have not responded to repeated calls.
- A traffic accident damaged the park fence and a brick pillar located on the corner of Fayette and Fallsway. Our risk management office has been contacted and insurance will cover most of the cost of the repairs.
- A drone inspection of all roof systems is scheduled for this Saturday (1/16). The result of this inspection will determine what actions are necessary to repair the water leaks.

Social Action Committee

Social Action committee and Peace & Justice committee have not met since our last meeting so no minutes are attached.

Thank you everyone who donated mittens, etc. I delivered 154 gifts to St. J&J.

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