

Parish Council Meeting Minutes

December 13, 2022

In attendance via Zoom: Joan Fulton, Kate Volpe, Catherine Mundy, Lindsay Dierkes, Anne Freeburger, Jim Casey, Geri Sicola, Mary Hennigan, Peggy Shouse, Liz Hasan, Jack Schmidt, Mark Palmer, Aidan Helie, Ray Heil, Rita McMullin, Denny McMullin, Craig Thornton, and Fr. Ray Chase

Absent: Colleen McCahill, Graham Yearley, John Moore

Geri Sicola opened the meeting with a prayer.

Council approved last month's minutes.

Committee and Other Updates

Pastor: Fr. Ray informed the council that plans to replace the louvers on the bell tower are continuing to move ahead. At the Historical Trust meeting, it was recommended that another firm look at the problem in order for us to compare the current cost proposal. The Board of the Trust agreed to fund a significant portion of the anticipated expense for the restoration of the louvers in the bell tower. With this grant from the Trust plus parish funds, we expect to be able to pay for this project in full.

Fr. Ray also shared that the leaks in the roof pose significant enough challenges that it, too, will need to be replaced soon. This week's newsletter will include a note about last minute donations and invite donors to stipulate their gifts for that purpose or for the louvers; these contributions require no diocesan tax, thus allowing us more with which to do what we need.

Facilities: Fr. Ray says there has been confusion about who actually calls the meeting and so there has not been one lately, but that should get cleared up soon. Denny McMullin shared that they are supposed to be meeting quarterly, and that they will resume soon.

Church Reform: Jim Casey notified council that the committee needs to appoint a committee member to appear in front of council (one who is not currently a council representative). See appendix for specific committee meeting notes.

Social Action: Ray Heil announced that annual food preparation for Christmas is coming up and they are looking for volunteers for Monday 19th at 9:00am. Anyone who wants to help can come. He also added that the men's clothing service had a

large contingent of clients; they are short of coats as well as underwear and t-shirts, especially in Medium.

Lindsay Dierkes received an email about Christmas donations for Afghan refugee children and wondered to whom to direct it; Mary Hennigan offered to receive it on behalf of Peggy Cronyn. Ray H. shared that the Green Team sponsored a discussion yesterday on the film *The Letter* about Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. He encourages everyone to view it—a link to the free viewing is in the weekly newsletter. See appendix for specific committee meeting's minutes. See appendix also for specific **Peace & Justice** sub-committee meeting's minutes.

Education & Enrichment: No updates

Finance: No updates

Liturgy: Catherine Mundy shared that Anne Maura English has taken over as head of the Liturgy Committee and should be the regular representative.

Committee Inclusion & Reporting: Geri plans to invite and schedule times for committees to come and talk to/with, specifically about how we interact together. Lindsay queried if we have a parish calendar to track committee meetings and offered to begin drafting one.

Finding Our Why:

Mary Hennigan introduced the representatives from the small group sessions who have drafted the vision statement as a cumulative effort of multiple small groups and comments from the wider parish community.

Kate Volpe read the newly revised vision statement (below in bold), and after some reflection time, council considered Geri's following questions:

**Rooted in Christ,
we are a radically inclusive community,
radiating God's love and compassion in Baltimore and beyond,
challenging and nurturing every person
to embrace and celebrate everyone's divine potential.**

Affirmations of the new statement?

- Jim Casey shared he really enjoys the "inclusivity" piece.
- Peggy Shouse enjoys the "radically inclusive" piece because of the double meanings of "radical" and how they both apply to our situation. Fr. Ray shared Peggy's sentiment and its connection to the message of "radical inclusion" coming from the larger church.

- Mark Palmer really appreciates the new introduction and the change from St. Vincent. He also likes the ending of “divine potential.” Fr. Ray agreed that the “rooted in Christ” was a necessary change.
- Ray H. appreciates the “root” and “radical” poetic connection and the alliteration within the statement.
- Liz Hasan loves that Baltimore was added from someone’s suggestion—it is a geographic root, too. Fr. Ray was also pleased by this.

Does the statement clearly and fully describe how we will look and be 7-10 years from now?

- Jim says not really, but he sees this as aspirational; the purpose of stage 3 of FOY is where we clarify and describe. Geri S. responded that we do want to be aspirational, but not so vague or beyond our reach; rather, something that we could see happen in 7-10 years.

What do we think is missing or not clear?

- Several members suggested changing the word "their" to “everyone's” for the following reasons:
 1. They believed the use of the word "their" was not grammatically correct or at least some would see it that way
 2. The use of the "their" in this context might suggest that it doesn't apply to all of us.

The drafting group explained that the use of the word "their" in this context is a familiar usage and made a case for keeping.

The Council approved the word change to "everyone's".

*Note: Upon further discussion that took place **after** the Council’s meeting, a quorum decided by email to keep the original phrasing of “their”. The term was deemed acceptable by relaxed grammatical standards and particularly appropriate when “every person” includes those who do not use traditional personal pronouns. The choice of “their” is a small step toward our professed goal of radical inclusivity.*

- Rita saw “radical” as interesting since we are white and old: we are not currently radical. Craig shared that we do need to reach out for diversity and draw more people in.
- Geri would like “growing” to be part of the statement as it seems more than a strategic plan point. Mark responded that he sees growth as a means to an end, and that we don’t absolutely need it here, but rather in the road map in order to move us to the vision. Catherine seconded this. Geri queried if we are even meant to be bigger and therefore more sustainable, or, if it’s not part of our vision, why do we plan for it? Catherine responded that there may be more objectives that we desire, but the vision statement is not the place for them. Fr. Ray added that if we work toward this vision, we will grow—it is the means to an end (an invert of what Mark said). If we move in

the direction of finding out ways to live this vision, this will by its very nature cause us to grow.

Once all questions and comments were shared, Council was happy to move forward with this version of the vision statement.

The FOY Phase 2 committee will write a commentary and prepare a release of the statement for the parish. Catherine strongly suggested that there needs to be a process of ownership from each member of the parish before moving on to the planning stage—it needs to be part of our heart, memorized, public, and familiar to everyone. Mary responded that this will be taken up by the committee and is part of the next steps; a communications plan will be formed. Fr. Ray suggested Christmas liturgy as a wonderful opportunity to present this—it is the birthing of a baby, metaphorically.

What do we do next to make this a reality?

Geri asked about a timeline for the “road map” of the vision statement. When would we like this to be done? Fr. Ray suggested Pentecost (to match liturgically), allowing Lent and Easter as good times for planning. Mary suggested the council needs a half day retreat to hash out what exactly “this” is, in order to manage expectations and gain consensus before beginning working committees of stage 3. She reminded us that we also may need to work around elections with changing members. Geri added having new members on this may be disruptive. Jim challenged that a tight schedule may be counterproductive because of the “exhaustion” of the whole church. Mark agreed, and that the congregation needs time to absorb before getting busy again. In light of this suggestion, Peggy suggested Advent as a good time for planning and the process; this gives time to incorporate new members. Lindsay added her concern that asking someone to work on this during Lent may conflict with their ability to observe Lent.

Jim supported Peggy’s suggestion; it would mean it comes after the Bishops’ synodal meeting in Rome and whatever comes out of that. Fr. Ray suggested an ad hoc committee to slowly move the community forward so that it’s not a massive change but an ongoing, gentle process. Mary again asserted that the half day retreat is necessary, that it must be in person, and that there is a planning committee to prepare for the retreat about the Stage 3. Geri agreed that Council needed a retreat anyway, and some of this could be addressed there. Council needs to take ownership of the planning process before it’s given to a planning group/ad hoc committee. Denny expressed a concern that we engage people outside of the same groups usually involved and invite them into the process of stage 3. Mary and Geri assured him that is what Council needs to discuss at the planning/pre-planning sessions: how we put a strategic planning group together is part of the concern. Geri ends that she will propose dates for a retreat session in the new year.

Parishioner Feedback:

Peggy at the 6:00 Mass got the comment that the parish council is doing an excellent job. (Well, hooray!)

Fr. Ray suggested a monthly update of council news in the newsletter—if people know what's going on, they may have more to comment/share.

Mary shared that she and Marianne Reichelt were at 6:00 Mass and were impressed at how involved the parishioners were. She shared the example of Fr. Ray welcoming some new members at one service, and how it was such a wonderful welcoming that she would like to see it at the 10:00. Also, she suggested that council members rotate who shows up at the 6 o'clock Mass.

Craig shared he will be gone for two weeks to visit his mom in LA whose surgery did not go as well as desired.

Craig offered closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Committee on Church Reform

November 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Present: Pat Ball, Fr. Ray Chase, Amber Hendricks, Gerry Fialkowski, Sue Rovnak, Ray Heil, Colleen McCahill, Jim Casey

1. Jim opened the meeting with a prayer.
2. The Discerning Deacons event at St. Vincent's on September 24 2022 was a success. Pat Ball thanked everyone who helped out. The Discerning Deacons are continuing their efforts. Their activities can be found on their web site: discerningdeacons.org. Pat encouraged all who are interested to sign up on their website for their newsletter. Of particular interest is an event: Discerning Deacons responds to the Worldwide Synod December 14 7:00-9:00 PM and December 15 12:00-2:00 PM.
3. Fr. Chase asked committee members to participate in a meeting on possible responses to the Archdiocesan Synod Synthesis. There was a short turnaround on the dates. (we need to fill in the dates.) There was some confusion because people thought that the Archdiocesan Synod Synthesis was superseded by the USCCB Synod Synthesis. Fr. Chase said the idea was to come up with practical efforts to fulfill the ideas expressed in the Archdiocesan Synod Synthesis.
4. There have been no meetings concerning the Archdiocesan Urban Focus on Baltimore since the last Committee on Church Reform meeting. Bishop Lewendowski and a team have begun visiting individual parishes to assess their strengths and their needs. These are day long visits. St. Vincent's expects a visit in early 2023. There was a frank discussion of the sustainability of many of the parishes in Baltimore City. Fr. Chase noted that some parishes have few people who live within parish boundaries attending mass. The people attending mass are legacy parishioners who care about the parish but no longer live nearby. Colleen mentioned the importance of making good use of church buildings which are no longer used by parishes. This is important to the local communities. Ray Heil shared an idea he has had to build affordable housing incorporating some of the buildings at St. Vincent's. Gerry Fialkowski noted that as a committee we were straying from our mission. There was general agreement that the committee should stick to church reform.
5. Gerry Fialkowski announced breaking news that the Maryland Attorney General's Office intended to release its report on sex abuse in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.
6. Audrey Rogers has asked this committee if any members wish to collaborate with her on a response to the recently released Document for the Continental Stage of the Synod. This document begins phase II of the world-wide synod. Everyone is invited to submit comments. The meeting of the St. Vincent's group is scheduled for December 10, 2022 from 10:00 AM – Noon via zoom.
7. The next scheduled meeting is set for January 16 at 7:00 PM via Zoom.
8. We closed with a prayer.

Minutes for the Social Action Committee Meeting

November 21, 2022

Attendees on zoom: Joe and Peggy Cronyn, Maureen Daly, Pat Frascati, Peggy Meyer, Jack Schmidt, and Kathy Younkin.

Next meeting date: January 23, 2023, 10:00am

The meeting started at 10:05am. Peggy M facilitated, opened with a prayer by Rabbi Harold Kushner, and acknowledged the Piscataway tribe's primary ownership of the land on which St. Vincent's is built.

Breaking Bread with the Hungry: Jack reported that we held the meals in the undercroft on November 11 and 18. These were the first times since March 2020. Instead of a buffet-style meal service, we are delivering the meals to our guests once they are seated. The procedure seems to be working well. The number of guests ranged from 70 to 80, which is below the number we were serving at our picnics (100 – 120) but we believe the numbers will increase. We have had a sufficient number of volunteers (approximately 15) so far to cover escorts to the tables (2), servers plating the food (4 or 5), food deliverers (2), drink servers (2), distributing lunch bags (1 or 2), and ad-hoc runners and facilitators (2 or 3). We now breakdown the tables, store the chairs, sweep, and mop the floors. Most of our volunteers are St. Vincent's parishioners with several of the drivers from Our Lady of the Fields also staying. Peggy M keeps a running list of volunteers' availability if they respond to her request. If the number of volunteers starts to lag, Peggy M will request help in the enewsletter.

Volunteers: Maureen stated that she has heard that some parishioners have tried to volunteer for activities but have been turned down. Peggy M responded that "she hasn't turned away volunteers from the parish for inside meals pre covid and now that we are back inside she hasn't." In fact, when a new parishioner notes an interest in the Social Action Committee on his/her registration form and the office lets her know, Peggy M contacts the person and invites him/her to attend the meetings and participate in activities.

Later in the meeting, Peggy C said she discouraged a potential volunteer for the Afghan family program because the person works full time, and the program really needs daytime volunteers. Furthermore, there is a process that the International Rescue Committee (IRC) requires potential volunteers to go through involving background checks and confidentiality agreements. The same is true of TRE volunteers who are needed during the day.

City Springs Elementary/Middle School: Joe said that things are going well, and he is getting positive feedback from the volunteers. The school is closed on Wednesday for Thanksgiving. He is trying to schedule a professional development lunch in December. In early December, there will be a book distribution by Donna Dannels and on

December 19, Joe and the volunteers are going to deliver 50 Christmas dinner packages to City Springs' families in need. Peggy M said the mitten tree should be set up by Friday November 25.

Monday Food Program: Peggy M said that the program run by Casey Driscoll and Hurle Waldman has been going well. In addition to our regular residential clients, we continue to distribute special bags (delivered by Our Lady of the Fields) to those living on the street.

Green Team: Kathy stated that the green team is recommending in this week's enewsletter that parishioners watch Pope Francis's movie The Letter, a film which parallels his Encyclical Laudato Si then join the Green Team 7:30 pm, on December 12, to discuss the film on zoom. Both Kathy and Peggy M have seen it and said it was excellent.

Peggy M mentioned that there had been several good webinars this month on zero waste, zero emissions and updated recycling procedures for Baltimore City. Shashawnda from South Baltimore Community Land Trust participated in one of those and was excellent. Peggy M is seeking 300 flyers with the updated recycling procedures and 300 recycled bags from the city but was told she probably would receive less. She expects to receive them in 2 to 3 weeks. She also said the new procedures for plastic recyclables lean to things with a narrow neck and require that all recyclables be dry to avoid contamination. Lids made of the same material as the jar or bottle that is recyclable should be left on.

Seafarers' Christmas Boxes: Kathy reported that there is some confusion about which type of boxes to use for the program. Usually, cardboard shoe boxes are used. However, this year tote bags and/or plastic storage boxes are being considered. It was pointed out that the plastic boxes could be used for other things once the contents are used. Kathy will inform the parish through the enewsletter once a decision is made. The boxes will be collected on December 11 and 18. Kathy will not be available at church to collect on December 11. However, the e-newsletter will direct participants to drop them off in the rectory dining room instead of the gathering space.

Men's Program: Jack reported that we are collecting more clothing and items than we have room to store them. This has resulted in many bags being donated to Goodwill or Helping Up Mission. He noted that we do not want to discourage donors from giving but we ask donors to be aware of seasonal demands and not donate summer items during the winter. We continue to serve 25 to 30 men on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month and the program has been going well. He noted that Helping Up Mission is not collecting women's clothing until January 1, 2023. Peggy M said that we provide some clothing on Friday nights when there is a dire need, but we have not had our regular handouts in order to avoid large gatherings in respect of Covid. Deacon Ed has distributed items from his car.

Peace and Justice Subcommittee: Peggy M suggested that we send the minutes from next Monday's (November 28) Peace and Justice meeting. Maureen raised several quick issues. She thanked St. Vincent's parishioners who attended the City Council meeting on inclusionary housing on November 17. In response to a question from Joe, she said there were 22 advocates who provided testimony from several strong members of the inclusionary housing coalition (ACLU, NAACP, CPHA SEIU and RUM). She thinks that Odette Ramos believes she has the votes to pass the legislation. Peggy M and Maureen asked the committee to email the Mayor's office, the City Council President, and Councilman Eric Costello (who apparently opposes the bill) in support of bill 22-0195. The bill will be taken up again for discussion and a vote on December 12. Peggy M also suggested that Maureen mention to Odette Ramos that it is very difficult to hear the council members when they are speaking. In addition to horrible acoustics, many members do not use the microphones properly and their comments are not heard by the audience. Peggy M mentioned that that has happened every time she has been at a Council meeting.

Maureen also wanted to make the committee aware that the Peace and Justice subcommittee does not have a representative in the project areas of Limay and BRIDGEMD. She mentioned that Limay was seeking funds. She also stated that it is important to maintain a relationship with BRIDGEMD since that is really the only ecumenical activity that St. Vincent's has.

The Resource Exchange (TRE): Peggy C stated that the craft fair was quite successful with approximately \$2,500 raised for Emergency Services. She thanked all of the crafters and Pat thanked Peggy C for providing excellent leadership.

Peggy C stated that TRE has been going through an unpleasant period during the last several months that has never been seen in the 11 years of the program's success. Health Care for the Homeless has replaced a contact person who was responsible for many problems and there have been additional concerns with the moving company. She said there will be only 3 move days in December but 4 in January reflecting a normal month.

Peggy C mentioned that Broadmead has reinstated its "barn sales" but is not allowing the public to participate. However, Joe worked extremely hard to talk a contact person into letting TRE collect furniture and items on an individual basis. Thank you, Joe! She said that TRE's balance is about \$18,000 and that TRE spends about \$35,000 each year. She expects Mary Catherine Bunting's donation in the near future and wants to hold off another donor's gift until mid-year. Peggy C noted that storage costs have skyrocketed.

Afghan families: Peggy C believes that there should be more oversight involved with St. Vincent's team and the Afghan families, but no solution seems available. She said that the transition has been really hard for the Afghan family especially since the IRC has not been very helpful. Five of the six family members are taking English as a

Second Language (ESL) classes, but the father is having the most problems despite having an Amazon Fire and appropriate software. This is very difficult because he is the wage-earner making \$14 per hour packing vegetables and needs more to support his family of six. Peggy C and Joe have been instrumental in getting dental help for the mother, Azziza, by convincing their own dentist to help on a pro-bono basis. Once the initial work was done, Azziza required additional work that is being handled pro-bono by a dental specialist that speaks Azziza's language. While Azziza is at the dentist, Joe babysits the 2 youngest children. Peggy C and Joe have become very close to the family and the whole family calls them "mom and dad."

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ): Peggy M mentioned that she received some feedback about voting for recommended election issues but otherwise there was not much contact.

We Have a Dream: A World Without Racism: Peggy M stated that the group is not meeting in December, but she wants participants to catch up on some of the wonderful recordings that were recommended in the previous month. The January 18, 2023, meeting is going to be held at church to view the video of the conversation with Father Bryan Massingale and Robert Jones entitled "White Supremacy and American Christianity." There will be soup and bread served before the video. Those interested in bringing soup or bread should contact Rita McMullin. Peggy M and Skipp Sanders intend to invite other parishes.

2023 Josephite African-American History and Heritage Calendar: Previously, Maureen had suggested to Colleen and Father that St. Vincent's should consider purchasing this calendar. The publishers allow other parishes to adapt the calendar to reflect their own events. There are discounts for larger orders. Peggy M agreed it was a great idea.

The meeting ended at 11:00am.
Respectfully submitted,
Jack Schmidt

Minutes for Peace and Justice Committee Meeting

November 28, 2022

A video meeting using Zoom began at 7:05pm. Attending: Mary Catherine Bunting, Chuck Frascati, Peggy Meyer, Dennis Moore, Jack Schmidt, and Giuliana Valencia-Banks (Jules). Jules facilitated and opened with a prayer by Reverend Samuel F. Pugh. Next meeting: January 30, 2023, 7:00pm. Barbara Bowles will facilitate.

We Have a Dream: A World Without Racism: Peggy said that it was determined at the November meeting to skip the meeting in December and encourage members to view the videos that had been recommended at the October meeting. The January 18, 2023, meeting will be held at 7:00pm at St. V's to view the conversation between Father Bryan Massingale and Robert Jones entitled "White Supremacy and American Christianity." Soup and bread will be served before the video and anyone wishing to provide soup or bread should contact Rita McMullin. Discussion will follow the video. January 25 is the alternative date should a weather problem occur on January 18.

Immigration: Jules said that there were favorable announcements about Temporary Protected Status (TPS) immigrants. Those with TPS designations from 18 countries (with El Salvador, Honduras, and Burma being the most critical right now) will be able to renew their TPS. They will be able to have work permits and travel for the next 18 months. However, these renewals do not provide a path to a green card or citizenship. Maryland has quite a few TPS immigrants from Honduras and El Salvador with Jules citing Sacred Heart parish in Glyndon having about 200 TPS families. She also recalled that when she worked at the Esperanza Center, they had about 350 clients from those countries. She said that these designations are being challenged in various courts and we should wait to see what happens. There has also been a change in how immigrants from Venezuela are being handled. The large number from Venezuela has overwhelmed the system. The immigrants will be allowed to enter the country if they have a relative or other sponsor who are financially responsible for them. While these families seek to find a sponsor, the backlog at the border continues to grow. Some can apply for asylum status, but that system is also very backed up. Jules also mentioned that, given the election results, the Afghan Adjustment Act (HR8185/S4787) may not be passed. This bill would allow Afghans who were brought to safety by the U.S. military to apply for lasting protection to stay in the U.S. long-term. Jules said that it is important to watch the actions of various courts and even the Supreme Court regarding immigration issues. States like Texas and Louisiana sue over everything. Locally, Jules stated that the Latino Racial Justice Circle is beginning to raise funds for private legal support for immigrant families. They are enlisting the help of two firms who will work at near pro-bono rates. She cited the fact that if \$10,000 could be raised, that amount would help 3 families whereas that amount would normally only help one family. Jules will send out the link once the program is ready.

Juneteenth Celebration (June 19): Dennis stated that this year's celebration was the first one that Slow Food Baltimore participated in, but he anticipated that it will probably do so next year as well.

Slow Food Baltimore: Dennis mentioned the "Soupluck" meeting held on November 20 at the Ivy Bookshop where soup, bread, cornbread, cider, and other refreshments were offered. This gathering was to celebrate the partnership between the groups whereby the Ivy Bookshop will be hosting book discussions over potluck meals every other month at 12 noon on the third Sunday in the month. The book of the month for January is *Grist, a Practical Guide to Cooking Grains, Beans, Seeds, and Legumes* by Abra Berens, Lucy Engelman, and E.E. Berger. Dennis mentioned that if anyone is interested in upcoming events, please see the website at www.slowfoodbaltimore.com.

Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ): Peggy reported receiving feedback on 2 election issues that SURJ had been following closely. SURJ supported turning over control of the Baltimore City Police Department (BCPD) to the city from the state and opposed the petition for term limits in the city. Voters approved the takeover of the BCPD but also approved term limits.

St. Vincent's Cemetery: Chuck reported that Maureen Daly and he volunteered at the cemetery's booth during the Irish Festival. The cemetery committee was pleased with the turnout. There was no further discussion about finances for the possible historic panels.

Peace Walk: Peggy mentioned that there was a peace walk tonight at 5:30pm at St. Edwards, 901 Poplar Grove. She thought of changing the date for tonight's meeting but there was not enough time. She hoped that Bishop Lewandowski's office will provide more notice before the next peace walks. Peggy, Mary Laukaitis, and Jack attended the September 27 peace walk at St. Ambrose's. The October peace walk at the Basilica was on October 19, the same date as *We Have a Dream*. Peggy said that usually there are about 100 or more participants from many different parishes on the walks.

Beyond the Boundaries (BtB): Chuck said that BtB continues to meet twice a week. Recent activity has centered on the inclusionary housing bill at City Council, sponsored by Odette Ramos. Chuck, Peggy, Maureen, Dennis, Mary Laukaitis, and Jack attended the hearing on November 17. He said that BtB was grateful for the support and for the additional written testimony supplied by persons who were unable to attend. He believes that Odette has the votes to pass the legislation. Next steps involve a negotiating session on December 5 where the number of non-Council attendees is limited. BtB hopes to get at least Matt Hill and Barbara Samuels into the meeting. There will be another meeting on December 12, when the bill may be voted on. Chuck also mentioned the importance of having a citizens' oversight group to monitor its implementation if the law is approved. Peggy asked that the committee write to Mayor Scott, City Council President Nick Mosby, and Councilman Eric Costello (who reportedly opposes the bill) to ask for their support. It was pointed out that St. Vincent's is in district 12 with Robert Stokes, Sr. as Councilman.

Pax Christi: Chuck reported that the annual Peace Awards dinner was a success. Due to the small number of respondents planning to attend in person (36), the ceremony was held via Zoom. He believes that Pax Christ may have to rethink the annual Peace Awards dinner because the number of attendees has recently been very small when, at one time, there were more than 100 attendees. Chuck mentioned that the Advent Prayer Service would be held on December 11 from 3:30 – 5:00pm at St. Vincent's. The guest speaker is Frida Berrigan. Chuck Michaels usually asks Mary Catherine and Pat Frascati to provide refreshments.

City Springs: Peggy stated that Joe Cronyn, who heads up the tutoring program for St. Vincent's volunteers, has arranged for a development luncheon on December 6. She said that we have several new volunteers this year such as Gerry and Tom Fialkowski and Denny McMullin.

Breaking Bread with the Hungry: Jack reported that we have held dinners in the undercroft on November 11, 18, and 25, the first indoor meals since March 2020. Our new procedure of serving meals instead of a dual buffet line is working. We have had weekly crowds of 60 to 80, which is smaller than our picnics. We believe the numbers will increase. So far, our number of volunteers has been sufficient. Peggy stated that our concern over Covid led us to place two tables together lengthwise so that our guests are 6' apart when facing each other. We believe the configuration keeps our guests safe and provides us with more room to work. Mary Catherine remarked that it is noticeably quieter. Peggy also reminded us that we now must break down tables, stack chairs, sweep and wash the floors.

Afghan family: Peggy and Joe Cronyn have been very active with the family and have become close to them. They were instrumental in getting their own dentist to do extensive pro-bono work on Azziza, the mother. That dentist also enlisted a dental specialist to do additional work pro-bono. Jules said that she regularly contacts Peggy and Joe to share things that she sees in her job. One of those items was the Center for Family Success where Azziza is taking a daily class in English as a Second Language (ESL) and a class in computer literacy. The two youngest are receiving pre-K training at the same place.

6 Black Candidates for Sainthood: Mary Catherine said that there was a mass on November 1 at St. Ann's to promote their cause with Bishop Ricard presiding. The choirs from St. Ann's, St. Wenceslaus, and St. Francis Xavier combined to provide excellent music especially with an upbeat recessional hymn. Peggy, Mary Catherine, Gerry & Tom and Rita & Denny attended. Mary Catherine also stated that Ralph Moore (of the Racial Justice Circle) along with Delores, would like to go to Rome to present the 1,000 signed letters seeking immediate sainthood to Pope Francis. He is in the process of raising money for travel. Chuck said that Pax Christi is supporting Ralph's efforts. Ralph has also recently talked to the National Catholic Reporter to promote the cause. Peggy said that she talked to Colleen about the 6 portraits. Colleen wants to display each on a one-per-month basis, but the exact procedure has not been determined yet.

BRIDGEMD: Peggy mentioned that Maureen is still looking for someone to represent St. Vincent's with BRIDGEMD as she steps down.

Limay: Peggy also mentioned that Maureen is still looking for someone to represent St. Vincent's with Limay as she steps down.

Social Ministry Convocation: It is scheduled for February 25, 2023, from 9am to 3pm at Mercy High School. Dr. Marlon Tilghman (co-chair of BRIDGEMD) is the keynote speaker.

Maryland Catholic Labor Network (MCLN): (Editorial research) The national network has been supporting the U.S. Senate cafeteria workers for more than a year. As of October 28, the workers (cooks, cashiers, dishwashers, and others) now have their first union contract which has a living wage (starting at \$20/hour) and affordable family health care. One worker stated that his health care went from \$120/week to \$7/week without a deductible. The union contract also gives workers a grievance procedure to settle future disputes, paid time off to vote, immigration protections and more.

Mitten Tree: Peggy said that the mitten tree has been set up in the gathering space and encouraged the committee to participate.

The Loyola School: This was previously the Loyola Early Learning Center which serves low-income children from preschool to K – 4 grades. Jules asked if we had thought about giving to this school. Mary Catherine suggested that the school is likely the beneficiary of donations from St. Ignatius Church.

New Business:

Jack asked if the South African Higher Education Fund was still providing support for students. The answer was yes, and it would still do so for several more years. Jack wanted to recommend that the money budgeted for that program should be designated to the Racial Equity Fund after the student support stopped. Jack also recommended that parishioners, Ann and Robin Whitlock, be invited to the next Peace and Justice meeting to tell us about their foundation and work among the children of Guatemala. Ann has recently returned from there. The committee approved the invitation and Jack will talk to Ann and Robin.

The meeting ended at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jack Schmidt