

Saint Luke Parish Pastoral Advisory Council

Minutes from the October 21, 2008 Meeting

Present - Msgr. Andrew Varga, Jeff Ford (Chair), Bill Valieant, Missey Moe-Cook, Grace Shay, Paul Bowlin, Sr. Maureen Fleming, Mary Hanrahan

Not Present - Steve Violette, Sharon Carpenter, John Revay, Katie Garvey

The meeting was called to order at 7:30. We opened with a prayer by Jeff Ford.

Minutes from the previous meeting were distributed and reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was put forth, seconded and approved.

Blessing of the Gathering Space

- The committee shared their experiences of the blessing of the Gathering Space that took place on Sunday, October 19th. There were many comments on what a wonderful event it was. Volunteers were thanked. There was some discussion about the (lack of) attendance and why this was the case.
- It was requested that we put Bishop Lori's homily on the website.

Reports

Pastor's Update

Stewardship

- Msgr. Andy reported that as a result of the financial stewardship appeal that our parish committed to increase our weekly donations by more than \$3000.
- Msgr. Andy also reported a "dramatic" increase in the use of credit cards as a result of our now accepting all four major credit cards
- It is difficult to identify a particular segment of "new givers" as some of the pledges could be from parishioners who were formerly giving cash anonymously (i.e. not using envelopes)
- Finally, there will need to be an annual reminder at the same time next year

Construction/CO/Sidewalk

- We currently do not have a Certificate of Occupancy. This is because of our existing sidewalk at the perimeter of the church property. While the sidewalk was not involved in the renovations, the Town of Westport is able to require that the sidewalk be brought in compliance with town code. Even though representatives of our parish have appealed to Town Hall exhaustively, it must be widened to 5 feet to meet the town standard. We are choosing to pave the sidewalk with asphalt, the least expensive surface. It is expected that this will cost \$30,000 to \$35,000.

Capital Campaign Update

- Recently two families agreed to donate the stained glass panels to complete the large entry way windows

St. Augustine Medal of Service

- Our parishioner, Daisy McCann, is our nominee for the St. Augustine Medal of Service. She will be honored for her many years of service to our parish on Saturday, October 25th.

Ministry Minute

Bereavement Ministry

- Sr. Maureen Fleming joined the PAC meeting to inform us about the Bereavement Ministry. This ministry provides a wonderful, empathetic service for families at the time of the death of a loved one. They can perform a variety of services from counseling to organizing a reception in our Community Room. The group is made up of: ten adult acolytes, three home visitors and twenty-five hosts/hostesses.
- We agreed that this information should be shared in the bulletin.

Harvest Fair

- Sr. Maureen also informed us of the change in the Christmas Fair/Gala. The event has been split into two separate events; a Harvest Fair with vendors and a Christmas Gala. The Harvest Fair will take place on November 14th, 15th and 16th. The Gala will be December 6th.

Family Life

Paul Bowlin reports that they are focusing on engaging families who are a part of Religious Formation. Initially, he is contacting the Fast Track families (grades 5-8) to ask for assistance with the family coffee hours. For the October 5th coffee hour, he had the assistance of five families. He also found a family who will host a November family movie night.

Communication

Email

- Msgr. Andy discussed the use of email blast to request a valid email from parishioners who do not have an email address on file with us. Cathy Zappi recommended that we follow up the email with a phone call from a member of the PAC.

Newcomers/Realtor Letter

- Mary Hanrahan mentioned that she met with Tim Weiss and they had discussed the need for a letter to be handed out to people who have recently moved to the Westport community. She will follow up with Msgr. Andy to incorporate his ideas into the letter.
- Mary also mentioned that Tim Weiss feels strongly that we get the "Shepherd" program going as soon as possible. The program will be a way to encourage new parishioners to feel comfortable with and become an active member of our parish.

Community Service Fair

Jean Fredricks reported that she felt the event went very well and all organizations would like to return. Briefly, Jean recalled that we received more than 15 volunteers for 'in parish' activities, six volunteers for Caroline House and more than 40 people signed up to attend the Crate and Barrel/Caroline House fundraiser. We are considering having the same event in the spring in order to encourage further sign ups, especially for those who are involved in the school calendar. Jean will summarize the success of the Fair for the bulletin.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Prayer Service

- Will take place at St. Luke's on Sunday, November 23rd at 4:00 pm.
- Open House will take place at 3:15 pm.
- We are hosting this Interfaith event and the reception that will follow.
- The group suggested that a voice mail from Msgr. Andy to the members of the parish would be welcomed.

Parish Covenant

- We agreed that an executive summary of the Parish Covenant would be helpful
- All members of the PAC are encouraged to summarize/synthesize/boil down the covenant and send it to Jeff Ford. In turn, Msgr. Andy and Jeff will use the responses to update the Covenant.
- Suggestions were made to re-publish the Covenant for the parish

Secretary for Next Meeting: Paul Bowlin