



ST. PAUL'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting – September 20, 2020

Elected Members Present: Christine Forbes, Patricia Davies, Pam Vogt, Deborah Harrison, Thomas Mulroy, Ross Terranova, Peter Adams and Rosa Gonzalez

Elected Members Absent: Kevin Green

Ex-Officio Members Present: Fr. Sean Harlow, O. Carm., Deacon Carl Locatelli and Deacon Michael McCabe

Recording Secretary: Deborah Botti

Ex-Officio Members Absent: None

Others Present: Maxine Martin

The meeting began with prayer at 6:50 p.m.

Minutes of the meeting of August 10 were accepted.

The following updates were given:

Ministry Reports:

Administration & Stewardship:

Tabled until the Reopening Committee report.

Education & Faith Formation:

- This year, 153 children are registered for Religious Education, which reflects that **all** of the families that could sign up did. The total enrollment is down only because of those who were recently confirmed.
- For the First Eucharist and Confirmation classes to meet safely onsite and adhere to the Archdiocese's mandates, volunteers are needed – ideally eight (right now, there's only one or two) so that they only have to serve every other week. There are new protocols for arrival, dismissal and bathroom use – as well procedures to follow in the event a child becomes ill. The Religious Education coordinator is looking to the Parish Council for help in finding volunteers.
- Distribution of textbooks begins this week. Books will be labeled with the students' names and arranged in the hall for pick up at the families' convenience.

- A Zoom catechists' meeting is scheduled for September 23.
- The Book Club is moving forward thanks to Zoom. Discussion about the next selection, "Amazed by God's Grace" by Larry Oney, begins September 29.
- The Discernment Group continues to study social justice issues and to provide faith-based educational links.

Christian Services:

- The application has been submitted to the Food Bank. It could potentially provide significant – although not total - assistance for the holiday baskets and/or food pantry. Some items are free; others are 16 cents per pound. Orders can be placed on line prior to pickup.
- Deacon Michael had a productive meeting with Therese Quinn, coordinator of the Giving Tree. Last year, St. Paul's parishioners purchased Christmas gifts for 250 children. With so much up in the air – and no physical tree – it was decided that 50 angel tags will be accepted from St. Simon Stock this year. It's best to start small, keeping in mind that there could also be need among parishioners whose financial status has been impacted negatively by the pandemic.
- A desire to volunteer has been expressed through the Discernment Group – and not just at St. Paul's. In the past, it's been made known through the bulletin, for example, when Hospice was offering volunteer training. This year, there probably will be need for assistance with the Warming Station, which is slated to move to Temple Sinai. There is a large space at the temple that will allow for social distancing – although some neighbors might be less-than-happy with the new location.
 - It was suggested that a list of volunteer opportunities to be published in the bulletin and on the website, either independently or in conjunction with the Social Justice blurb.
 - Organizations can occasionally be featured with its volunteer needs explained.

Social Activities:

Nothing to report.

Worship & Spiritual Life:

- The Youth Ministry continues to meet via Zoom every Thursday evening; however, it is exploring how outdoor activities might be safely incorporated so that the kids have the opportunity to see each other in person.
- Deacon Michael has reached out to the lectors to learn who might be interested in reading at Mass again. One lector would do both readings.
- A new fiscal year has begun, and our bookkeeper brought up the raffle that was started in January, but not completed. The consensus was rather than let it sit until the fundraiser can safely be resumed, the number of tickets sold should be determined. If the number is low, money can be returned. If enough tickets were sold to cover the prizes, then a drawing could be held.

Art & Environment:

Dovetails with the Reopening Subcommittee.

Chairperson's Report - Christine Forbes:

- There was a big shift this week with entry through the East Wing rather than through the Main Church. It seems more organized, and it's easier to usher people to their seats, but there was concern raised about the many extra steps for some of the older volunteers.
- It's nice to hear music again. And the Gloria and Creed have been added, so there is more vocalization. Is this a concern? The flip side is how many more restrictions, such as a request to use a soft voice during community prayer, can be imposed?
- About 30 people attended on Saturday. The Sunday Mass hit the maximum and a few people were turned away.

Vicar's Report – Fr. Sean Harlow:

- First Eucharist is Saturday. Maybe that will translate into a few more people coming to Mass from that point forward.
- The MERV filters were dropped off. Julio will be installing them this week.
- The Communion Service is a moot issue as Religious Education is using the hall.
- It's time to plant the mums.

Other business:

A plan needs to be devised for Parish Council elections. We will be losing Deborah Harrison, who has served three consecutive terms, at the end of 2020.

Do we reach out now for nominations? How do we get the word out? A Flocknote with a bio and photo? Virtual elections?

It was suggested that because of the extenuating circumstances presented by the pandemic, the elections could be tabled until next fall, with all current members serving an additional year. The chairperson will send a letter to each member to ascertain whether this is acceptable or not. The responses will dictate how to proceed.

The meeting closed at 7:37 p.m. with prayer.

Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday, October 12, at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Deborah Botti