

MEETING NOTES
Church of St Matthew Parish Council
July 22, 2021

7:00 pm in-person Parish Center work room and remote via Zoom

Facilitator: Janelle Rohr **Notetaker:** Suzanne Clarke

Attendees: Chris Avalos, Alan Christensen, Suzanne Clarke, Jerald Dosch, Anthony Minus, Janelle Rohr, Linda Sellars, Joanne Smith; ex officio: Phil Grant, pastoral administrator; Karen Thompson, trustee; Father Biju Mathew, parochial administrator; Joe Stevens, finance council

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by Janelle Rohr
Reflection Mary Magdalene Feast Day prayer was led by Janelle with response by members
Notes from June 24, 2021, meeting were accepted
<p>Finance Council Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parish staff will receive 2% salary increases. ○ The November calendar raffle will be dedicated to the purchase of 6 computers and software for staff, training for new purchases, and to fixing the roof over the kindergarten room and other maintenance needs. ○ Karen is working on the calendar raffle. ○ Annual Representation Letter to archdiocese is due in October. It verifies that we took care of all financial matters. ○ A buildings and grounds maintenance committee is being created. ○ More students are expected at Quantum STEAM school this fall, necessitating use of the second floor. That area needs some maintenance work to prepare for its use.
Listening Sunday Report: One parishioner reported difficulty hearing the priest's homily several weeks ago. This was due to microphone placement and was corrected. Also, Karen reported that she checked all 3 assisted listening devices, and they are working fine.
Liaison Reports (provided prior to meeting)
Casa Guadalupana: Chris Avalos
Community of Saints Catholic School: Suzanne Clarke
Faith Formation: Janelle Rohr
Liturgy Committee: Linda Sellars
Loaves and Fishes: Jerald Dosch
Men's Club: Jerald Dosch
Pace/Prism - Buildings and Grounds Projects: Phil Grant
Parish Office: OPEN
People of Praise: Linda Sellars
Quantum Steam Academy: Karen Thompson Board meeting is next week. They want some things fixed on the second floor in anticipation of having more students this fall.
Rosary Society: Joanne Smith
Social media, website, online Masses: Alan Christensen. Alan said that there currently isn't a 2-way conversation about these topics, so it's difficult to make a report. He and Phil had a good conversation about creating a liaison relationship with Kevin

Jack.

There is dated material on the website that needs to be looked at. Ten times the number of people follow us on Facebook now vs. before the Covid-19 pandemic. More Faith Formation people get information from social media than from the bulletin. Content and underlying platform are two different things; it's a lot of work to handle both. For now, smaller articles from the bulletin are being posted online also so they are available for that audience.

St. Mary's Clinic: Janelle Rohr

Volunteer ministry: Anthony Minus

Updates and New Business

- 8/15 Mass at Cherokee Park has been publicized in the bulletin and on Facebook. The Mass and picnic will be in the social hall in case of rain.
- The Synod planning group will meet next Monday. They just received the training schedule for facilitators and scribes and will be planning how to organize the small groups. Rosary Society will be one of the groups, among others. Publicity will be in the bulletin and fall parish mailing, dates & times to be determined. October will most likely be the start month. The call to participate will need to be in homilies and by personal invitation, also.
- Fall calendar raffle, Fix-It dinner, other fundraising: The Finance Council decided to use proceeds for technology and maintenance. A cover letter will be mailed in September. An October dinner is being planned, such as a Fix-It Dinner. The Order of Foresters needs national approval re: matching a raffle's proceeds versus those from a dinner. The best match would probably be from a raffle. Linda Rivera will take care of paperwork for a license for the raffle, and volunteers will be needed for a Fix-It Dinner. These 2 fundraisers appear to be adequate for our financial needs.
- Fall mailings: It was suggested that the first mailing be sent out just before 10:15 a.m. Sunday Mass resumes in September. The letter will welcome people back to church and give information about fundraisers, Faith Formation, Minus family brunch, and Synod groups. Another mailing will go out in late October with Advent and Christmas schedules and perhaps an Advent booklet. The annual financial report will not be in the mailings, but rather will be published in the bulletin and on the website in October. Parishioners will also be invited to ask questions of Finance Committee members after a Mass.
- How can we incorporate COS families, invite them to events? How are we partnering with COS other than financially? These topics were raised by Anthony and led to a lively discussion. Perhaps the school calendar can be fused with our parish calendar and include this in the COS weekly newsletter. We need to work with Bridget Kramer to invite students to come to Mass in uniform, bring up gifts, etc. How can we bring back Family Night with games, etc.? How can we resume this participation considering Covid restrictions, and what is the best way to communicate with families? Janelle said that we look to Catholic schools to raise the next generation of Catholic leaders.
(Phil, Karen and Suzanne will initiate a conversation with Bridget as was discussed after the council meeting.)
- Leadership training for Council members update: Phil is interested in doing this for more than Council members, perhaps providing an adult education offering for the parish.
- Social Hall bulletin board: Karen took our pictures for the new bulletin board display.
- Website updates, online Mass attendance, Google analytics, data on visits to our sites & pages; Alan and Phil are working on this; a future report is coming. We get more data from Facebook side than YouTube: 75% of our audience is women, most over age 55. It would be great to have a youthful, under 30, liaison who "speaks" Instagram. There is a huge potential there.
- Coffee Sunday:
Jackie Minus has agreed to coordinate, starting after the Minus family brunch on Sept. 19. Once we see what Mass attendance is, we could try offering Coffee Sunday twice a month, and then see what the response is. We could call it Coffee Hour so time commitment is manageable.

Parish Council Process

- By-laws & constitution documents: They exist on our website. Questions raised: are they current? Where do the documents live? The length of term decision re: 2- year term didn't get to the documents on the website, which still say 3- year terms. We need a small group to review the documents and find the most recent versions. The entire website also needs to be reviewed, updated. We could use the parish shared drive to work on documents.
- Rotation of facilitator/notetaker update; let Linda Sellars know if more changes are needed to the document she sent via email.
- Update needed to st-matts.org/opportunities-needs/parish-pastoral-council: Janelle asked members to check this address.
- Reminder: send notes we take to Linda Rivera after Council approval for posting on website

Growing an Engaged Church discussion

Phil handed out excerpts from pp. 28-30; he focused our attention on the 3 paragraphs at the top of the sheet.

Discussion followed:

- An emotional connection to church is more important than a rational connection, according to the research in this book.
- Members pointed out that the research cited is at least 15 years old; is it still relevant? Copyright is 2006. How have things changed?
- Religion is not rational, it's faith.
- Why do people come to Catholic churches, why do they come to St. Matthew's rather than another parish?
- Emotions during 2020 election were so strong, emotions ruled.
- We seem to be talking about emotions in a negative way. They are extremely powerful, as are faith and hope.
- Megachurches appeal to the emotions, and they give people hope.
- Younger people don't want to follow rules; Catholic church is a more rule-driven church.

Phil then asked us to answer:

What excites you about St. Matt's?

- Non-judgmental, welcoming
- Fr. Steve excites me, gets me to church
- Personal, sense of community, no matter who the person is (funeral lunch ministry, for example)
- Sense of welcome; I think St. Matt's is converting, transforming people; helping people have a better life, see God more clearly

And what concerns you about St. Matt's?

- We'll "age-out", lose parishioners
- Fr. Steve!
- We're in the context of the larger church that is shoving people away. The people in charge seem to have little awareness of public relations and how the public and the faithful perceive their actions.

Homework for next meeting:

- What is the importance of this section we have just read?
- Given that, what are the next steps we need to take?

There is more to discuss! Possible parish council retreat? Maybe everyone go to a Saturday Mass, then go out and discuss?

Adjourn The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Next meeting: August 26, 2021, 7 p.m., hybrid, in-person at Parish Center, Zoom link to come
Facilitator: Suzanne Clarke Notetaker: Chris Avalos