

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
New Freedom, Pa. 17349
Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

Date: September 14, 2021

Attendance **Present:** Father Mark Wilke, Deacon Fred Horn, Sister Jane Keller, Robert Campbell, Anthony Carlton, Janice Elsen, Bo Gifford, Mary Glass, Gary Grant, Dennis Sarpen and Karla Coombes
Absent: Barbara Bittner, Diana Morrison, Chris Wood
Excused: Father Josh Cavender, Susan Mareck

The meeting was opened by Dennis Sarpen at 7:10 pm

Opening Prayer: Offered by Father Mark Wilke

Review of Minutes: Motion by Gary Grant, seconded by Bo Gifford to accept the June 8, 2021 minutes as submitted. Discussion.

Vote: All in Favor; No Opposed. Motion carried.

PARISH REPORT/BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE: Father Wilke

Father has been busy dealing with the tile and carpet concerns in the Main Church. With regard to the tile in the atrium, he has had several contractors in to look at the problem, but there is no clear consensus as to cause and therefore repair. He is dealing with a person from the Harrisburg Diocese and hopefully will have more information shortly. He has had several parishioners offer their assistance for when a solution is decided. He will be securing several estimates and will keep the Council apprised of his progress.

With regard to the Church carpet, it has been down over 30 years and he has been told that if he got 25 years out of carpet in a heavily used area, he was good. Removal of the old carpet with removal of all pews will be quite a project, but it is felt that doing all of the carpet at one time instead of piece by piece is preferred.

J. Elson asked about the carpet by the baptismal font being rolled. Father stated he is aware of this, but it is the best solution possible at this time.

Sister Jane thanked Father for his presence in the school and at the religious education programs and stated that the children looked forward to his visits. Father mentioned that a kindergarten student asked him if he had fixed the floor in the Church because it was not a safe thing and he told the class he was working on it.

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL REPORT: Susan Mareck

1. Enrollment for the school is at 126. Three classrooms are at capacity for maintaining the 3 feet apart. Preschool enrollment has increased from last year's low of 33 to 49.
2. After beginning school without masks, we are currently required to wear masks in the school building. Mask breaks are taken throughout the day. We are also following protocols that were in place last year, handwashing, distancing, etc. Towards that end we were able to purchase 3 additional cafeteria tables to allow for more social distancing at lunch times. The tables are spread out and grade levels are assigned a section of the cafeteria.
3. Both Arrival and dismissal are now taking place with parents arriving via the Reehling Road entrance to our campus.
4. We have two students who are doing distant learning due to a physical disability that requires them to remain at home. One will continue for the entire year, the other should be back to in person learning by Nov. Diocesan approval is required for distant learning.
5. Bingo is scheduled for Oct. 21st at the New Freedom Community Center and is still being planned as of this writing.
6. Thanks to Fr. Wilke for scheduling an additional Mass on Friday mornings, we are back to weekly in person Mass attendance with just our school students and faculty.
7. We will continue our virtues of the month with working on Kindness for the month of September.
8. Our own Phil Duffy brought his sound system to the playground at the beginning of the school year and the classes were able to enjoy their lunch times outside in the fresh air and dancing to the music.

9. School is sponsoring a yard sale on Sept 18th from 8 – 2 in the school parking lot and social hall.

It was mentioned that data shows Catholic schools have about 19% non-catholic students attending; our school has 26%.

RELIGIOUS ED REPORT: Sister Jane Keller

1. Our Welcome Back -Family Social was held on Thursday Sept. 9th.
2. A special blessing was offered to all our Catechists and Teachers this past weekend at all the Masses. Sunday was observed nationally as Catechetical Sunday.
3. Many thanks to all our generous Catechists and Aides who have teamed-up to assist with Rel. Ed. We're able to offer classes for all our 3 Year Olds through High School.
4. Rel. Ed Classes begin this week.
5. Sunday Good Shepherd classes began on Sunday Sept. 12th.
Our Wed. Thursday classes begin this Wed/Thurs. Sept. 15-16.
6. Registration continues to stay open for all classes for students ages 3 through High School.
7. RCIA Classes also began on Sunday. Sept. 12th.
8. Parent Meetings are scheduled for Wed/Thurs. Sept. 22-23 for all parents of students in Grade 7-8 in prep for Confirmation.
9. Parents of students in First year prep for First Penance/ First Communion will meet on Thursday Oct. 7th
10. Our Claire's Gourmet Fall Fundraiser begins on Wed/ Thurs. Oct. 6-7.
11. Rel. Ed continues to join with the school in support of all fundraisers, programs and projects whenever possible.
12. Rel. Ed hopes to participate in the school's mission projects more faithfully next year.
13. Our Rel. Ed Staff works together with the school in setting guidelines for the safety and well being of all our students.

YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT: Chris Wood

No report

EVANGELIZATION COMMITTEE: Barbara Bittner

No report

PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT: Karla Coombes**LOANS**

Balance on Education Building Loan as of 8/31/21 is \$138,938.00

Balance on 2019 YE Deficit Loan as of 8/31/21 is \$50,967.00

Total Loan Debt: \$189,905.00

CASH BALANCE

Estimated G/F Cash Balance as of 9/14/21: Positive cash balance of \$436,882.28.

(This is so high because of the 2nd SBA PPP loan that was Received back on March 2nd in the amount of \$239,690.00 as well as Some of the 1st SBA PPP loan.)

UNDESIGNATED SAVINGS

Parish General Savings as of 8/31/21: \$26.30

DIOCESAN ANNUAL CAMPAIGN (DAC)

- Goal for 2021/22 is the same as last year - \$192,003.00
- The actual payments collected are \$101,322.00
- Outstanding pledges of \$9,754.99 of which \$6,545.00 is past due.

- If we are able to collect all the outstanding pledges, we are still \$80,926.00 short of the assessed amount.
- I had budgeted a shortfall of \$71,184.00
- The donations have come from 266 gifts with an average of \$418.00

FAITH DIRECT

- Enrollment is the same as last reported with 184 families
- With average weekly collection at \$7,287.46

Looking into updating the phones – finance council rep has about 40 phones to donate (valued at \$150.00 each). We are still evaluating exact number of phones needed.

PASTOR'S REPORT AND COMMENTS: Father Wilke

Having been at our parish for almost three months, Father feels that we have a vibrant and active community and is looking forward to working with the parish council.

Gary Grant suggested that we all introduce ourselves so that Father can put names to faces.

Father has the names of several people who have offered to be involved with a Building/Grounds Committee and he is working on its development.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

- a. Consider holding regular meetings at SEC to improve social distancing. Discussion. In favor
- b. Parish Council election for vacancies. Discussion. Decision was to have vacancies advertised in Church Bulletin with candidates to submit short bio;

also to accept nominations from parish council (but candidate is to be asked first); and lastly Father Wilke can appoint. Then the bios with photos can be placed in parish bulletin and voting by parishioners can be held at all Masses on a specific weekend

Gary Grant mentioned that we are not exactly in line with the PC election guidelines, but after discussion and COVID restrictions, it was felt we were as close as possible.

- c. Carol Karotko will be at the October meeting to bring us up to date with regard to the bazaar, store and any fund-raising plans.

Anthony Carlton mentioned that the sound of water in the atrium made it difficult to hear during Mass when out there with an active child

Janice Elsen asked if lights by the Chapel could be turned on as it is very dark when entering/leaving. Father replied that they had been turned off due to neighbor complaints about it being too bright in the middle of the night.

Anthony Carlton thanked Father Wilke saying we are blessed for his interest in the school.

Bo Gifford stated that the K of C will have it first soup/sandwich on the first weekend in October.

Motion by Janice Elsen, seconded by Gary Grant to close the meeting.

Next Meeting: November 16, 2021

Closing Prayer: Father Wilke

The meeting was closed at 7:55 pm

Respectfully Submitted:
Mary Glass