

PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
ST. THERESE CATHOLIC CHURCH
February 6, 2024

Call to Order: 7:04PM by Pat

Attendance: Father Gregory, Pat, Joann, Tim, Carl

Opening Prayer: Assigned member was unable to attend, so Father Gregory read some scripture and Joann read her previous opening prayer from Dec meeting.

Vision Statement: The Council read the Parish Vision Statement in unison.

Pastor Comments: Father Gregory told us that the Ecumenical Prayer Service held at Grace Covenant in January during the week of Prayer for Christian Unity was a great success and could potentially become an annual event. He asked for others who attended to share their thoughts, and Pat said that the pastors who spoke were clear and inspiring, and the service was very uplifting. The event was well attended and there was a large turnout from St. Therese.

Father informed us of an upcoming Deanery Plenary meeting, which is an annual meeting of clergy and lay leadership. The meeting will be held at St. Bede in Williamsburg on February 21, 2024, from 10:30AM to 2:30PM and other members of the Council may need to attend, although it was not yet clear. (Since then, Tim Brown has agreed to attend with Father Gregory and Deacon Jose.)

Formation: The Council continued reading Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation on the 150th Anniversary of the birth of St. Therese. We read paragraphs 18-24 and discussed.

Refreshments: Refreshments were provided by Tim.

Old Business: The minutes from the January 9th meeting were voted on and approved.

Pat read an update sent from Charlie about the most recent committee meeting for our twinning with Haiti program. Five members of the Haiti committee will attend an upcoming Diocesan meeting.

Father Gregory is starting a committee to represent our church at a booth at the Gloucester Daffodil Festival April 6-7, 2024. Pat and Tim offered their help and participation.

Matthew VanderMyde (Margie's husband) is building a lending library, which will include books for all ages and will be placed outside of our church on the end near the Pocahontas statue.

New Business:

Church office hours/later availability was a two-fold topic suggested by Pat for consideration and discussion.

1) Sometimes the office is scheduled to be open, but the staff are unavailable (staff meeting, etc) so perhaps people who are willing to help could sit in the office to answer the phone or sit in the Commons to welcome people who may come in during that time with questions or seeking assistance. Would need someone to organize volunteers.

2) Potential for creating a set time outside of the 9AM-2PM normal hours, when the church would be open for working people to have an opportunity to come into the church if they need to pray. We

discussed several aspects to accomplish this. Someone willing to help could be there to watch and then close the church, we could install a lock with a code, or we could advertise the later hours to coincide with already scheduled evening events when people are around anyway. It was decided that council members will ask at the upcoming Deanery meeting if other churches do this and how they handle it, in order to get additional ideas and input.

The church voicemail setup needs to be checked because it seems that the phones are not always going to voicemail.

Youth ministry was briefly discussed but we will get further updates at the next meeting when Sarah is present. Some parishioners including Sarah Flynn and Sarah Linsmeyer met with Nadine about a team strategy for leading the youth group. The previous search committee will reconvene to work on identifying a part time youth minister in the meantime.

Parishioner comments were discussed, and members shared some positive feedback recently overheard. Remember to always be open and listening if people are talking nearby about things they like or do not like about the church, so that you can step in and get more information and potentially bring the items to the council for discussion. One recent item is that there is no longer enough room for the handicapped in the back of the church so that is being addressed.

Interfacing between pastoral council and staff members was an idea suggested by Tim for consideration and discussion. He wondered if the two groups have expectations of each other or if there are situations when we might need an opportunity to interact and discuss specific events or items. Father said that these are two separate groups and it is unnecessary to have scheduled meetings. Anyone is welcome to meet with relevant staff members on an adhoc basis if the need arises.

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting is March 12, 2024 at 7:00PM in the church meeting room.

Closing Prayer: Assigned member was unable to attend, so Joann read her previous closing prayer from Dec meeting.

Adjournment: 8:52PM by Pat