

## Pastoral Council Minutes, Oct. 24, 2021 6:30-8:00 PM

**Attendees:** Clergy: Father Dillon. Trustees: Bill White, Margot Burkle. Members: Greer Koerner, Sue Croce, Elizabeth Kozarec, Deb Falvey, Yolande Eldridge, Harold Hutchinson, Valerie LeShane, Elaine Carter, Stephanie Deixler, Carol McCormick. Youth/Peer Ministry Rep: Connor DeBoda.

**Absent:** Members: Jill Kennelly, Maureen Fuest Youth/Peer Ministry Reps: Matt Celotto, Gabriel Mongelli

**Opening Prayer:** Father Dillon opened the meeting with a prayer at 6:35.

**Approval of the minutes:** The minutes of the September 26, 2021 Council Meeting were approved.

### Pastor Update:

- It was reported that a baptism this past weekend was not posted in the bulletin. Father Dillon advised he would look into it and noted that baptisms will be posted.
- Father Dillon discussed the Forward with Faith Campaign. After investigating, he learned that there has been interest in an addition to the Father Sullivan Center. Father suggested that this might be considered as the Forward With Faith project of our parish. Father proposed a feasibility study as the next step in this process. Town and Diocesan approval will be needed for any project.
- The parish is required to raise a total of \$680,000 for The Forward With Faith campaign. The parish keeps 50% toward a major project and submits the other 50% to the Archdiocese. The parishioners who donate to the campaign have 5 years to complete their donation. Any funds raised in excess of the \$680,000 would be split 80% to St George and 20% to the Archdiocese. It was suggested to formally request an extension to the deadline for the Forward with Faith Campaign.
- Christmas Card: Father Dillon prefers that the St. George Christmas Card remain solely as a Christmas card. He prefers to not include any other messages other than the Christmas Mass schedule. The mass schedule will be: Christmas Eve Mass - 4 pm; 6 pm; 10 pm  
Christmas Day Mass - 9 am 11 am
- Members suggested to Father Dillon that it may be time to restart the program allowing the children of the parish to bring food donations up onto the Altar during Mass. A message will be sent out to the families of religious education students and a notice will be placed in the bulletin.
- Father discussed All Souls Day which is approaching. He advised that there will be tables set up allowing members of the St. George community to put a photo of a loved one who has passed away to be recognized. The tables will be going up next weekend.
- Father advised that the Rectory will participate in Guilford's Halloween celebration by giving out approximately 1,000 candy bars.
- Father advised that Justine, a St. George office employee, has been assigned the task of updating the entire St. George website. She will also work on a system to allow robo calls with important messages to the community. Upon discussion, Father also noted that he would prefer to have Justine work on updating the ministry list (current functioning groups and contacts), so that phone calls will reflect a St. George caller ID phone number.
- Parishioner update: Father suggested that perhaps an update to the parishioners list could be handled with a cut out in the bulletin asking all members to provide updated information. This "cut out" could be mailed and returned to the office and/or put in the collection box. Father advised he would take care of this.

### **Peer Ministry:**

- The Peer Ministry representative reported that the Peer Ministry reps are interested in undertaking the Backpack Project for those exiting the prison system and preparing for a successful entry into society .
- It was asked if there was a deadline and how many backpacks were needed? January, 2022 was the suggested month of collection. Following a discussion, the following were some suggestions:
- Items can be requested (per the list) from Religious Education groups as well as the parish. Some items are more expensive than others, so a balance of items might be assigned to classes (i.e. toothbrushes; t-shirts (XL) and gloves/hats etc).
- All items must be new. Cash donations are also needed to cover the costs of bus passes ( \$15.75) and possibly backpacks.
- The high cost of durable, high quality backpacks was discussed, since they might range in the \$50+ range. If complete backpacks are the goal, this aspect will need to be explored. The goal for completed backpacks and number will also need to be determined.
- It was also suggested that Peer Ministers contact the pastor of the First Congregational Church, who currently coordinates this project, for further information and planning.
- The Peer Ministers will work to put a plan together and report to the Council at the next meeting, Nov. 21.

### **New Business:**

#### **Inclusion of ESCA students and St. George Religious Ed. students into Parish Life:**

- ESCA (Parish School) Ministry: We were advised that ESCA is involved in an effort to offer greater volunteer opportunities to their student population and has requested that St George include ESCA students in volunteer opportunities. The ESCA representative for St. George integration of students into parish life is Barbara Travisano.
- It was noted that the Religious Education students of St. George should also be included in volunteer opportunities. Margot Burkle and Elizabeth Kozarec offered to work on this project. They will reach out to the ESCA representative, Barbara Travisano, as well as discuss the idea with the St. George Religious Education Coordinators. They will report on their progress at the next meeting.
- Student volunteer opportunity suggestions included: Sing Christmas Carols at Nursing Facilities; make Christmas Cards for residents of Nursing Facilities; help during the Italian Festival and other St. George events as age appropriate and supervised. It was noted that some of the interactive activities may not be available due to COVID concerns.

### **Lazarus Ministry:**

- Father discussed the Lazarus Ministry which involves members of the St George community reaching out to the family of a deceased family member to assist with funeral Mass planning. Once there are enough volunteers to work in this ministry (4-5), Father will schedule a training session.
- Father indicated that the interactions between the community member and the family members could be in person or virtual and would involve choosing music and readings for the funeral Mass as well as offering support through what can be an overwhelming process. Greer Koerner and Margot Burkle volunteered to be part of this project.
- The Night of Remembrance for parents who have lost children will be held, Sunday, December 5, 4 PM. Council members were encouraged to reach out to any parent who lost a child to be advised of this remembrance.

### **The Fun and Entertainment Agenda item-tabled**

- Purpose of these activities is to attract new families. It was tabled for the future due to pandemic concerns regarding large groups of children and families.

**Background Checks and Virtus Training**

- Our group was advised that they would be contacted by the Parish Office regarding this.

**November meeting date change**

- It was suggested that we change the November meeting from 11/28 to 11/21 due to Thanksgiving weekend (11/28). The members agreed to our next meeting date as 11/21.
- Meeting space will be checked on..

**Meeting adjourned at 7:59 with a closing prayer.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol McCormick, Secretary