

Parish Council Meeting Minutes
Sunday, November 21, 2021 6:30 pm

Attendees: Clergy:Father Dillon Trustee:Bill White Members:Yolande Eldridge; Elaine Carter; Sue Croce, Harold Hutchinson, Beth Kozarec, Debra Falvey, Maureen Fuest, Jill Kennelly, Stephanie Deixler, Carol McCormick Youth (Peer Minister) Representatives: Matt Celotto, Gabriel Mongelli

Absent: Trustee:Margot Burkle Members:Greer Koerner, Valerie LeShane
Youth (Peer Minister) Representative: Connor DeBoda

Opening Prayer: Father Dillon opened the meeting with a prayer at 6:33.

Approval of the Minutes: The minutes of the October 24th meeting were approved.

Non-agenda items:

- It was brought to the attention of the Parish Council that the Cookie Share, which was deemed unsafe during the pandemic, was listed in the Guilford Holiday magazine which was recently distributed to the community. The magazine indicated that refreshments would be available in the St George Church Hall after the tree lighting. It was suggested that a notice be placed in the bulletin and that sandwich board signs be placed at the front and rear entrances to the Church Hall noting the cookie share cancellation this year due to pandemic safety concerns.
- Father Dillon confirmed that, as indicated in the bulletin recently, there has been a 50% reduction in attendance at St George and in all the churches throughout our diocese. We were advised that there has been a drop in the amount collected in the offertory but that many parishioners are donating online. The overall total amount collected on a monthly basis has not been impacted.

Pastor Update:

- The question was raised if the live stream Mass might be encouraging parishioners to keep from attending Mass in person? If we stop broadcasting the Mass, would people return to Church? Father Dillon indicated that the live stream Mass will end when it is safe to do so. The homebound livestream option will continue for those unable to return to Church. The cost of live streaming is not known.
- Father Dillon discussed the **Forward with Faith Campaign**. He is investigating the needs of the Parish. An extension has not been requested. Father discussed forming a Building Committee.
- Father Dillon encouraged the members of the Parish Council to check the Christmas Mass schedule. There will be a 4 pm, 6 pm and 10 pm Mass on Christmas Eve. There will be a 9 am and 11 am Mass on Christmas morning.
- At our previous meeting, Father Dillon indicated he would have Justine, who works in the office, handle several jobs including updating the list of ministries. Since we have become aware that Justine has given her notice, we asked who would be handling those jobs? Father Dillon advised that he is in the process of finding a replacement.

Peer Ministers Report: Matt and Gabriel discussed the Backpack Project. They have compiled a list of the supplies they will request. They asked whether they should request items or donations? It was suggested that they request both. It was suggested that they could assign a range of items to the CCD classes and offer community service hours for students' contributions to the project. It was suggested that they request monetary donations from parishioners through a pulpit explanation of the project at the end of Masses in late January.

Matt and Gabriel indicated they would focus on the classes they teach which includes the 9th and 10th grade CCD classes and that they would send an email to the parents of their students to be sure the parents are aware of the project. They advised the Council that there is a month-long break in CCD classes in the weeks around Christmas. This led to a discussion of the timing of this project. We had been asked to avoid scheduling this project during Thanksgiving, Christmas and early January (Abraham's Tent). End of January is still viewed as the best target launch of the Backpack Project.

It was suggested that the Peer Ministry could approach stores like LL Bean, LandsEnd, Target and Walmart for donations, including high quality, sturdy backpacks. Unfortunately, it was pointed out that these organizations require approval from their Corporate headquarters to authorize donations, so letters of request would need to be sent asap.

It was suggested the Peer Ministers schedule the Mass talks with Fran Wainer; put a schedule together to keep the project on target; calculate the cost of each backpack for collections; and look into a possible educational component to this project. Lastly, it was suggested that a document be created with a project timeline and steps for organization of this project and communication with the Parish Council; CCD classes; bulletin announcements; pulpit overview; corporate requests and any educational component.

Lazarus Ministry: Father will put a blurb in the bulletin in search of 4-5 people who might be interested in this ministry. He will then set up a training session. He discussed the guidelines for a funeral Mass. There should be one person who shares a eulogy and it should be no longer than 5-7 minutes long. There are specific music choices available. The ministry should create a comfort level for all involved so meetings could be in person or virtual. The Sullivan Center could be a possible location for in person meetings.

Integration of CCD and ESCA students into Parish Life Committee: Beth Kozarec volunteered to reach out to some ministries on behalf of ESCA. There will be a holiday card project involving both ESCA and CCD students.

It was suggested that ESCA students might be able to help with the Backpack Project but it was decided that the Peer Ministers would work with older students at this time.

Drive-In Movie Planning: The idea of drive-ins during June/July 2022 was discussed. It was noted that the Men's Group organized a drive-in previously and it broke even for expenses due to food selling. It was a great opportunity to get families involved. We will explore the cost of renting the necessary equipment (projector, screen, etc). Father consented to the parish supporting the initial costs related to the equipment. The church does already own an FM transmitter.

Holiday Caroling at senior facilities was discussed. Stephanie will coordinate with Sister Kathleen. She will reach out to the Principal of ESCA to see if ESCA can participate. There will

be a notice placed in the Bulletin and Stephanie will contact the CCD coordinators. Stephanie will schedule a few sessions at senior facilities.

Final Prayer: Father Dillon led us in a closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

The Pastoral Council does not meet in December.

Next meeting is January 23 , 2022 6:30 PM.