

St. Mark's Parish Pastoral Council

January 9, 2019

In Attendance:

Beyea, Dianne
Burns, Fr. Owen
Carvell, Trinda
Connors, Michele

Ellis, Wendy
Glasgow, Mary Alice
Howe, Marilyn
MacDonald, Mike

McGrath, Lawrence
Stroud, Anne

Absent:

Doherty, Bob
Johnson, Kayla

Little, Peter

Vienneau, Ben

The meeting was called to order by Chair Michele Connors at 7:15pm.

The opening prayer was led by Fr. Burns.

The minutes of the December 12, 2018 meeting of Parish Pastoral Council (PPC), were approved on a motion by Mike MacDonald and seconded by Lawrence McGrath.

Business Arising from Previous Minutes

- 1. Continuing Education for Council Members- *Divine Renovation Apprentice*:** Wendy Ellis provided a short overview of the book with emphasis on its focus on strategy. She encouraged PPC members to make notes as they read the book, as their notes will provide a great basis for our discussions at Council. Anne provided copies of the reading schedule which had been e-mailed to PPC members by Wendy. Our first discussion will take place during our Council meeting on February 13. The members of our Parish Support Team (PST) are also reading this book.
- 2. Bookmark and candy cane initiative at Christmas Masses: Update:** Anne Stroud: This was an initiative undertaken by the Communications Team of the PST. It was intended to reach those who attend Mass at Christmas but only infrequently, or not at all, during the rest of the year. 700 bookmarks were printed and over 500 were given out at the Christmas Masses, along with small candy canes. The bookmarks had parish contact information, weekend Mass times and a New Year's prayer. There was very little time between the Communication Team's decision to undertake this initiative and Christmas, so production of the bookmark and the details of distribution were rushed, but it was felt that the opportunity to reach out to those who do not attend Mass regularly was too important to miss. The Communications Team intends to repeat this initiative next year allowing more lead time to plan and prepare.

Anne asked Council members for their feedback. PPC viewed the initiative favourably. Wendy suggested that it would be beneficial to choose an image for the bookmark that had a higher resolution so that it could also be used on our parish website; the image used this time had too low a resolution to allow this tie in. Wendy also offered access to both a St. Mark's photo archive, which includes photos of our Nativity scene and Advent wreath, and free images available via a Wix subscription. It was felt that it would be preferable to use a St. Mark's image rather than a stock photo. Several Council members suggested that holding a similar initiative at Easter.

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- 3. Alpha at St. Mark's: Update:** Mary Alice Glasgow: Mary Alice described Alpha as a tool to provide education about basic Christianity and a way to provide connectedness. The Alpha program is not designed to make Catholics, but to help people develop a closer relationship with Jesus. To date, thirty people have gone through Alpha at St. Mark's. The next session is scheduled to commence on January 31. It is hoped to have enough volunteers and guests to warrant four table groups. This would be an increase over the two tables of guests at the most recent Alpha session. A September session is also planned.

Fr. Burns has invited members of the Alpha Team to do a short presentation promoting Alpha after the final blessing at all Masses this coming weekend. The presentation will include an Alpha video featuring hockey player, Joe DiPenta, of Cole Harbour NS.

Wendy mentioned that the Alpha Team at St. Benedict Parish in Halifax is aware that we are starting a new Alpha session at St. Mark's, and that they are praying for us.

New Business

- 1. Round table discussion and to identify items for future PPC meetings:** Anne Stroud suggested that Council invite a member of the Finance Committee to attend an upcoming Council meeting to provide members with current financial information. PPC will need such information if it is to evolve into a strategic planning body. In the past, the Finance Committee has provided Council with updates regarding our parish finances. Anne is also interested in obtaining a clearer idea of the status of our Building Fund and the criteria used to decide what improvements are eligible to be funded from it. Michele suggested that Anne e-mail Peter McGinn for information.

Mike MacDonald raised a concern regarding the lack of handbooks/work instructions for the various ministries at St. Mark's. Michele advised Mike that PST is currently working on this. It is intended that PST Administrators will talk to the coordinators of all the ministries in their areas in order to understand what they do, determine if changes are needed, and to create documentation to provide consistency.

Update from Parish Support Team (PST): Michele provided an update about the upcoming strategy workshop that PST plans to hold in February. Michele and Cathy Riganesi have met with Heinz Schaerer from St. David's United Church in Rothesay. St. David's recently held a strategy workshop of their own with about fifty people in attendance. It was facilitated by Tracy Chapman. Michele and Cathy plan to meet with Ms. Chapman in the near future. The purpose of our workshop will be to identify strategic thrusts (outcomes) which will describe what we want from the parish revitalization process and guide everything else. Michele will provide a couple of potential workshop dates for us to consider in advance.

Michele informed Council that our PST has devoted time at recent meeting to identifying stakeholders. Once a list of St. Mark's stakeholders was created, time was spent discussing the questions: "What does St. Mark's want from each stakeholder?"; "What do these stakeholders want from us?" Michele is in the process of rolling this information into a document, which she will then ask Anne to share with PPC. Please provide Michele with your comments after you receive and review the document. We be able to check our progress against this document going forward

Other Updates:

- 1. Bible Basics:** Mary Alice advised Council that a new Bible Basics program will start on January 19. She will be facilitating the sessions.

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2. **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:** Adoration was held at St. Mark's for one hour during the afternoon on New Year's Day for the members of Fr. Burn's men's group and their families. Approximately 30-40 children from 1 month to 14 years of age were in attendance with their parents. Live Praise and Worship music was provided. For those wishing a quieter experience, the chapel was available. This was not a parish event, but there may be an opportunity to provide this type of experience for members of our parish, in future.
3. **Tabernacle:** Fr. Burns has received positive feedback regarding moving the Tabernacle from the chapel to the area behind the altar.

The closing prayer was led by Lawrence McGrath.

Our next PPC meeting is scheduled to take place on February 13, 2019 at 7:15pm in Room 1.