

Minutes of the Parish Council Minutes  
St. Vincent de Paul Church  
March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013

The meeting was brought to order by the Council President, Jim Casey, at 7:34 pm with an opening prayer by John Kober, Jr.

In attendance: Fr. Richard Lawrence, *Pastor*; Chris McCullough, *Pastoral Associate*; Jim Casey, *President and 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Jack Bonner, *Vice President and 9:30 Mass Rep.*; Graham Yearley, *Secretary, 12:15 Mass Rep. and Corporator*; John Kober, Jr., *7:15 Mass Rep.*; Rosie Graf, *9:30 Mass Rep.*; Sara Kelley, *9:30 Mass Rep.*; Pete McDowell, *11:45 Mass Rep.*; Laureen Brunelli, *Communications and Outreach Committee Chair*; Kathi Jeffra, *Education and Enrichment Committee Chair*; Audrey Rogers, *Liturgy Committee Chair*; Dennis Flynn, *Finance Committee Vice-Chair*; Pat Ball, *Facilities Committee Chair*; Peggy Meyer, *Social Action Committee Co-Chair*; Michael Dunevant, *Liaison to The Friends of St. Vincent Cemetery*.

Absent: Anne Marie Freeburger, *Corporator*

### **Pastor's Report**

1. The Archdiocese is launching a parish planning initiative. It might follow the ideas created in Boston in their second wave of closings, which were developed to rectify the mistakes made in the first round of closings. These ideas can be seen on [www.disciplesinmission.com](http://www.disciplesinmission.com). Some of those ideas include the clustering of churches, usually 2 or 3, but up to four under one pastor with one common parish council and one budget, although each parish would have its own financial resources. Priests from the clustered churches may live together in one of the rectories; the need for Parish Life Directors would be eliminated. If the Archdiocese adopts this model, the objective of any administrative reorganization would be to unify efforts around the idea of the "new evangelization".
2. St. Vincent's had been a leader in the fight to abolish the death penalty in Maryland. It now appears that the state legislature will pass a bill abolishing the death penalty in the current session.
3. Fr. Lawrence became a homeowner and settled on his condo at Scarlett Place recently.

### **Finance Committee**

1. Although it appears we have eight thousand dollars or more in our checking account, the bulk of it is held in trust for specific projects, leaving little committed to paying our bills. Consequently, we will have a negative balance until the large gift we receive in the spring from a generous donor is deposited. The Council was told that that gift had been received today.
2. The Finance Committee is seeking new members. Maureen Fitzsimmons and Dennis Flynn have long served and wish to be replaced. Potential members should be

knowledgeable in investment banking, accounting, and law. Interested persons should speak with the pastor.

### **St. Vincent's Cemetery**

Mike Dunevant is the parish liaison to *The Friends of the St. Vincent's Cemetery*. They are seeking a ten thousand dollar grant from the Archdiocese to keep up the cemetery; the Council expressed its willingness to co-sponsor that grant if co-sponsorship is required. There will be a planning meeting on March 23 to prepare for the clean up day on April 20. Parishioners are asked to assist the *FoSVC* volunteers in cleaning our cemetery property.

### **Young Families**

There was a meeting of parents of young children two weeks ago to discern their needs and desires in terms of family program initiatives here at St. Vincent's. Parents expressed interest in social, spiritual, and service events for the families and social and enrichment events for the parents. A follow-up survey has been distributed to ascertain the level of interest in these areas and the likelihood of participation. The meeting consensus was that with our limited resources we should start *small but well* and therefore the prioritization of what should be offered is important.

### **Events of the past two weeks**

Two weeks ago a basket of keys in Fr. Lawrence's office were stolen. Nothing happened for two weeks. Then, last Friday, the construction manager of the font project discovered in the morning that many of the doors of the church that are usually locked were unlocked and two exterior doors were wide open. Offices had been ransacked but there was little indication that anything was taken. The next day, it was discovered that the poor box had been ripped from the wall but tossed aside when it could not be opened. The locks could not be changed until today, so for the past three days, Fr. Lawrence sat up at night to guard the property. Now the locks have been changed. There was a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of getting a security system.

### **Town Meeting**

The next Town Hall Meeting of the parish will be held over two days, April 6 and 7. Jim Casey will lead a meeting at both Saturday Masses and one on Sunday between the Masses. The subject will be the transition as Father Lawrence remains pastor, but moves out of the rectory. The division of duties between Fr. Lawrence and Chris McCullough will also change, but the details of those changes have not yet been worked out. Jim promised to vet his report with both of them before the town meetings.

### **Job Description of Administrative Assistant**

Chris McCullough submitted a job description to the Council of the part-time administrative assistant position that will open up when Barbara Hodnett partially retires at the end of April. He mentioned that he would prefer to hire someone full time, but the funding for it does not exist currently. The Council approved the job description and recruitment for this position.

### **Rectory Usage**

Chris McCullough also submitted several options for the use of the rectory when Fr. Lawrence moves out. Fr. Lawrence's rooms on the second floor could become a library and an additional meeting room. The nursery could be moved to the front room of the first floor. The Council reviewed and discussed these proposals. They will be revisited at a future meeting.

### **Young Adults**

The discussion about the status of the young adult group was reopened. Its status had been brought to Council last month. The group appears to be unraveling without leadership and Rosie Graf and Sara Kelley had asked for a committed staff person to coordinate the group last month. Our financial situation does not allow for adding any new staff. While a group of young adults will attend the Seder together, it is unclear what the future of this group will be.

### **Old Business**

Service Contract for the HVAC System: Chris McCullough reported that another bid for maintenance of the heating/ air conditioning systems had been received from Dynastics. Their plan would have less frequent inspections, but it also cost less than the earlier bid from the Hartford Company. Chris is continuing to interact with the bidding companies to determine the best arrangement for us.

### **New Business**

Jim Casey said that elections for parish council members will be held in May. He added that both he and Jack Bonner have reached the end of their term limits. Graham Yearley's position of representative for the 12:15 Mass will be eliminated when that Mass service is ended at the end of June. Jim tabled discussion of election specifics until the April meeting of Council.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Communications and Outreach Committee [Laureen Brunelli, Chair]**

While the C&O Committee has not met since the February Council meeting, we have been busy.

#### **BB Connect Webinar**

Several Committee members (Jackie Range, Audrey Rogers, Chris McCullough and Laureen Brunelli) attended a webinar about the Blackboard Connect service, which is being offered to parishes. The Archdiocesan school system currently uses this system to inform parents of school news, closings, etc., via robocalls, text blasts, and emails. While it had some useful features, at \$2 per family per year, we felt it was too expensive for our needs, which don't really include the telephone features. Also it had no reporting mechanism for email open rate. We discussed using an email system with tracking features, such as Constant Contact, at some point in the future.

### **Survey**

The Committee is fine tuning the Communications Survey, which it plans to distribute at the weekend Masses and Town Hall on April 7. We also plan to have it available the following weekend and online.

### **Sign**

We have a design for the banner to be placed on the fence at the corner of Fayette and Fallsway. However, we need an original, full-size photo of St. V's spire. Because we can't find a full-size version of the one on the website, Steve McDaniel recently took some photos of it.

### **MidAtlantic Congress**

From the Committee, both Audrey and Laureen attended. Laureen attended sessions regarding digital communications, social media and parish marketing. The ideas are percolating!

### **Website**

Laureen, with the help of Chris and Audrey, has been working on adding more content to the website. See new pages for Lent: <http://www.stvchurch.org/lent/> and <http://www.stvchurch.org/lent/a-journey-through-lent-at-st-vincent/>. These were created by repurposing old materials. The idea is to have similar pages for all the liturgical seasons and to eventually link these to a "Reading Room." The goal of the "Reading Room" page would be to become a destination for interested persons in finding internal and external links to reading materials and to be an online repository of the resources already created at St. V.

### **Next Meeting**

Our next meeting was scheduled for April 7, but since that is now the Town Hall date, it will be rescheduled.

## **Education and Enrichment Committee [Kathi Jeffra, Chair]**

### **Children's Programming:**

Nursery A nursery worker, Ali Perris has been hired for Sunday mornings. FFF: 4 children preparing for 1<sup>st</sup> communion 5/12 and 3 children's parents have asked for their children to be prepared for Reconciliation

Young families: Chris will do an orientation with leaders to address responsibilities and other concerns and with families to explain the offerings Retreat/VBS/FFF sometime before retreat. Caroline Umana is incorporating a D48 component into the gardening project at Roots and Branches Charter School.

VBS: 7/22 to 26 Anne will ask Skip about the appropriateness of the Reginald Lewis Museum for a destination. Lorna will look into Walters. Rita will look into some ideas that were presented at an event she attended at St. Mark's on the Hill.

**Dinner for 8:**

Registration so far is 48 adults plus 1 child have signed, new groups will be assigned to begin after Easter and meet through 8/31 Chris will work with Rita to develop an evaluative tool to be used next time.

**Vatican Series:**

Catherine Convier-Donovan has been contacted to take Sr. Mary Collins' place and speak about Liturgy on 6/10 (catered by the Dogwood) Arthur's talk has not yet jelled, but it will be a potluck

**Parish Retreat:**

June 7, 8, and 9, 2013. On 4/8 Kathi, Denny, Rita, Chris, Peggy will meet with Jack Buckner to discuss retreat themes. Chris will look into Fr. Lawrence's preference, and offer do a word and communion service. Rosemary will ask Mike Herschfeld, Rosie, and others about doing announcements. Leaders for children's program: Ali Perris has been asked about working retreat, but she is uncertain of her schedule. We could also ask Amy (the previous nursery worker) and Joann (who helped with VBS last year) names of several parishioners are also being floated. Rosemary will ask Nawakwa if the pool will be open, and if the camp will be providing a lifeguard.

**Lenten Film Series:**

*Babette's Feast* is up next, Lorna will bring clam chowder and bread and butter, Denny will bring soup, either Pat or Peggy will bring soup. Kathi will bring salad and tea.

**Rollheiser's book:**

*Our One Great Act of Fidelity* most of the first 40 copies have been sold. Lorna will begin to organize the discussion groups for the Easter Season. Kathi will write a paragraph to explain the overarching theme of Eucharist to run through the film series, the book, the retreat, and the summer preaching series.

**Earth Day:**

Jim Lochner has agreed to work with Kathi on a presentation of the film "Journey of the Universe." The overarching question being, The ancients drew from their understanding of the universe to inform their theology, now that our understanding of the cosmos has expanded, what does our current cosmology saying to us about our creator? Kathi will ask Ray Heil if he would like to work on this.

Next meeting is on April 28 about 15 minutes after mass.

**Liturgy Committee [Audrey Rogers, Chair]**

The Liturgy Committee met on March 4, 2013.

**Training: Lectors**

Nearly ¾ of the 9:30 Mass lectors have attended the first session of a two-part training conducted by Don Henderson and Jim Lochner. Other Mass lectors and

groups using the ambo audio system were also invited and an average of half of them also attended. We hope to have the second session finished before Pentecost and an alternative training program will be offered after Easter for those lectors who had schedule conflicts for the first.

### **Lent**

We finalized plans for the Lenten services and addressed two issues. The first has to do with the poor attendance at Lenten services other than the Triduum; and the second had to do with the desirability of the sung St. John's Passion on Good Friday since the committee had received complaints about its length and nature. The Liturgy Committee divided in its opinions. We are planning to use Survey Monkey to assess parishioner assessment of what we offer in Lent to gain insight.

### **Eastertide Events**

We also finalized planning for these events which include Baptismal Exegesis and our usual May services for First Communion, High School Seniors, and Marriage Vow Renewal.

**2013 and 2014 Summer Series** (The designated weekends are 7/7, 7/14, 7/21. Theme will be on the *Dimensions of the Eucharist*. The planning subcommittee will begin meeting in April.

### **2012-13 Committee Goals**

We have met all our goals except committee expansion. We await registration data to contact potential new members.

Next meeting is May 20.

## **Facilities Committee Report [Pat Ball, Chair]**

1. Harford came out to do an analysis on the design of our heating system to brainstorm strategies which will enable us to attain our desired room temperatures. Prices on those proposals will be coming soon.
2. The font project has progressed considerably. The marble is all in place. The camera and audio are all installed. The wood work that embraces the font has begun. Though we have missed out March 1 completion date, the project should be completed well before Holy Week.
3. The sacristy windows are being refurbished by Baltimore Trade's Guild.
4. Chris is waiting on one more bid for the painting of the exterior of the church. He will meet with Facilities and A&A committees to discuss this and other upcoming projects and prioritize them for council's approval. This will be an update of the list that was brought before council in 2007.
5. Structural engineers were out to create a proposal for supporting the joists that are structurally questionable in the upper croft area of the Church. Bids are being collected and work on this will probably begin in the next month depending on the insurance company.

6. Drywall that was damaged in the ceiling of the basement bathroom area from the clogged downspout has been replaced and repainted.
7. No progress on the permit for the kitchen in the church basement.
8. The tile in Fr. Church's bathroom is not readily repairable because it was discovered that the tub is sinking into the floor. Upon examination, it was discovered that not only is the tub leaking and making the underlying joist wet (causing it to be covered with white mold), it is also cracked. The plan is to wait until Fr. Dick has moved out to repair the damaged joist. It will require tearing out Fr. Dick's apartment bath ceiling and the tub in Fr. Chuck's bathroom to get at the joist to repair it.
9. Chris is still trying to coordinate a visit with Dynastics so that we can get another bid on a maintenance contract for our HVAC systems.
10. BG&E was out to do an energy audit on our lighting. They made notes on fixtures and bulbs that need to be changed. They will pay 80% of the costs. They will send someone out to look into the efficiency of our HVAC system next.

#### **Social Action Committee** [Peggy Meyer, Co-Chair]

The **Archdiocesan Social Ministry Convocation** recognized our parishioners, Joe and Peggy Cronyn, with life time achievement awards: Joe especially for his leadership in Jonestown Planning Council, and Peggy for hers in *The Resource Exchange*.

**The Resource Exchange:** We supplied 7 individuals, whom Healthcare for the Homeless placed in apartments, with furniture and starter kits in February. Many volunteers picked up furniture, shopped for needed items, put together starter kits, sent letters and conducted moves.

**Gun Violence:** Robert Peterson began interviews with guests on Friday evening to develop a documentary to focus on gun violence in the inner city.

#### **The Peace & Justice Subcommittee:**

We participated in a rally in Annapolis protesting gun violence. We had instructors at the Social Ministry Convocation and many attendees. As we join BRIDGE in the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, we invite you to walk with us through the city beginning at noon at City Hall. The Maryland Senate passed repeal of the death penalty and it should go to the floor of the House of Delegates this week. Thank you to those who contacted legislators. Call to Action is here in Maryland on April 6th. Please consider attending. We supported Caroline Umana in the first *Roots and Branches* project by building garden structures.

**Jonestown Planning Council:** Developers attended and reported their plans for several properties in the neighborhood. One resident reported on CityLab activities of the Hopkins Carey Business School students, who also attended.

**Emergency Services:** We gave groceries to about 100 families and spent about \$350 in February. The men's program gave clothing to 55 men in February and spent about \$800.

**Friday Dinner for the Hungry:** We continue to serve 150-250 guests each Friday evening.

**St. Vincent Park:** *Helping Up Mission* men clean the park the first Saturday of each month so parishioners don't have to cover that day.

The Parish Council Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes submitted by  
Graham Yearley, Secretary