

Church of St Patrick
Parish Council
MINUTES: January 11, 2024

Members Present: Fr Kuss, Terry Kapsen, Ivan Pittaluga, Zach Neuman, Lisa Romain, Bernadette Daly, Andy Piazza, Mike Weibel, Cappy Moore, Allison Schmidt, Brian Brown

Members Present via Zoom: Bill Schnobrich, Grace Hanson

Members Not Present: Daniel Farris, Roseanne Strand, Jim Swanke

Meeting Objective: Parish updates and priority matters followed by strategic planning discussion to review survey results from parishioners and findings from benchmarking interviews with other local churches.

December 14, 2023, Meeting's Minutes Approved

Introductions

- Meeting attendees introduced themselves and their roles.

Parish Update & Priorities/Fr. K

- Updates to parish events calendar needed for second-half 2023-2024 fiscal year.
- Input needed to assess possible changes to weekend Mass schedules.
- Chair and Team needed to manage 2024 Garage Sale

Potential Changes Discussed

- Number and timing of weekend Masses
- Scheduling annual fundraising appeals
- Planning for church festival

Strategic Planning - Review of Parish Survey Results from January/Zach N & Ivan P

- Overall high satisfaction rating around 90%
- About 50% of respondents provided recommendations
 - Not enough data for statistical significance, so need to rely on judgment.
- Some "easy wins" are possible by addressing common requests.

Strategic Planning - Benchmarking Interviews with Other Churches/Mike W

St. Gabriel's of Hopkins, MN

- Pre-pandemic attendance was ~600 weekly attendees, getting close to that number.
- Very engaged Hispanic population and strong community outreach.
- Struggling with youth ministry and faith formation.
- Recently consolidated with another parish, so their focus is on becoming one community again.

St. Edward's of Bloomington, MN

- About 1200-1300 member households, 3000 total members.
- Seeing slow decline since pandemic.
- Financially challenged by loss of older donors and lack of younger giving.
- Completed strategic plan recently, hired planning consultant.
- The biggest challenge is engaging the next generation and youth.

St. Patrick's of Oak Grove, MN

- Listed 2200 members, about 1000 active.
- Attendance down 20% post-pandemic.
- Finance committee supportive but have infrequent meetings.
- Do not have parish council yet.
- New pastor and staff, so a lot of transitioning.
- Struggling financially and with capital needs.

Key Church Interview Takeaways

- Attendance and engagement are down across most churches post-pandemic.
- Attracting and retaining youth and young families is a common challenge.
- Many churches face financial struggles and inflation impacts on giving.
- Leadership transitions and lack of volunteers are pain points.
- Outreach and service are strengths for engaged parishioners.

Next Steps for February Meeting:

- Break into subgroups by topic to provide recommendations:
 - Festival planning
 - Future of nativity scene (Diorama)
 - Weekend Mass schedule.
- Gather more data from parishioners on proposed Mass changes.
- Share recommendations with Father Kuss before next meeting.
- Continue benchmarking interviews.