

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2025

Zoom

Members in attendance: Fr. John Dillon, Marianne Deausen, Guy Federico, Todd Grams, Bernie McGuire, and Ann Pierre.

Others in attendance: Deacon Jim Datovech, Deacon James McCann, and Communications Coordinator Melissa Egan.

- The meeting was called to order at 7:34 pm.

At its first meeting of the new fiscal year, the Parish Pastoral Council heard much about our parish's ability to worship well soon, both in reviewing the annual Financial Report for the year that ended June 30 and learning the status of projects funded through our recent capital campaign.

Fr. John Dillon presented the council with the Annual Parish Financial Report for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2025. This document showed that the parish ended the most recent fiscal year with a slight surplus, posting \$1.65 million in total income and \$1.64 million in total expenses. It likewise showed the budget for the current fiscal year as projected to balance, with \$1.63 million in income and \$1.63 million in expenses.

Council members had a series of questions about the document. Todd Grams inquired why offertory collections were slated to drop over the next two years; Fr. John said it was due to the parish not having an offertory appeal last fall, since the capital campaign was already underway. Ann Pierre asked whether anything was being done to promote offertory giving among our new parishioners; Fr. John replied that most of the newcomers are attending our Mass in Spanish and that the staff would work on encouraging them to give. Bernie McGuire asked why the archdiocesan assessment was going up and then down; Fr. John pointed to the new archdiocesan policy to increase assessments, meaning much of the money collected by parishes would now be taxed.

Deacon Jim then updated the council on the status of projects funded by the capital campaign. They are as follows:

- **Replacement of heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system for the church, Gathering Space and Parish Center:** The parish solicited four bids to replace its HVAC system and completed paperwork for HVAC commissioning with Montgomery County. After the archdiocesan College of Consultors approved the project in June, a contract was signed in August with Carrier. The parish ordered customized units in mid-September and they will likely be installed in January 2026.
- **Replacement of lighting control system:** Pirro Electric secured the bid to replace the lighting control system. Technicians are replacing it in the church during business hours from October 29-November 4, 2025.

- **Replacement of HVAC system in the Rectory:** The system in the Rectory needs to be replaced. The parish is in the process of soliciting three bids on it.
- **Outdoor stairs:** The parish is studying two options: replacing the stairs or installing a sidewalk so that people can walk to the parking lot. Deacon Jim said it may make sense to install the sidewalk, because stairs could be dangerous for children.
- **Steps leading from the Rectory to the parking lot:** Parish Secretary Donna Zezzo has indicated that these steps are crumbling and need to be replaced.
- **Steps going up to the two side doors of the church:** These two sets of steps have also deteriorated, such that the rebar is exposed. They will also need to be replaced.
- **Organ:** Music Director Janet Pate is working on acquiring quotes for a new organ. She has looked at both Rodgers and Allen organs at area churches; these are the two major organ manufacturers. It appears that the parish will have the money to replace the organ by the first quarter of 2026.
- **Piano:** Although his work is not funded by capital campaign proceeds, the piano refurbisher who has been rebuilding a new piano for the church appears to be making progress. The money for the piano rebuild is in hand and will not be drawn from capital campaign funds.

Because of so many possible upgrades to the church sanctuary – new flooring, pews, choir area, organ and rebuilt piano– Deacon Jim said the parish should hire an architect to sketch out an overall plan for how it will look. The principals with Mullineaux & Mullineaux, the firm the parish had used to build the Rectory and Kuehner Room, have retired, so the church will need to look at another firm.

Deacon Jim also mentioned that the bids for the HVAC system for the church campus and the lighting control system came in \$30,000 less than previously anticipated. The parish leaders working on this project will assess how much money is left over after the above projects are completed and will prioritize funding with what they have left.

Other projects Deacon Jim mentioned that the church would like to look at include security enhancements for the Rectory; electronically outfitting all the meeting spaces; and providing a quiet room where people could watch Mass.

In other business, the council heard an update on the planned Ministry Fair. Ann Pierre said the planning committee of Marianne Deausen, Chris King and herself have confirmed the weekend of January 10-11, 2026, for the ministry fair. Tables will be set up on a first-come, first-served basis and should include Lectors, Altar Guild, Altar Servers, St. Vincent de Paul, and the Communications ministries.

Some proposed ministries the committee would like to consider being established or expanded include an At-home Ministry, Prayer Chain, Writers of the Prayers of the Faithful, a Cry Room, and a Health/Mental Health Ministry.

Ann also reported on the dinner and a movie event from 6:30-8:30 pm Saturday, November 15, to screen the documentary, "A Place at the Table: African-Americans on the Path to Sainthood." The film features the six African-Americans who are in the queue to become saints in our Church. Sponsored by the

council's Ad-hoc Committee on Racism, the event will provide dinner to attendees before the film at 6 pm. Committee members are promoting it widely outside of the parish.

In other business, the council also heard ministry reports from the following ministries:

- **Religious Education:** The ministry has seen the retirement of Religious Education Administrative Assistant Marie Purdy and hired Francesca Santos as the new Assistant to the DRE. Vacation Bible Camp from June 23-27 served 60 campers and was facilitated by 51 teen volunteers and 18 adult volunteers. The Religious Education Program has 131 students registered for Sunday Elementary and Monday Elementary instruction. Seventy-one middle school students are enrolled in the Monday and Tuesday classes. Seven students each are enrolled in the Special Needs Catechesis class, the High School Catechesis class, and the new Sisters of Strength Bible Study class for high-school aged girls. In addition, 23 students are enrolled in the RE Homeschool Model. For Sacramental Preparation, the parish is readying 44 children for First Reconciliation and First Eucharist this year and 37 teens for the Sacrament of Confirmation. In addition, three children and one teen are preparing for full initiation in the Church following the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults, adapted for children.
- **Communications:** Work included submitting articles for the August and September issues of *Our Parish Times*; organizing a parishwide thank-you for parishioners' participation and support for capital campaign; and beginning work on a video project to commemorate the parish having worshipped in the church for 50 years this year.
- **Music:** Report included the Choir having started singing again; the first Children's Choir rehearsal having taken place in mid-September; and the report on the October concert having benefitted the St. Vincent de Paul Society Conference of St. Francis of Assisi.
- **Knights of Columbus, Council 2323:** Conducted the Sweepstakes Ticket Sales; sponsored a senior dance; providing games at the Parish Picnic on October 5; conducted the Tootsie Roll Drive for children with special needs; sponsored a pumpkin carving event on October 18; hosted a potluck dinner and benefits seminar on October 21; participated in the Shady Grove Pregnancy Gala on October 23; and participating in a bed build event on November 8 with the nonprofit Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Teens who need Student Service Learning hours are invited to attend with a parent.
- **New Neighbor Interfaith Alliance:** Successfully executed the second Set Them Up for Success Volleyball Tournament on August 23, which netted nearly \$19,000 to subsidize or pay for rental costs for its New Neighbors.
- **Couples for Christ:** The lay ecclesial ministry sponsored a Marian Conference on October 25.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:08 pm.