

Sacred Heart Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

November 10, 2024

Council members present: Alex Amado, Colleen Boone, Rob Cassleman, Sandra Gallardo-Cook, Trisha Doumit (co-chair), Fr. Steve Dublinski, Rich Heath, Bunnie Lawhead, Phil Nelson, Marie Wallace Parrish co-chair). Mary Sutherland, parish secretary.

Opening Prayer - Our Father.

Starting up a new Parish Facilities Committee: We need to form a committee as soon as possible, with a chair, or a couple of people to head it up. The previous exploratory and facilities committees (starting in 2015) had no term limits, so people stayed on indefinitely; this one needs a simple charter with defined terms. Those committees looked at multiple options for improving our church campus, including remodeling onsite, tearing down the current buildings and rebuilding onsite, or going offsite and building a new building or remodeling an existing one. The off-site options were unbelievably expensive, and tearing down onsite was very high also. The consensus of the current pastoral council is that we should stay onsite and improve where we are.

A parish survey in 2022 found that half of parishioners had concerns about moving and half had concerns about staying, but that 64% would support either option. Of those who would not, 15% wanted to stay, 9% to move, the rest were undecided. The previous committees were formed in response to problems with parking availability, problems in the neighborhood, accessibility, space in the church and social hall, classroom safety, etc. Attendance has dropped since the pandemic. There is currently no problem with parking or space in the church. There are fewer students in the neighborhood; a number of houses are empty. We have fewer children in faith formation classes so the two classrooms with no additional exit are not in use.

Accessibility and space in the social hall during large events are still problems, and the classrooms are not ideal. In addition, the church itself (not the annex or social hall), has a very old electrical system called knob and tube. The load on it was reduced by using LED lighting, but it should be replaced eventually. The church has no fresh air intake for the heating and cooling system. The filters used now are very strong, and are replaced consistently, but a better system would be helpful. Both systems will be expensive to replace. A council member brought up an additional problem: there is very little room for a choir and musicians up by the altar.

A facilities committee should have people with competence in certain areas, plus representatives from different groups. For that reason, it is better to ask/appoint people rather than have general nominations. There should be a maximum of eight members. We will have a separate fund-raising committee. Rob Cassleman and Rich Heath agreed to be on the new committee; they are council members with prior experience on the former committees. They and Fr. Steve will put together a good group. They will refer to the architect's report the parish commissioned in 2020, which is at <https://www.sacredheartpullman.org/new-church-plans>

Parish Food Pantry – do we need a food pantry ministry? Is that something the Youth Group could help with? The pantry is very successful. Parishioners are using it. Keeping it organized and stocked is difficult. Right now there are only about three people working on it. The council liked the idea of having it be an official parish ministry. Maybe some youth would like to help keep it organized since they want to put their faith into action. Parishioners who expressed interest in joining a service group when they answered the small group survey could help. The council members didn't think we should make it bigger. Some thought it might be better to move it into the annex. One problem with keeping it organized now is there is no designated place to put any food donations, and they tend to pile up near it. We need to fix that.

Upcoming Events: Fr. Steve asked that council members try to attend some of these, and they will.

Spaghetti Dinner & Dessert Auction, 5:30 pm, Saturday, November 16.

Theology on Tap for all adults at Rico's – Just War Theory, 6:30 pm, Monday, November 18.

Church Leaf-Raking and Clean-up, breakfast at 8 am, work to follow, Saturday, November 23.

Advent Wreath Making, pizza, and stuffing finals bags, 5:30 pm, Sunday, December 1.

Monday, Dec. 9 is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. (Since Dec. 8 is a Sunday, it transfers to Monday.)

All Saints Day and Day of the Dead Update: More people than expected showed up for the 6:30 pm Mass, 86. Many Spanish-speaking people came. A dozen college students attended because it was earlier than the Mass at St. Thomas More at WSU. They all said thank you for the celebration. We should coordinate with WSU so we have different holy day Mass times. The food was very good, and people appreciated the slide show about The Day of the Dead in Mexico. The movie was a little late for children, but looked pretty in the background. Next year All Souls is celebrated on Sunday. We will do something after the Masses, including Spanish Mass.

Closing prayer: Glory Be.

Submitted by Mary Sutherland