

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE COUNCIL MEETING - September 17, 2025

The Finance Council of the Divine Grace Parish met for a regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, at the 2nd Ward Sanctuary (Ellwood City, PA). The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Father Jim with an opening prayer.

Those in attendance: Father James Wehner, Jamie Shearer(P), Amy Behun, Peter Boyer, Jay Cortez, Felicia DiNardo, Joe Ennis, Chelsey Knapton, Licia Lentz, Frank Lordi, Kate Maseth-Ready, and Frances Tartal.

Staff: Deacon Don Pepe

Absent/Excused: Daniel Jenkins, Andrew Welch

A. BRIEF REPORTS AND UPDATES:

1. St. Agatha property sale: This is complete; we received a check for \$185,000 after fees.
2. Ritzer Hall property sale: Deacon Don stated we are waiting on a closing date. All religious items have been removed. Butler County really wanted the property as they can put it to great use for the community. Total sale proceeds are \$696,434.55 from a net sales price of \$750,000.00, Gia Albanowski, Realtor, Berkshire Hathaway, completed the sale and net sheet.
3. St. Gregory organ restoration: Gifts and donations of close to \$300,000 toward the total project cost of \$600,000.00. Approximately 2,000 pipes are being installed. Father Jim plans on doing a second round of donor appeals to help offset the cost. Proceeds from the Ritzer Hall sale will be applied to the restoration fund as well.
4. Potential property sale at St. Ferdinand/Form A: We are currently in a holding pattern, as Cranberry Township must have Town Hall Meetings, such as we had, to get the citizens' feedback regarding the property purchase and the township's plans for it. More than likely, nothing will happen until after the first of the year. At that point, the township will make a formal presentation to us with an offer. We haven't seen the terms of the sale/purchase, but if there are concerns, an addendum may be added. It was pointed out that appraisals are valid for six months; the current appraisal is currently out of date.
5. Parish Appeal Progress (compared to last year): This year our goal is \$504,000.00; we have exceeded the goal. Last week our number stood at \$541,000.00.

6. IRA Distribution Letter: This will be deferred until after the Zoom meeting with the Diocese and their presentation of the new Catholic Foundation on October 15, 2025.

B. ACTION ITEMS:

1. The minutes of the June 18, 2025, combined Divine Grace Finance and Pastoral Council meeting were read and approved as written with a motion by Felicia DiNardo, second by Jay Cortez, and approved with a unanimous voice vote.
2. The minutes of the July 16, 2025, combined Divine Grace Finance and Pastoral Council meeting were read and approved as written with a motion by Kate Maseth-Ready, second by Felicia DiNardo, and approved with a unanimous voice vote.
3. August 2025 Finance Statements: Revenue was up \$40,000; nothing extraordinary in the August, 2025 Finance Statement. We continue to be in excellent financial position. Chelsey Knapton had a question about \$872,000 of other income #4890. Father Jim explained that money was from Covid for the three parishes, as we did not have to lay off any workers. So, basically "free" money. Jamie Shearer questioned where we are seeing the expense of the Parish Magazine. Father Jim said that expense of \$6,000 is under Faith Formation. He noted that we only signed a three -month contract. The "goal" of the magazine is to be self- supporting by advertisers. This is not happening as of yet. Father stated that our regular weekly Bulletin costs us NOTHING, and we actually get \$20,000 yearly.
4. Property purchase at Holy Redeemer: A recommendation and a motion from the Temporalities Committee was reviewed by the Council. After an on-site meeting and based on past studies and recommendations, the Temporalities Committee recommended to NOT purchase the blighted building adjacent to Holy Redeemer Church for the purpose of adding eight additional parking spaces. The building cost was estimated at \$20,000; BUT the cost to demolish and asbestos remediation (which was priced six years ago) etc., is well over \$200,000.00. Father Jim said while he appreciates the fact that the building is an eyesore, he can't justify that expense. A motion to accept and endorse the parish Temporalities recommendation to NOT purchase the building located adjacent to the Holy Redeemer Church was made by Kate Maseth-Ready, second by Amy Behun, and approved with a unanimous voice vote.

C. BIG THINK:

1. EITC Funding from NexTier for St. Gregory's School/ Are there others? / is this our responsibility?

2. Opportunity for Solar at Divine Grace: Kate Maseth-Ready did a presentation on the benefit of solar to non-profits (no tax credit but a direct payment from the IRS for most likely 40% of the total project cost) to allow them to participate in clean energy. Kate outlined steps necessary to proceed before starting the bid process, if in fact Divine Grace Parish decides to pursue solar for the campuses. She pointed out that the Big Beautiful Bill has closed the window for this credit/payment. As a result, commercial as well as non-profit solar projects must be started no later than July 4, 2026, and be in service (operational) by December 31, 2027. If Divine Grace is to go this route, time is of the essence. No sense leaving 40% of a large project cost on the table. Father Jim asked Deacon Don Pepe give the presentation to the Temporalities Council for their review/discussion and Finance Council revisit/discuss.

D. MOVING FORWARD:

1. Diocesan Foundation Presentation – Wednesday, October 15, 2025, via Zoom

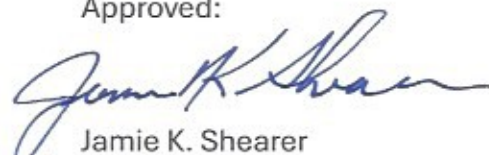
There being no further business, Father Jim offered a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

The next regular meeting of the Divine Grace Finance Council is scheduled for Wednesday, October 15, 2025 via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted:


Kate Maseth-Ready
Recording Secretary

Approved:


Jamie K. Shearer
Chairman

Date: 11-19-2025