

# St Ambrose Parish Pastoral Council Minutes

7PM, Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2025

Present; Jim Cousino, Paul Rahn, Dave Rutten, Janet Ouellette-Westra, Marilyn Thornburg, Bronwen Grody, Father Albert Kemboi, Msgr. Michael Hazard, Mary Hentschl-Early, Judie Maliszewski.

Absent: Greg Adamczyk

Opening Prayer: All – Holy Spirit Prayer

Tonight's Meeting Minutes: Dave Rutten

Parish Financial Report: Bronwen distributed the July through October financial report. The November report was unavailable because the Diocese has not yet communicated November parish investment results. October expenses are also understated because a bank deposit intended for the Parish Account was incorrectly deposited to the Food Lift Account. The correction will be recorded in November. Year to date Sunday collections are about even with last year. Food Lift expense is understated because of the incorrect deposit. Other expenses including Parish Salaries, the September Picnic (new for this year) and Catholic Schools Subsidy (up 2.4% or \$100/month) are up. Rectory furnace was repaired and the clothes dryer was replaced.

Finance Council Meetings: Meet this year on the first Tuesdays in February, May, August, and November.

Parish Council Meetings: Meet in March on the first Tuesday (because of the priests' retreat) and on the second Tuesday of other odd numbered months.

Order of Christian Initiation of Adults: One candidate is currently participating in this year's program.

Religious Education: 33 students from 18 parishioner families are enrolled. 8 catechists are doing the instruction. K/1<sup>st</sup> has 6 students, 2<sup>nd</sup> (First Communion) has 3, 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> has 7, 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> has 5, 7<sup>th</sup> has 6, and 8<sup>th</sup> (Confirmation) has 6 students.

Parish Mass Attendance: Average Sunday Mass attendance in December was 312. Christmas attendance at the three Masses was 499 and Solemnity of Mary Mass attendance was 149, so weekly Mass attendance including holydays is 417. Church attendance increases when religious education is in session. Mass attendance for 2024 is up more than 6% over 2023.

Parish Livestreaming: Parish participation through Livestream Masses has tapered off as in person participation has increased. In 2024 on average, 16 persons participated in weekly Livestreamed Masses. Parishioners unable to attend in person continue to offer very positive feedback on Livestream Mass offerings.

Lent & Easter Schedule: A proposed schedule will be discussed at the Council's March meeting. Easter in 2025 is April 20<sup>th</sup>.

2025 Bishop's Annual Appeal (BAA): St. Ambrose surpassed our 2024 goal of \$63,153 with \$89,646 pledged. To date \$72,663 has been paid, but some payments will continue in early 2025. Typically about 96% of pledges are paid. The 2025 BAA begins the last week of April and continues through early June until Pentecost Sunday (June 8). Parish goals are 18% of prior year Sunday collections less a reduction based on the number of parishioner students attending

Catholic schools. The Diocese in 2025 is assuming responsibility for all pledge and payment processing. Parishes will mail all pledges and BAA payments to the Diocese for deposit. Council members offered suggestions on how to improve this year's campaign. Parishioners need to know how the money is used. Father Albert will appoint a BAA Committee to lead the 2025 campaign.

Parish Strategic Plan: A large group of parishioners developed a parish Strategic Plan in late 2019 just before Covid. The plan focused initially on improving communications. Newsletters along with improving the parish website and Facebook offerings were the result. Father Albert in 2025 would like to develop an updated Strategic Plan or roadmap for 2026-2030. He will appoint a Committee to develop an updated Strategic Plan.

Spring Newsletter: Council members agreed to another Newsletter to be mailed just before Lent. Articles to inform parishioners about parish activities will be due February 15 with a mailing target of March 1.

Designated gift: The Parish has used portions of a donation to remove a damaged tree in front of the rectory. The remainder will be used to remove several other weak trees, provide more storage for funeral lunches, and to add additional countertop and storage in the Parish Activity Center front hall.

Parish Council Secretary: Jim asked who is willing to serve as Council secretary. Options were discussed including Judie continuing to serve, rotating among members, or seeking a non-member volunteer. No final decision was made.

Communion under Both Species: Judie asked about Communion under both species. Offering the Precious Blood will be continued and parishioner interest will be evaluated.

Closing Prayer: Hail Mary and Blessing (All)

Next Scheduled Meeting: March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 7 PM (see "Parish Council Meetings" above).