



**Parish Council Town Hall Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, September 24, 2025**  
**7:00PM**

The meeting was advertised in the bulletin that the entire parish was invited to participate and offer feedback, support and gather as a parish. The aura of the meeting represented the sentiment of Faith in the St. Anns community.

1. Opening prayer and Welcome from Fr. Matt Laird.
2. Introduce member of the Parish Council- each council member had the opportunity to share their personal experiences in the parish.
3. Deacon Joe McGinley- He will celebrate his 18<sup>th</sup> year as a Deacon in October 2025. He is responsible for many parish activities such as support for the Faith Formation, oversight of altar servers, presentations at OCIA, as well as being the co-director for permanent deacons in our diocese; he is also aligned with literacy center in Attleboro as English as a second language.
4. Tom Wilbur- Chair and President of the St. Anns Parish Council; Tom is also a member of the Knights of Columbus, is a lector and participates in numerous parish activities
5. Cheryl Schondek- She has been a parishioner for over 4 decades and is currently a Lector, Eucharistic Minister, member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, has taught Faith Formation, support the youth groups, youth choirs and numerous parish activities.
6. Loraine Levy- She has been in the parish for over 25 years and is the finance council liaison, a lead on the beautification committee, a former employee of the Fall River Diocese, and is the co-chair for upcoming Trivia Night Activity.
7. Chris Buckley- He has been an extremely active parishioner for 12 years; Chris is a member of the Knights of Columbus and former Grand Knight; he does a great deal of work with the Scouts, has led numerous parish events including the annual cook outs and can be seen around Raynham supporting families.
8. Joan Lynn- She is the current Director of Faith Formation; Joan has been in the parish for over 6 decades and has worked with several Pastors. She is involved in numerous parish activities with her most important one is oversight of over 350 students in this year's Faith Formation Program from grades 1 to 9.

She understands the needs of the student as a retired educator and someone who attended CCD at St. Anns Church.

9. Trish Cady- Trish is an active member of the parish and has attended Mass for over 49 years here at St. Anns. She is active member of our Faith Formation Organization, lending her services with teaching, organizing events and several student activities. As a current educator in the local district, she is always ready to lend her expertise.
10. Karen Toste- She has been attending Mass with her wonderful family for over 35 years and has been a member of the Catholic Faith for over 30 years. Karen participated in the RCIA program and was welcomed into the Church by Deacon John Welch. Karen is very active in the parish with oversight of the OCIA program, leads and participated in 2 Women's Groups Bible Study Programs, is an advocate for the church, continues to support the Adult Faith Formation Program and is supportive all Parish events. Karen and her husband Frank give their time, talent and treasure to support the parish. Karen's six children have received all sacraments here.
11. Ed Merritt- He has been an extremely active member of the parish since 2002. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus and currently the Grand Knight. He oversees the annual parish picnic and is the technical expert who assisted with the new website, all sound systems and set up the live stream for all Masses. parishioner- current Grand Knight- the tech expert- for all events including holidays and celebrations.
12. Jim DeVincenzo- He has been a member of the parish for several decades and received his sacraments at St. Anns with Deacon Welch. He is actively in several ministries such as the Knights of Columbus, is a Eucharistic Minister and Lector. He and his wife are supportive of all functions and events in the parish.
13. Peter Schondek- He has been a parishioner for several decades with his faith driven by his family as his father was in the first class of Deacons for the Fall River Diocese. He is an active member supporting the youth group for over 7 years, teaching Faith Formation for over 10 years, is a Lector, Eucharistic Minister, member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and supports all activities in the parish.
14. Ed Mahoney- Ed is an extremely active member in our St. Ann's community with tremendous dedication and support to the Knights of Columbus.

He supports the parish picnic, food, clothing and blood drives and is always willing to help with numerous activities. He is the former President of the Parish Council and leads with empathy to support the parishioners in our community.

Other Notes: Father Matt shared a detailed power point presentation. Here is brief recap.

1. We have 1700 registered families with approximately 400 who attend Mass regularly. *Action Item:* Let's collaborate to increase participation at MASS.
2. Mass Counts are taken in November in most parishes. The parishes on Cape Cod are taken during the summer months. We have seen a high of 1100 ; however, the most recent count in 2024 shows that on average 724 attended Mass.
3. Other statistics:
  - a. Baptisms- 17 in 2025, 81 in 2024
  - b. First Communions- 60 students in 2025
  - c. Confirmations- the numbers are skewed since we consolidated and moved the age requirement back to grade 9 from grade 10.
  - d. Weddings- 3 in 2025
4. The parish is active compared to other parishes in the diocese.
5. Financial Recap
  - a. Goal to operate without a deficit- we are currently in a favorable position.
  - b. We have a separate finance council who work with Fr. Matt
  - c. We hold 2 months of operating cost which is approximately \$70K.
  - d. The balance of our money is held at the Diocesan level as they have a financial advisor, and it offers consistency for all parishes.
  - e. We are in the process of the annual collection to support the repairs in the parish center. The goal is to exceed last year's collection of \$100K.
6. The parish was one of three churches to participate in a survey- The DMI survey was conducted by the Christian Leader Institute.
  - a. There were 261 participants via the online and paper format.
  - b. Some results:

i. Highest for Strongly Agree

1. 80% Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ
2. 71%- Scripture is the Word of God
3. 50% Would recommend the parish to a family member, friend or neighbor.

ii. Those with highest percentages of attending Mass shared the following:

1. 80% go to Mass weekly
2. 60% participate in a weekly prayer service
3. 27% have a high degree of Catholic Devotion and prayer spirit

iii. Opportunities revealed in the survey

1. Develop a stronger confidence in teaching; parishioners possess a hunger for a deeper understanding of the faith.
2. Faith of Disciples- we are happy, but there is opportunity for more engagement as parish community. How can we support an increase in vocations.
3. Music can deepen the participation, adding variety, and increased participation.

iv. Parishioners who are involved in 3 or more ministries

1. The sentiment is to remain connected to parish life and building relationships in the community.

v. Feedback on the Leadership

1. Pastor shows care for the community
2. Is involved in several levels
3. Opportunity to expand welcoming attendees at Mass

- c. *Action Item:* Fr. Matt, Cheryl S and Karen T will develop an action plan/next step for the survey

7. Other discussions

- a. How do we get more young people involved. *Action:* send a survey to determine viability to form a youth group.
- b. Explore expanding more devotional prayer.
- c. Vesper- may be nice during the holidays
- d. Should we explore a Life Teen Mass.
- e. Should we have greeters at the doors of the church to welcome participants.
- f. How best to engage the third and fourth graders to participate as an alter server, future Faith Formation teacher, participate in a youth group, and other activities.

#### 8. Last Year's Accomplishments:

- New website
- New Air Conditioner
- New Roof
- Walnut Tree Company removed trees and cleaned the landscape
- Physical Mailbox 675 North Main Street
- Abortions Memorial Blessing
- Church Foundation Painted
- Steeple upgraded during roof work
- Painting in the Parish Hall
- Prayer Posters in the classrooms
- New Drapes
- New Statue
- Parking lot patches

#### 9. Upcoming Projects

- Annual appeal- to support flooring and carpets replaced- safety issues
- Parking lot- over 40 years old- \$300K to 450K cost for total overhaul

1. Goal of \$500K to get the project started – should there be a special second collection envelope
- Covid program rebates- \$30K
  - Question on the lawn updates
  - Handicap lots are not to code.
  - Thoughts on parking lot donations- name your spot for a fee.

10. Closing discussion:

- a. Show the Movie the Chosen- and have a discussion.
- b. OCIA programs - keep building on their faith- be part of the community.
- c. Create small groups for Lent to mentor the new members to the church.
- d. Reach out to Parish Council- via email- publish email and/or phone number.

Great meeting; good dialogue and participation.

Closing prayer by Fr. Matt.

Minutes respectively submitted by Cheryl Schondek