

CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION/ ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA
JOINT PASTORAL COUNCIL MINUTES
Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at Church of the Transfiguration

Pastoral Council Members in Attendance: Rebecca Hartman (chair), Skip Lehman (vice-Chair), Bob Ciccone, Kristen Graham, John Hurley (lay trustee), Erica Jones, Michael Musa (youth rep), Marissa Phelps, Lindsey Ricci, Michael Schell, Tracy Volkman, Charlene Weeks, Kasey Wise (youth rep) and Diane Yacoby

Staff: Meg Kastner, Dan Hofford, Anne Gallagher, Karen Rinefierd, and Margie Benza (via video call)

Ministries: Bob Goldbach and Kathy Kyhos

Excused: Fr. Rob Bourcy and Karen Zielinski

Guests: Ron Jodoin and Keith Bock

Recording Secretary: Martha Jodoin and Donna Mihalik

Rebecca called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m.

Opening Prayer was led by Diane Yacoby. She offered a reflection on today's Bible passage that was about Samuel being called and telling Elijah. After the second time Elijah told him to respond "Here I am Lord."

The third time Samuel was called he did respond "Here I am Lord." How many times does God call us and we don't recognize it?

Welcome: Rebecca wished everyone a Happy New Year. She hoped that our holiday was a blessed time. She thanked everyone for coming out on a wintry night and will try to keep the meeting moving along.

Approval of Minutes: The corrected minutes were sent out the other day. There is one more correction: the Transfiguration Security team members are Margie Benza, Devon VanVechten, Greg Heuther, Pat Vallely and Nancy Wahl. The St. Catherine's Security team is Bob Goldbach, Dan Hofford and Ben Cutter. With this additional correction a motion was made by Charlene Weeks and seconded by Kathy Kyhos to accept the November minutes. All were in favor.

Update on Five-year Planning: Dan Hofford said that there is a meeting tomorrow with trustees and Fr. Rob to discuss the next steps for Five-year planning. What is next with our relationship between the two churches? It would be good to have a plan ready to give to the diocese.

Open Forum

Diane commented that she had gone to St. Catherine's Christmas Eve 4pm and that it was crowded and St. Catherine's did a good job of crowd control.

Diane also listened to Anne and Karen's podcast. She suggested that it would be good to have a trailer on the podcast in the lobby, maybe special moments, to promote it and attract more people. Maybe the podcast should have shorter segments. Anne responded that they are working on keeping them shorter.

Tracy said the choir did a beautiful job.

Concern was expressed that only 8 people showed up for Evening Prayer at St. Catherine's. Turnout at Transfiguration is higher as it was a tradition there. Some said maybe it was too close to Christmas and maybe the last one should be skipped. Margie explained that it is a tradition (with liturgical significance) to have Evening Prayer for the 4 weeks of Advent. Kathy said people loved the smaller attendance at St.

Catherine's and it was thought provoking. Rebecca said that she liked the quiet and peacefulness of Evening Prayer and filing out in silence.

The Christmas Concert was well attended and the music was beautiful. It is held every two years. It was bad weather driving home; people thought that the smaller attendance may have been because of the weather.

Rebecca said that people have told her they wanted to get the projectors fixed and a person said they would be willing to contribute money. When there is a special project people are willing to donate. Two out of the three projectors are broken. Dan responded that they have one estimate and need to get at least one more. If we had monitors instead of projectors, they would be a distraction and the screen wouldn't be able to project words large enough to be seen. A bid of \$10,000 is high, but the projector needs to be easy to use and still work with the computer system that sends the information to the monitor. The sound system that we have is robust and requires tech savy. Should we contact the Diocese IT people? Dan says he will contact them. We need to make sure what we use is more accessible for people with hearing loss.

To increase parishioner attendance at Pastoral Council Meetings, it was suggested that we publish the agenda on the website, and/or add more content to announcements. For example, we could add that the topics to be discussed at the meeting will be ... and welcome all to attend and be a part of the discussion. It was suggested that we could take a survey, have hard copy in pews or a QR code, have teens available to assist people who don't know how to use QR code. We are open for comments. We need to know if we are falling short on something. In Fr. Rob's weekly email we could add two or three highlights of upcoming topics at meeting. One of the problems is we don't know in advance what topics will come up during Open Forum.

How did the Christmas collection do since there were no special envelopes? Christmas came in less than budgeted. December monthly collection is up, however-which could be because we asked people to contribute more, and perhaps also because the diocese is out of bankruptcy. It is hoped the finances will look good at end of fiscal year. We already know that for the next budget, salaries are going up 4% and insurance 10%; staffing is always the biggest challenge with respect to parish finances. We also have a demographic challenge. The larger donors are older. We need younger donors, but there are fewer of them and the ones that do often do not give as much due to their current stage of life. It is good to hear people share how and why they give. We used to have children's envelopes which helped them understand the need to donate to the church. St. Catherine's has met CMA goal. They had people speaking on it. Transfiguration is close to meeting goal.

1. Would like to see demographics of the parishes
2. How many registered families?

Update Alpha: Anne stated that the program was successful last spring. They needed to postpone this year's program because of a death in her family took time away from planning a team. It is important to have the right people to fill the roles and a kitchen crew. It was an adult program that the whole family benefited from. It was nice to hear faith sharing, enrich marriages, share a meal, and have a program for children. Since teens watched the kids, it allowed both parents to attend. One group is still meeting quarterly. It was a good program that included social and spiritual. We will do it again in the future.

NCYC: Anne reported that they had a fantastic time. 15 young people attended, as well as chaperones. Teens will speak at mass the end of January or February. A short video will be available to thank people and there will be a longer podcast. Her goal is to bring 27 teens in 2027.

Proposal for a shared event was tabled because of Fr. Rob's absence.

Discussion of upcoming Lent/Easter events was also tabled.

Covenant Review: How are we following or not following it?

Comments included how well written the covenant is. Karen and Donna had several meetings word crafting the covenant. To prepare to write our covenant, covenants from other parishes were reviewed. The agenda should be published in advance. How do we do that? Two officers, Fr. Rob, Meg, and Karen work on the agenda. At their next meeting the agenda committee should discuss how to evaluate. Marissa stated that we only have ten meetings and 2 are social so we only have 8 meetings to make a difference for the whole year. Executive committee could do yearly plan and prioritize issues, understand clustering, financials. If we get feedback from parishioners we could send to agenda committee in advance of meeting so we know what will come up in Open Forum and be able to respond. How much time should we take for Open Forum? If we knew definite topics we could advertise in Fr. Rob's weekly email, or announcements. We should encourage people to come if they want to share feedback.

In the book Effective Catholic Parishes there is a model where the Parish council meets less frequently but for a longer time and has small committees to do work.

Parish council members should wear their name tags to church and possibly sit somewhere new in church to meet parishioners. Ask parishioners if they have any topics they want to see discussed.

Survey?

We need one clear vision/mission statement. Marissa, Tracy, Kristen and Dan are willing to be on a subcommittee to work on this and meet before the next council meeting on Feb. 11.

Karen stated that the nomination/selection process starts in March. We gave covenant to people considering running for parish council. In past St. Catherine's had an orientation meeting. Is this helpful? People stated that the covenant was helpful. Receiving a private call explaining the member's experience was good. At Transfiguration we had more people run than open spots. St. Catherine's took longer to get members. After hearing responsibilities some people drop out. Members thought it is good to have concrete things to say to nominees. If people didn't get selected encourage them to attend meetings anyway and reconsider running again.

There needs to be better communication about concrete work we do. We could have pillars of topics. We are the voice of the parish. We need to make recommendations and evaluate by reviewing our work.

Reports: The following report was submitted by Margie Benza.

Liturgy

- Advent Candlelight Prayer at both parishes was beautiful
- Advent Penance Service took place at Transfiguration jointly with the children's First Penance on Saturday, 12/13/25 at 10AM with 40+ children

- Our thanks to the Arts & Environment Committee for the beautiful enhancement of our worship space for Christmas and their help in dismantling back to Ordinary time this past weekend.
- Christmas Mass attendance at Transfiguration was 12/24 – 4pm-972; 6pm – 307, and 12/25-256
- Our thanks to all who assisted in making our Masses prayerfully beautiful.
- Our usher ministry updated training is scheduled for 1/25/26 with Monroe County Sheriff's Dept.
- Ash Wednesday begins Lent on 2/18/26 at Transfiguration with a 6:45am Mass and 12:10 Ash and Word Service and at St. Catherine's – 9am and 5:30pm Mass.

Pastoral

- Our thirteen-week Grife Share program began 1/8/26 with ten participants.
- CPR training is scheduled for 1/24/26 at Transfiguration.
- Current active ministries are Communion Visitation at Brookdale, Cloverwood and the Highlands, Eucharistic Adoration, Good Samaritan, Respite Ministry, Make-A-Meal, Visitation and Spiritual Direction.

Peace & Justice

- Parishioners generously donated to the November winter clothing drive which supported the LaMadonna Homeless Ministry and Rochester Hope.
- The Christmas Basket served over 170 families with food and gifts and five local food pantries thanks to the many generous sponsors, donors, program coordinators, and volunteers who participated, numbering over one hundred fifty. Special thanks to Denise Nunziato and Nancy Wahl for stepping in extraordinarily this year.
- The Sharing Tree recipient gifts numbered over 200 with five local agencies served.
- The Global Solidarity ministry will be traveling to El Salvador in mid-February with nineteen parishioners participating in their annual Service-Learning trip to visit the community and learn more about our parish supported Early Childhood Education Learning Project for 50 area sites.
- Our Peace & Justice Education Committee is offering a Just Faith eight-week program entitled, Just Action! How to Advocate and Mobilize for Justice starting 2/2/26. See the bulletin for details.
- Mark your calendars for our Annual Potato Supper on Friday, 3/6 at 6pm in the Parish Life Center.
- The PJB Ministry offering peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to the homeless, developed last year, has been a blessing to many with addition of ongoing volunteers.
- Other active ministries are the Monthly Food Collection, and Open-Door mission Collaborative. Support of the Sr. Regis Food Cupboard, St. Andrew's Food Cupboard, Eastern Service Workers, Bethany House, Rochester Hope, the Community Garden resuming in the spring and Care of God's Creation to name a few.

Next Parish Pastoral Council meeting will be Feb. 11 at 7 pm at Transfiguration.

Rebecca adjourned the meeting at 8:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Jodoin