

**St. Gabriel the Archangel Family of Parishes (SGFP)
Pastoral Council Meeting, September 17, 2025
Minutes**

1. Call to Order/Opening Prayer

Chris Knief called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM, and Fr. Kyle Schnippel led the group in prayer. Chris welcomed all present to the meeting of the SGFP Pastoral Council (PC), which includes all five churches within the St. Gabriel the Archangel Family of Parishes: Holy Cross (HC), Our Lady of the Rosary (OLR), St. Christopher (SC), St. John the Baptist (SJB), and St. Peter (SP).

2. Roll Call

Council Members Present: Fr. Kyle Schnippel (Pastor) Tabitha Bentz, SP Nancy Calvelage, SP Jim Dieli, SC Josh Doseck, SJB Jon Duren, SC Hector Guevara, SJB Rick Jobe, OLR John King, OLR (Vice-Chair) Chris Knief, SJB (Chair) Geone Neria, SP Mary Beth Paget, HC Matt Ross, OLR Joel Stammen, SC	Council Recorder: Marsha Loges Staff Present: Sam Ritze, Director of Stewardship Guests Present: Barb Batty, SC Bruce Batty, SJB Tami Kueterman, SJB Rosemary Leingang, SJB Aeden Timbrook, OLR John Underwood, SC (IT Committee Chair) Chris Vagedes, SJB Betty Voisard, SJB Dale Voisard, SJB
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Old Business

3. Approval of Previous Minutes

The July 16, 2025 PC Meeting Minutes were approved as submitted.

4. Management Products Status

Chris introduced the subject of the development of the Management Plan, which is being developed by Joel Stammen and John King, with input from PC Members. That administrative document is intended to define the framework for PC objectives, roles, and operations.

Editor's Note (for context, as indicated during previous PC Meetings):

- A Draft PC Guidance and PC Charter were developed based on existing SC and SJB documents. They address what the PC is, how it will operate, how members will be selected, and other similar administrative matters.
- PC members were to provide comments on those Draft documents, for consideration by the Executive Committee and the PC Committees POCs, at their mid-August meeting.
- The Draft PC Management Plan, which will be a living document, addresses how PC Committees are established, terminology used, how communications will flow, and how to communicate and collaborate with staff liaisons and the management teams.

Joel expressed concern regarding the lack of comments provided by PC members so far, about the Draft PC Management Plan.

- a. It was suggested that, because very few PC members have submitted comments, then perhaps not all members are accustomed to, and so have difficulty with the use of, MS Teams. Perhaps the more typical use of MS Word and email, would be the more appropriate mechanism for PC communication.
- b. It was stated that the use of the terms Council, Committees, and Commissions, as well as the organizational structure chart, do not reflect current SGFP operations and are inconsistent with Beacons of Light guidance. In addition, some suggestions made at previous meetings are not reflected in the current Draft.
- c. Joel stated that the PC Management Plan is a “living document” which will be ever-changing. Any further comments should be provided by September 24, and then all comments will be incorporated into the current version of the document. The updated document will then be presented to the PC for approval.

5. Committee Status

Chris requested a report on the status of the various currently established PC Committees. He also asked that written reports be posted to the MS Teams Pastoral Council Teams Channel, for all PC members to see.

Editor's Note (for context, as indicated during previous PC Meetings):

- *Each Committee POC was to meet with the associated staff liaison to become familiar with the existing processes, strengths, and weaknesses.*
 - *When a Draft PC Management Plan becomes available, they were to prepare initial Draft PC Committee Charters expressing the make-up, roles, responsibilities, and objectives of those Committees.*
- a. Communication – Chair: Josh Doseck; Staff Liaison: Laura Joliat.

Josh reported that he had met with Laura to learn more about ongoing SGFP (all five churches) Communication activities and processes. His initial findings are:

1) Communication products:

- Bulletin, Bulletin inserts, Emails, Weekly Newsletters, Facebook, Livestreams (Masses, Town Halls, etc.), Web site.
- Weekly Mass Schedules, Priests, Intentions, in Bulletin.
- Weekly Announcements of Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals, in Bulletin.
- Weekly Announcements of special events and messages, at Masses
- Communication Request Form.
- Annual Report.
- SGFP Directory.

2) Biggest challenges:

- Old and incomplete email/contact info database.
- Web site updates needed (a HUGE task).
- Other “autonomous” web sites and Facebook pages are being generated independently; thus, that info is not submitted for SGFP-wide communication.

3) Josh offered the following initial suggestions:

- Collaborate with the IT Committee, to develop solutions and tools (e.g., mechanism for parishioners to self-update their email/contact info).
- Assemble a task group of volunteers from all churches, to assist in a thorough Web site review and update.
- Assemble a task group of PC members (or others) from each church, with the necessary computer and communications skills, to analyze and prioritize the known issues.
- Develop job descriptions defining the skill sets required to select appropriate volunteers to fill the roles needed to assist in the communication processes.
- A Communication Committee Charter should be developed, to address current needs and to identify goals, objectives, and a timeline.

b. Worship – Chair: Joel Stammen; Staff Liaison: Paula Kern.

Joel reported that he met with Paula to learn more about ongoing SGFP (all five churches) Worship Commission activities and processes. His initial findings are:

- An overall SGFP Worship Committee, chaired by Paula and involving representatives from all five churches, meets periodically.
- All five churches currently work independently, addressing all elements of Worship at their own churches. However, those processes are not documented.
- The various processes should be documented and then brought together for consideration, to determine what each looks like and to identify any similarities, differences, weaknesses, and concerns.
- A structured plan should be developed, consistent with Archdiocese guidelines, to introduce commonality of all aspects of Worship, across all churches, while also respecting community preferences, traditions, and cultural differences.
- A statement of roles, responsibilities, and specific required skill sets should be developed, to select appropriate volunteers to fill the roles needed to assist in the worship processes.
- A Worship Committee Charter should be developed, to address current needs and to identify goals, objectives, and a timeline.

c. Facilities – Chair: Hector Guevara; Staff Liaison: Norm Shearer, Dennis McGarry.

Hector reported that he met with Norm to learn more about ongoing SGFP (all five churches) Facilities activities and processes. His initial findings are:

- Norm has a good handle on the status of all current and near-term planned Facilities projects.
- St. Christopher has a good team and process for assuring successful Facilities projects, and that process should be considered for replication throughout all five SGFP churches.
- Norm anticipates retiring in March 2026.

d. Finance – currently on hold. No report.

- e. Information Technology (IT) – Chair: John Underwood; Staff Liaison: Mary Beth Sheleman.

John said that he has no updates for this meeting, but to stay tuned for the next meeting, when he will report on the results of his collaboration with the Communications Committee.

- They will focus on exploring technical resources and developing solutions, to streamline technical and non-technical processes in order to push out calendar events to emails, to Facebook, to the SGFP web site, and to Announcements.

New Business

6. Townhalls

- a. Director of Stewardship, Sam Ritze

Chris introduced Sam Ritze, who serves as the SGFP Director of Stewardship. Sam briefly summarized key activities he has undertaken since joining the SGFP Staff on August 1.

- 1) He expressed his pleasure and optimism due to the enthusiastic welcome he has received, and he recognized the unique communities, cultures, and geographic dispersal of each of the churches within SGFP.
- 2) He indicated that for the 13,000 parishioners to become more involved in parish stewardship, they must first feel welcomed and recognized. This can begin with personal greetings by the Ushers/Greeters, at weekly Mass. We should all show caring and hospitality, and get to know families by name.
- 3) He spoke briefly about the importance of recognition of all that stewardship involves, and he emphasized that each parishioner has some element of Time, Talent, and Treasure to offer to our Family of Parishes, as we all grow together in our Faith and in the service of the Lord.

- b. Townhall Topics

Fr. Kyle explained that five Townhall Meetings are planned, one for each SGFP Church, to address the Canonical Merger process and its potential impact on the overall operations of the SGFP Parish Family, and to answer any questions submitted by parishioners. He requested that the PC members listen to parishioner concerns and comments, and be present at those Townhall Meetings. Any questions to be addressed at the meetings must be submitted by October 14. The schedule for the meetings is:

- October 29, Wednesday, 7:00 PM, St. Peter Church
- November 2, Sunday, 11:30 AM, Holy Cross Church
- November 3, Monday, 6:30 PM, St. Christopher Church
- November 9, Sunday, 11:30 AM, St. John the Baptist Church
- November 16, Sunday, 10:00 AM, Our Lady of the Rosary Church

Fr. Kyle said that his Town Hall message will focus on three areas:

- 1) What is a Parish? What is a Church? What is a community of parishioners within a Parish?
- 2) What is the financial impact of the upcoming merger of our five parishes into a single parish?
 - What are shared expenses (which are almost 2/3 of expenditures)?
 - What happens to dedicated funds (e.g., Schools, Grounds, Cemetery, Church Improvement, Outreach, Food Pantry, etc.)?
 - What happens to current and future designated gifts/donations?
 - Who makes financial decisions and controls funds?
- 3) Next steps, leading to approval of a petition to merge into a single parish with five churches (as directed by the Archdiocese).
 - Need feedback from parishioners; need to communicate plans, need to answer questions.
 - Prepare/review/approve petition to submit to Archdiocese, requesting merger.
 - Submit to Archdiocese for approval.
 - Target approval: July 2026.

7. Leadership Report Discussion

- a. Fr. Kyle presented his Leadership Report. Principal topics addressed included: a) Leadership Team; b) Capital Projects; c) Ministry Notes; and, d) Canonical Merger Process. *See the detailed Report at Attachment 1.* Brief further discussion of selected topics took place.
- b. The following additional topics and parishioner comments were addressed, as well.
 - 1) Last year, PC sub-committees generated several reports and proposed action items. Those should be resurrected and follow-up actions taken, as appropriate.
 - 2) Several months ago, all our churches identified and documented their numerous (several dozen at each church) active ministries. These should be analyzed for possible expansion and possible merging, among all five churches. These then should be promoted as volunteer stewardship opportunities, communicated to all parishioners, and published on the SGFP web site.
 - 3) To promote volunteerism for those various ministries, a Volunteer Coordinator position should be established. For each ministry, with Human Resources staff assistance, job descriptions with defined skills required for specific volunteer positions, should be developed.
 - 4) The sound systems at some of the churches require upgrade or maintenance.
 - 5) The current Mass schedule for all five churches should be reviewed periodically, with a view toward assuring maximum attendance. Further, the sense of loss felt by some parishioners due to the many changes in Mass offerings and liturgical services, should be acknowledged.

6) Considering the many violent incidents which have occurred in recent months, parishioners should be constantly reminded of the importance of vigilance and situational awareness. Security awareness is the responsibility of each parishioner. Strangers and strange activities should be reported and challenged (carefully and politely, of course).

7) Pastoral Council should hold periodic information sessions with parishioners to increase awareness of the function of the PC, introduce PC Members, and promote dialogue. These should be scheduled in coordination with planned Coffee and Donuts days at each church.

8) Consider changing the night that the PC meets. The current schedule is the 3rd Wednesday of every other month, but that conflicts with the SC children's Religious Education Wednesday evening classes, and with St. Peter Church Wednesday evening Mass.

8. Adjournment

The PC Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM. The next PC meeting currently is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 19, 2025, 7 PM**, at St. Peter Church, Fehrenbach Hall.

Attachment:

Leadership Report, September 17, 2025

v/r, -mjl- 😊