

St. Michael's Parish Council Meeting

September 16, 2025

I. Call to Order & Opening Prayer

President Laurie Kraemer called the meeting to order. Fr. Courtright led the opening prayer.

II. Organizational & Routine Matters

- **Roll Call: Present:** Fr. Courtright, Fr. Seth, Laurie Kraemer, Janet Burns, Craig Knutson, Rhonda Varriano, Brent Lahr, Craig Pfau, Dean Kuhns, Lori Swinney, Erin Perronteau, Mary Ann Whalen
Absent: Ken Vasek
- **Approval of Minutes:** Rhonda Varriano motioned to approve the minutes from the previous meeting (June 3) . Seconded by Janet Burns. Motion passed.

III. Reports of Representing Organizations

- **Altar Society:** Janet Burns reported that the Altar Society is getting ready for their Fall Breakfast & Bazaar to be held Sunday, Oct. 5, from 8 am to 12:30 pm. They will be serving pancakes, three types of egg bake (sausage, ham, & cheese), fruit, & sweet breads. Volunteers are still needed. Janet asked Craig Pfau if some of the KC men would again help in the kitchen. Ladies are making doughnuts Sept 21-23 to sell at the bazaar. The Altar Society wanted to have the breakfast on Sept. 28, but St. Mary's is having their dinner that Sunday. St. Jude's in Thompson is having their dinner on Oct. 5—the same day as our breakfast.
The Altar Society is now holding monthly meetings. They will meet next on Sept. 25 and again on Oct. 7. Janet asked if anyone knew of someone who could strip & wax the floor in the church basement kitchen. We hope to do this after the breakfast.
- **Knights of Columbus:** Craig Pfau reported the Knights are taking on the “Month of Money” that the Men's Club used to sponsor. The KC's recently helped with the Special Olympics and the Relate Care Clinic. They hope to have another membership drive soon.
- **Bridge Builders:** Lori Swinney reported on two requests from school principal Sara Dudley because the federal government has frozen all federal funds that were traditionally distributed to schools on July 1. The Bridge Builders approved the requested \$2358.22 for the VEX Robotics Program supplies for 5th & 6th grades. The Bridge Builders also approved funds for the “Friendzy” social emotional learning curriculum used by Mrs. Thorfinnson in her school counseling sessions.
The Bridge Builders meet next on Sept. 18.

IV. Reports from Parish Boards and Councils

- **Board of Education:** Dean Kuhns reported the St. Michael's School Board is in transition because now all the Catholic schools will be under the All Saints Catholic Schools Network Board. Therefore, this was Dean's last Parish Council meeting as St. Michael's Board of Education representative.
Fr. Courtright suggested that maybe one of the three St. Michael's representatives on the Advisory Council to the All Saints Board (Ben Hellekson, John Shaft, & Jeremy Schmaltz) could come to our Parish Council meetings. He also suggested that we have a representative from our Religious Education come to the Parish Council meetings—perhaps Marie Vetter.

- **Finance Council:** Erin Perronteau reported the Finance Council will meet the following week to go over the July & August financials.
- **Pastor's Report:**
 - Fr. Courtright commented that besides the new Catholic middle school starting here in Grand Forks, St. Joseph's in Devils Lake and St. John's in Wahpeton have recently added middle schools.
 - Fr. Courtright reported that the All Saints Catholic Schools Network has hired a company to help raise money for the new middle school building. About \$13 million will be needed.
 - Safety precautions recently implemented in light of the recent shooting at the Catholic School Mass in Minneapolis: when St. Michael's students go to church for their school Mass, they come over from the courtyard instead of walking to the church from the front. Teachers do a sweep of the church before & after the Mass. Also, during Mass, the door into the church from the courtyard entrance will be closed so no one can look in from the courtyard.
 - Fr. Courtright reported that we still need to raise money for some parish projects. The cost of reshingling the church roof was approx. \$380,000. The Diocese gave us a loan for 50%, but we still have to pay that back. Also, the painting of the statues cost \$16,500.

V. Old & Current Business

- The Beautification Committee has not met recently. Collin Granger is the leader.
- **School Gala on Oct. 24:** It will be held at the Ralph Engelstad Arena. Approx. half of the tickets have already been sold. A generous parishioner recently paid for the tickets for all of the teachers at St. Michael's School. All of the classrooms are making baskets for the Silent Auction. Maybe the Parish Council members should contribute towards a basket. Two big sponsors have just given \$2500 each to the Gala.
- **Time & Talent:** Does this need another push? It was suggested that we should try again in January. Also, we should talk about the successes we've had. It was suggested that maybe we need to have a representative from the parish welcome new parishioners. Maybe Parish Council members could welcome people at the back of the church after weekend Masses.
- A committee of Parish Council members met last week to go over the Parish Council by-laws. They will meet one more time. It was commented that the Parish Council's role is to just be an advisory committee to the Pastor.

VI. New Business

- Geo-Thermal Dripping & Condensation: The air conditioners need to be cleaned.
- Caulking has been put on the outside steps.
- Parking Lot over the old Coal Bin in the courtyard: We're still working on that problem.
- It was brought up at the Council meeting that perhaps there should be more training for the altar servers.
- The Diocese is putting on a "Musician's Workshop" on Oct. 24-25 in Fargo.

VII. Adjournment & Closing Prayer: The Parish Council will meet next on Oct. 21. The meeting then adjourned and Fr. Seth led the closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ann Whalen