Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2025

Opening Prayer

Silent Roll Call
Parish Council: Byron Albers, Amy Bergman, Stacie Enneking, Derek Spieles, Fr. Ken Schnipke, Steve Gruber, John Stechschulte, Kate Hemmelgarn, Emilie Winner
Absent: Jeff Stammen

Standing Commissions: Major Bernhold, Jacque Borchers, Ike Hoying, Jana Ranly, Kay Schmiesing

Visitors: None

Approval of Minutes
The PPC council members motioned electronically to accept the January 2025 PPC meeting minutes.

Standing Commission Reports

Building & Maintenance - Ike Hoying
- Last meeting was Jan 28, elected new officers and Ike is the new chair.
- Projects include: North and south side concrete will likely be started in May
- Still in discussions on the ice melt. Concerns about maintenance and care. Someone to maintain all the time (can turn it on when it needs to begin heating up, before mass, etc) 2 reps will be coming to review and give us more insight at our next meeting. Would run heating before the concrete is poured.
- Discussion and vote on security on SecureCom vs NewWave - voted on SecureCom
- Open discussion on 2 quotes for the front restoration (steps, unlevel granite, and retaining walls - needs repaired, lifted, put into place). Feel Meyers is the right place to go and if we should do something with bathrooms beneath.
- Price ranges from 100k-250k, ranges and there could be scope creep once we look into it more.
- Question about if we should do this project with the steeple project. Major went through the numbers and it is already figured in.
- Steeple repair is still in the committee's hands.

Education Commission - Jana Ranly
- All grades have done, or are scheduled to do, the Stations of the Cross in their class between now and Holy Week
- With the installation of the new bishop, we will not have our 2026 Confirmation date until at least early summer. The bishop will be our 2026 Confirmation presider
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- We are looking at new books for 2nd grade. We currently use the Faith and Life series for grades 1-5 and 6-8. Although the content of these books is great, the 2nd grade Faith and Life book does not specifically prepare the students for their sacraments. The change to Signs of Grace books would better prepare our students for First Reconciliation and First Communion. The books are titled Signs of Grace You are Forgiven and Signs of Grace You are Loved. There are samples of them at the parish center if anyone is interested in looking at them.
- Looking at 2025/26, we will be implementing the Catechism, and how to use it, into our 8th grade curriculum. This would also be added to our high school lessons as well.
- Stacie has one open chaperone and student spot available for Catholic Heart Mission trip to Nashville - June 22-27. If you know of anyone interested let Stacie know.

Cemetery Board - Jacque Borchers

- Power outage in utility building in January - arcing due to loose clamp. Also had frozen pipes in toilet area. Buschur electric made the repairs and Mike Schulze fixed the pipes.
- In the current section of the cemetery, furthest west, of the 80 lots available, currently 22 lots left. Planning to put continuous foundation at the end of this year or in 2026.
- Columbarium - working on sample niche door in the office so that people can see it when people ask about it and what information is included.
- Found a 1987 copy of our cemetery rules and regulations that have not been updated since. They are meeting in April to update this.
- In January, the board voted to increase the cemetery annual dues. Single member increased from 10 to 15. For a family, from 20 to 30.
- From Byron: St. Rose gets a new mower each year and are very happy with their service, so it might be worth reaching out to them. Contact China G. Jacque says there will be 3 types of mower samples to try this year and they are looking at a leasing deal.

Mission Commission - Kay Schmiesing

- Mission Commission had their meeting March 3. Misty Mihm, Director of Auglaize County Crisis Center, was the guest speaker.
- $1,000 donation was made.
- Sandy Dunlap sent out 5 boxes totaling 2,900 rosaries recently.
- Soup and Bread luncheon will be April 9 at the K of C Hall with Jodi Blinder, our Christ Our Light Director of Evangelization is the guest speaker. There was a sign up for members to donate soup and bread for the luncheon.
- There will be an Easter visit from Mission Commission members to the homebound and elderly with flowers and donated Winan's candy or cookies (from Jodie Eckstein).
- We donated a gift basket to the Taste of the Shrine fundraiser on May 22.

- We voted to purchase t-shirts for the Vacation Bible School this summer. Last year they had over 200 students attend.
- We also discussed and approved to help with the funding for tables and chairs in the upstairs room that still have individual desks.
- Discussion on having a coffee truck at our Parish garage sale this summer.
- Discussion continued on forming a new committee to visit and bring a gift basket to the families of newly baptized babies.
- Molly Verdier from Morgan's Place Cemetery will be our guest speaker for the April meeting.

Finance Commission - Major Bernhold
- Updated bylaws
- Circulating expense policy to all employees annually
- Questions on capital projects?

PPC Committees

Parish Ministry Committee - Jeff Stammen
- Would Mission Commission be looking for a welcoming/newborn committee? Something Parish Ministry Committee could look into helping setup or see if other families are doing this.
- Every 2 months or so we send a message to all our groups. We could send a message to groups to see if any groups or if they know anyone who might be interested.

EAP/ASP Committee - Steve Gruber
- Haven't met but there is an update from Leslie on the security projects. Everything is approved for SecureCom. Still need additional paperwork (insurance and liability) before the Archdiocese will sign off, and then in the fall they would look to complete the project.
- Would building and maintenance project-manage it? If not, will talk to Leslie to make sure it doesn't fall through the cracks.
- Once the hardware comes in, they will look more into who will manage and monitor this.

Elections Committee - Kate Hemmelgarn
- Thanks to Amy for taking this committee over next year.

Unified Pastoral Council Update - Byron Albers
- Went over Pastoral Plan Goals for 2025-2027
- We have a Leader Guide we would like to cascade to this whole group and then to your respective groups.
    - Leader Guide summary: The objectives are to present COL Pastoral Plan & Goals to every commission, committee, organization, and group in Christ

Our Light family of parishes. The Leader Guide provides: an overview of the plan and its development, an explanation of the priorities and goals, and talking points and examples to help members understand each goal (Knowing, Loving, and Serving God) and discern how they can help achieve each goal for COL.

- Emphasized we are not adding new "work" for the leaders in our parish, we simply want to tie each thing we already do to our goals of "Knowing, Loving, or Serving God" to show how it ties to our larger goal.
- Father Ken will forward the digital materials to the full Parish Council and the Parish Council can distribute among the groups in the Church

Old Business

Steeple Preservation Update - John Stechschulte

- "Preserve Our Steeples" is the tagline. Have had numerous meetings with a great group of people. The scope of work is the copper portion of each of the two steeples which will be replaced.
- Quote from Wellman Brothers are $825k for the copper. Internal drainage system around $20k. Refacing the clocks is around $56k. Total almost $900k. There may be additional expenses so the fundraising goal is $950k. Minus $250k from Finance Committee so fundraising $700k.
- The kickoff will be March 29 & 30. We will have a speaker at each mass and pamphlets and pledge cards in each pew. They will also be mailed.
- 50% of families donated for organ project so aiming for 50%. In the organ project, all but 1 pledge was completed. The pledge goal for each family is $1000 which could be paid out over 1 or 2 years.
- Midnet Media will develop a site that shows images and a presentation of the steeples to show the damage and provide more information and FAQs.
- The last repair was in 1937. This will be about another 85 year fix.
- The rollout is going to be in August 2025. Completion in the summer of 2026. Will begin at the north steeple.
- There will be a note in the bulletin noting what percentage goes to the Archdiocese and how they help us.

Online Church Tour Update - Steve Gruber

- Tour is up and running and there will be flyers and a note in the bulletin. Midnet Media did a great job getting it online fast.
- The project is complete.

Sound System Request

- There are 5 potential changes based on what changes were suggested.
- 1 - Have a plaque that says to speak slowly that the lector can see: Propsing a laminated card that says "Please speak slowly and enunciate so all can hear clearly"

- 2 - Evaluate the microphone: Proposing to educate parishioners about the sound system, how it works, and what has been done, and to try sitting in different sections of church to find the best sound. Unfortunately, it's about the best it can be.
- 3 - Use carpeting: Carpeting would be costly to install and too expensive to maintain.
- 4 - Special paint or tapestry on walls: Proposing to discuss with decoration committee if it's possible to have permanent or rotating banners between windows.
- 5 - Put speakers on one end only and have sound move straight out: Proposing to educate parishioners via text in the bulletin.

New Business

Disposition of Constitution and Bylaws

- Committees, check your bylaws as they need to be updated every 3 years. We can help if needed. As commissions continue to operate and you change people, you also change what you do. Make sure you update your bylaws to reflect what you're doing, even if it's a few simple tweaks.
- The parish council does need the updated bylaws. Byron is cycling out of this position so the parish council will determine how to/who will handle this moving forward.

Comments from Father Ken

- Archdiocesan parish vitality report has been published. Check it out. Christ Our Light is leading the way in a lot of things. We aren't the largest family, but we do have the largest number of churches, and the report shows everything including projected number of priests from each parish and more. We have the highest attendance and utilization of space. Gives updates on 5 phases and where each parish is at.
- Adding a mass at New Bremen has helped with standing room only at other masses. The 10:00 mass at Holy Redeemer had dropped 30-40 people, and 8:00 mass is averaging well. Our overall attendance has increased.
- The new Archbishop is very joyful and outgoing and has experience with the pastoral planning process we are in now.
- It is very exciting that the children's choirs will be singing for the bishop on April 3. It will be live-streamed. There will be 2-3 people from each parish in the whole Archdiocese who will be attending. This is only the 11th time in over 200 years that a bishop has been installed in the Archdiocese.
- When it comes to having more priests, the earliest we might have more priests is by 2030. The best thing that can happen before then is that it will plateau.
- Most of the large parish pastors have stepped out due to the situations being unmanageable.

Next Meeting Date: 5/20/2025 7:00pm
(We meet in August, October, January, March, and May)

Closing Prayer

Executive Session

- Beth Mescher and Joel Wuebker have been elected to Parish Council unanimously. Thanks to Byron and Kate for your service.
- We will need 1 new member for a 3-year term of the Christ Our Light Parish Council which is the 2nd Thursday of the month to replace Byron. Steve nominates Amy to be the new COL council member and everyone motioned to approve.