Christ Our Light - Family of Parishes

Thursday, April 11, 2024 7:00pm
Council Minutes

Attendance: Byron Albers, Stacie Enneking, Emilie Winner, Mark Francis, Erin Niekamp, Jenny Albers, Barb Kahlig, Michelle Ashman, Nate Kirwen, Trevor Wynk, Cory Ahrens, Tony Homan, Kathy Broering, Adam Koesters, Steve Dircksen, Pamela Meyer, Tyler Schmidt, Mitch Schwieterman, Nick Wilker, Fr. Ken Schnipke. Not present were Sue Bruns and Karen Homan.

Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Council meeting began with scripture and reflection; led by Fr Ken Schnipke, Tyler Schmidt, and Erin Niekamp.

1. The first order of business saw discussion concerning the DRAFT version of the Unified Pastoral Council By-Law. Fr Ken pointed out the primary focus of the council is pastoral planning. Many day-to-day operations are handled by individual parishes and committee efforts: such as the finance committee and the CRE's. Fr Ken highlighted a few areas discussed at the previous meeting (members-at-large, roles and responsibilities of the pastor and the elected officers, and an annual review of the amendments). Byron Albers moved to approve the bylaws and Mark Francis seconded that motion. A unanimous vote was cast to approve the by-laws.
2. As stated in Article IV of the unified by-laws, officers of the council shall be the chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and secretary from the members-at-large. Nominations for these positions were offered, along with a unanimous "aye" vote for each position. As defined by the unified by-law, these members may not serve more than two consecutive terms without an absence of at least one year.
    a. Chairperson: Erin Niekamp (nominated by Mark Francis)
    b. Vice-Chairperson: Trevor Wynk (nominated by Tony Homan)
    c. Secretary: Cory Ahrens (nominated by Tony Homan)
3. Nick Wilker offered several updates concerning the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes.
    a. The Disciple Maker Index Survey process is moving forward. The data is still being compiled and will arrive shortly. The largest consumption of time, by CLI, involves entering the paper form responses into a database. Soon, several members of the parish staff and Vision Leadership Team members will learn, via a series of webinars, how to access and utilize reliable information from the survey. Nick Wilker congratulated the entire COL Family of Parishes, as we have seen an overall large response. Nativity and St Rose marked the highest responses with both over 76%! Fr Ken stated that this data from COL is combined with over 700,000 parishioners who have taken the survey nationally. One member asked how this information would be used. Both Fr Ken and Nick feel that it will be delineated to, and utilized by all the COL subcommittees (Eucharist, Evangelization, Stewardship commissions, etc), individual parishes, and the unified pastoral council. The survey data will also be broken down by parish, allowing us to review it through many lenses. Currently, a focus group is being put together for Liturgy/Worship to disperse data and identify the needs of our family of parishes, other focus groups will be put together, as well to align, with the COL principles. We will have this information soon! The members felt that this would provide a good narrative of how our family of parishes is thriving, in comparison, with other parishes.
    b. A branding committee was established from various parishioners across the entire COL Family of Parishes. Nick Wilker expressed how it is exciting to see many talented parishioners work

closely on these projects. It is a reflection of how well the COL committees have been working together. So far, they have designed a primary logo and a shadowed silhouette of each parish church; which will be in the parish bulletins. They will be preparing guidelines on how to use the new logos: not only within the bulletin but also on a common website that will be coming soon.

c. Parish Bulletins - the long-term plan is to unify all 8 bulletins into one. This takes time though. Each parish has had representation and help on this topic. In June, the Marion Catholic Community and Holy Redeemer bulletins will be consolidated. This is largely due to the current contract ending with their bulletin publishers. St Joe and St Augustine recently renewed their contract and will join once this contract ends in March 2024. This will be a work in progress. The committee feels there are many neat portions from each of the current bulletins. They are evaluating which items are essential, and a priority, for each parish. The bulletins are expected to be 100% funded by local advertising. Currently, there are 9,600 members from 3,200 families in the COL parishes. A bulletin is essential to the communication and strength of our parishes. Several questions from members were asked about how this process works. Fr Ken reported the committee heard several presentations from bulletin publishers, received financial quotes, and assessed the value of each company to our needs. LPI was selected as they will pay our subscription to Flocknotes; which is an email and text reminder service; as well as, a bulletin publishing service. Many families receive similar reminder services from their local schools. It will operate similarly. It is important to note that through the generosity of local business sponsors which will be displayed at the end of the bulletin, our bulletins are printed and delivered to our parishes free of charge.

d. Picture Directory- a picture directory has been planned for the entire COL family of Parishes. A schedule of picture dates will be published for each parish soon. Pictures are scheduled at several locations in June, July, and August. This has been relatively challenging as there are more families and not many companies that still do church picture directories. Families will be able to schedule appointments online. This schedule will be posted in the weekly bulletins soon.

e. Staff Updates: interviews for the Director of Evangelization will take place the week of April 15th. Fr Ken is happy with the interest in the position. This position will come with a lot of responsibilities including parish mission, adult formation, RCIA, and collaboration with the CRE's. The CRE's are working in unison and are happy to report they have the sacramental schedule completed for the '24-'25 academic year. Nick Wilker praised how effectively they work together to plan First Communions, reconciliation, and all the imperative aspects of religious education. Fr Ken reported that Anthony Moeder has been hired to serve as the Music Director for both St. John and Precious Blood. Sue Roeckner has been hired as the Business Manager for St. John while keeping her position as Business Manager of Precious Blood and St. Sebastian. St Augustine will be hiring a Coordinator of Religious Education soon.

f. Easter - members reported an overall positive experience at all the Easter masses. They praised all our priests for their commitment and time for the Easter season. Nick Wilker reported the parish office will make adjustments to next year's schedule to help with the overflow of the Easter Sunday crowd at Precious Blood. Two takeaways occurred that will result in a few changes. The starting time of some masses was too close, causing traffic congestion. In addition, the 11:00 masses were full, but some earlier masses were grossly overflowing. Some later masses will be moved to accommodate the interests of the earlier

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times. Overall, a great first start. The members praised the commitment of the parishioners to attend mass; especially the number of families bringing their small children.

g. Good Friday: a suggestion was given to Fr. Ken to separate service times a little further apart. Currently, the services at our four churches are at 12:00, 12:30, and two at 1:00. Fr Ken felt this was a good recommendation. Members discussed that current traditions are essential to the holy week; especially those parishes involving the students during mass. All in attendance agreed.

5. Family of Parishes Events and Updates

a. Holy Redeemer - will be updating their rosary path

b. Nativity - will be having some steeple repairs, a picnic in July, and installing lights on the altar.

c. St Sebastian- happy to report that Window Creations has arrived to complete the final stage of their window project, update that the Fish Fry went well and will continue next year.

d. St Rose: the Window Project is nearing completion, only one large window on the west side must be completed. They hope it will be completed in the next few weeks. A parish picnic has been scheduled for May!

E. St Augustine will add an Angel of Hope statue in the cemetery.

6. Other Notes: We ask that each parish assign representation to the rotation schedule.

Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Council meeting ended with a concluding prayer led by Fr Ken Schnipke.

Next meeting: Thursday, September 12, 2024 7:00pm

Fr Ken Schnipke (Pastor)
Nick Wilker (Director of Worship)
Adam Koesters (Nat)
Kathy Broering (Nat)
Byron Albers (SA)
Stacie Enneking (SA)
Mark Francis (HR)
Erin Niekamp (HR)
Jenny Albers (SJ)
Michelle Ashman (SJ)
Barb Kahlig (SJ)
Karen Homan (PB)
Nate Kirwin (PB)
Trevor Wynk (PB)
Cory Ahrens (SR)
Tony Homan (SR)
Steve Dircksen (St Joe)
Pamela Meyer (St Joe)
Sue Bruns (SS)
Tyler Schmidt (SS)
Mitch Schwieterman (SS)