Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Council Minutes
Thursday, February 8, 2024 7:00 PM
St. Augustine, Minster

Attendance: Byron Albers, Stacie Enneking, Mark Francis, Erin Niekamp, Jenny Albers, Barb Kahlig, Karen Homan, Trevor Wynk, Cory Ahrens, Kathy Broering, Adam Koesters, Steve Dircksen, Pamela Meyer, Sue Bruns, Tyler Schmidt, Nick Wilker, Fr. Ken Schnipke.

Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Council meeting began with scripture and reflection.

Christ Our Light Family of Parishes Unified Pastoral Council DRAFT Constitution.

- A sub-committee consisting of Cory Ahrens, Byron Albers, Sue Bruns, Pam Meyer, Erin Niekamp and Fr. Ken met in person several times and worked via email to review, discuss and edit the DRAFT Constitution and suggested bylaws. The DRAFT constitution was also discussed at each of the eight parish council meetings.
- The bylaws subcommittee reported that each council was supportive of the DRAFT Constitution. Several appreciated the representative structure of the Unified Council, affirming each of the parish councils and thought the DRAFT Constitution may provide a template for reviewing and establishing individual parish council bylaws. There was common awarenss and agreement that the DRAFT Consitution is a work in progress and will be reviewed annually for the first three years.
- The purpose and function of the DRAFT Constitution was reviewed highlighting that "pastoral planning for the Family of Parishes is the primary activity of the Council." While parish councils regularly deal with maintenance and other internal matters, those would be cumbersome to discuss at meetings for all eight parishes. It was deemed necessary to have parish councils to handle maintenance and other concerns locally and to be involved with the family through the Unified Council.
- "Members-at-large shall be elected members of individual Parish Pastoral Councils and appointed to the Pastoral Council of the Christ Our Light Family of Parishes. Parishes with more than two hundred families will have three representatives, parishes with less than two hundred families will have two representatives." The bylaws subcommittee discerned a percentage of parishioners ratio for membership was not feasible as it would be hard for larger parishes to provide that many members and smaller parishes with only one member would not be represented if that member was absent.
- Members to serve a three year term. With membership appointed from among elected parish council members, it is important to encourage parish council members to serve two terms. This allows a new parish council member to have a year or more of experience on parish council before being appointed to the Unfied Council.
- The Role of the Pastor description was added with other leadership positions. Defining roles will help guide such roles into the future.
- Commissions are aligned according to the six Beacons of Light principles: Eucharist, Church Administration/Leadership, Stewardship, Evangelization and Love in Action. Some parish councils have already aligned with the six principles. Other parish councils expressed the need to eventually reogranize their parish councils. Most felt that existing parish commissions would remain as they currently are but aligned under the new configuration of commissions.
- Discussed Affiliated Councils. Finance Council per Canon Law does not technically fall under the Parish Council, but both need to work integrally together towards mission and use of resources. Included Property Management to have an overall view of the

family resources. Suggest Cemetery Boards occasionally meet and work collaboratively in ways that are mutually beneficial.

- Meetings to consist of a retreat day over the summer and four meetings during the year, allowing parish councils to meet the other five months as needed. Parish Councils thought this would be an effective meeting schedule.
- Meetings would be open to all members of Christ Our Light Family of Parishes. Parishioners may address the Council when they have been placed on the agenda one week prior and recognized by the chairperson/vice-chairperson.
- The constitution will be reviewed every year for the first three years and every three years thereafter. Criteria for amendments were noted.
- The hope is that a well defined and effective Constitution will shape the purpose and function of the Council now and well into the future including change of administration.
- The DRAFT Constution will be voted on at the April 11th meeting.

Christ Our Light Updates:

- The Vision Statement will be presented at all the Christ Our Light weekend Masses February 10-11, 2024, insert in bulletins and impact statements on websites.
- The Disciple Maker Index (DMI) survey is open January 20-February 26. Encouraging all parishioners to participate in the survey that takes 10 to 15 minutes to complete.
- The Christ Our Light Branding and Communications committee presented two logos that were voted on by parishioners. A common bulletin cover with the new logo will begin February 10-11, 2024. There is gradual progress toward a common bulletin.
- The Christ Our Light Feast day, the Presentation of the Lord, usually February 2nd, was transferred to the February 3 – 4 weekend Masses and included a candle blessing that was well received.
- While the Archdiocese is recommending families of parishes move toward a unfied parish status by July 2027, we will take our time in Christ Our Light family of parishes to more fully understand the pros and cons of all the options including moving toward some form of becoming one canonical parish or remaining a Family of Parishes as well as the rationale and reasons behind each of the options. Our plan is to develop a consultative and collaborative process that begins with research on each of the options, then developing a series of information sessions/gatherings/town hall meetings to help parishioners understand the pros and cons, rationale and reasons behind each of the options and then developing a process for making the best decision moving forward.
- Lent, Holy Week, Easter Mass Schedule was presented
- Hiring process underway for business managers at Holy Redeemer and St. Johns, music director for St. Johns and Precious Blood and looking toward a director of evangelization position for the family of parishes.

Christ Our Light Family of Parishes Events & Updates

- Holy Redeemer Women's Breakfast and speaker February 11th
- St. Sebastian Fish Fry Knights of St. John Hall February 16th

The meeting concluded with the Beacons of Light Prayer

Next Christ Our Light Unified Pastoral Council meeting April 11, 2024, 7 PM, location TBD

Minutes submitted by Fr. Ken Schnipke, C.PP.S.