



**Minutes for the Holy Savior Pastoral Council meeting**  
**4:30 pm, Monday, September 22, 2025**  
**Rectory**

**Pastoral Council Attendees:**

Shannon Glover, chair  
Laura Koch

Tom Puiia  
Catherine Napolitano-Ross

**Other Attendees:**

Fr. Aaron Damboise, Pastor  
Diane Breton, Catechetical Leader

Wendy Russell, Catholic Charities  
Amy Ruzbasan, SEARCH  
Linda Pepin, Office Assistant

*Fr. Aaron opened the meeting with prayer at 4:33 p.m.*

**Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION:** Catherine Napolitano-Ross moved to accept the minutes from the June 26 meeting. Laura Koch seconded.

**VOTE:** Motion carried (unanimous). Minutes approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Catholic Charities SEARCH**

Wendy Russell and Amy Ruzbasan of Catholic Charities of Maine -SEARCH program gave an overview of the program, whose mission is to enable vulnerable seniors to remain independent and create a long-term support system to meet their needs. They noted there are four or five seniors on the wait list in our area awaiting a volunteer. The program is not only for Catholics. Many of the clients are in their 80s and 90s and no longer drive, which can be isolating. The SEARCH program, supported through Catholic Charities and grants, pairs volunteers with clients. Wendy noted many of the volunteers feel like they get more out of it than they give.

Amy is new to her position as coordinator and will be doing some marketing to spread the word among potential volunteers and clients. Both volunteers and clients are vetted to ensure safety for all involved.

They noted the SEARCH program also shares some clients with the Catholic Charities homemaker program which offers light housekeeping.

SEARCH is asking the parish to share brochures, include information in the bulletin, and provide referrals to other groups that may help facilitate finding volunteers and clients. Wendy and Amy will be at next month's Senior Gathering.

## **Faith Formation**

Diane Breton, Catechetical Leader, gave an update on youth and children's programs.

- There are seven children in the first year of a two-year Faith Formation program; no children are in their second year.
- Family Fun Nights started again in September. In future years, they will restart in October as September has conflicts with fairs and sports.
- Eight people are signed up for Youth Bible Study. This group will also do community service occasionally as part of the program.
- Vacation Bible School was amazing, and Diane is grateful for all who prayed and donated to support the program. It was entirely covered by donations, and she couldn't have done it without helpers, noting it pays to trust Jesus, as two additional helpers were needed and came to her a week prior asking if they could help. The parish hall was converted to 'Jerusalem' for the week, with tents, pillows, market place, etc.
- Next summer the youth plan to put on a rummage sale to raise additional funds for youth programs.
- Diane is in early stages of looking into outreach to homeschoolers to bring more families to Mass. Fr. Aaron expanded: the bishop is concerned about home school families, that they have a place in the parish and that the information they are teaching aligns with faith formation. Fr. Aaron, Diane, and Nick Puia met to discuss, noting some parishes around us have successfully engaged homeschoolers. We can find out from them what is working in their parishes. The group discussed inviting homeschoolers to come to a specific Mass with adoration, music, refreshments, perhaps starting in December this year. Fr. Aaron stated we can't start a school again, but we can definitely help homeschooling families. Shannon recommended reaching out to an existing homeschool group on Facebook, and Laura invited Diane to call anytime to draw on her experience as a homeschooler.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Discussion on how to engage younger members**

Fr. Aaron noted this year Diane is working with children in YFF, while he is working with adults on catechesis. He asked the council their thoughts on pulling together a parent session to hear what they need from the parish. Laura suggested presenting some ideas of what the parish can do—things like childcare during Mass, coloring sheets, etc.—to help families know what they can ask for. An initial meeting would open up lines of communication to get parents thinking, and they can come back later with input.

The group decided to table the discussion until additional Pastoral Council members are present, though it would be helpful to have that initial contact before the January Pastoral Council meeting. Fr. Aaron will talk with Diane about that.

### **Trunk or Treat**

The group discussed optimal starting times, dates, and details for Trunk or Treat, ultimately deciding on Friday, Oct. 31, 4-6:30 p.m. There is no Holy Day of obligation for All Souls this year, so there are no additional Masses to schedule around. Catherine will check with other towns and schools to see when they are doing their Trunk or Treats.

Shannon is leading the event, and noted the Knights of Columbus have volunteered to mark off the squares for the 'trunks' in the St. A & J main parking lot. Laura suggested a costume contest, and Tom offered to bring benches/picnic tables.

## OTHER ITEMS

### **Pastoral Council role**

Laura asked for clarification on the role of the Pastoral Council. Fr. Aaron stated he will use it as a roundtable, to consult the council regarding ideas (such as meeting with parents as discussed previously), but also to hear about concerns for the office or for pastoral care. He also uses the Pastoral Council as another way to disseminate information.

### **YFF fundraisers**

Laura asked if the parish is in such dire straits that it needs to fund faith formation with fundraisers. Fr. Aaron noted the fundraising is supplemental. The parish is solvent. Laura asked if Journey [a youth retreat] is still happening. Fr. Aaron stated it is not as it became cost prohibitive.

### **St. Dominic School**

Laura asked if the bishop has decided what will happen with St. Dom school. Fr. Aaron said that hasn't been decided; the focus now is on growing the academy, held for the time being at the old Holy Cross church.

### **Altar Server Dress Code**

Shannon asked for clarity on the dress code for altar servers. Fr. Aaron said it would be helpful to have a written dress code for parents to refer to. Several members of the council cited deviations as distracting, and Fr. Aaron said he will address it.

### **Music**

Catherine asked about balancing the music so vocals don't overpower instrumentals. She suggested using instrumental music only during the time for Eucharistic reflection after receiving communion, as sung words interfere with individual prayer. Fr. Aaron will raise this at the upcoming Worship and Spirituality meeting.

### **Suggestion Box**

Tom asked about a suggestion box, and it was noted there is a suggestion box in St. A & J inside the main entrance.

**Next meeting:** 26 January 2026 – to include an update from Knights & Daughters

*The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Pepin  
Office Assistant (Ex-officio)