



Minutes for the Holy Savior Pastoral Council meeting
4:30 pm, Monday, June 15
Rectory

Pastoral Council Attendees:

Shannon Glover, Chair
Laura Koch
Patrick Mooney
Catherine Napolitano-Ross
Margaret Templeton
Tom Puia
Excused: Sharon Gates

Finance Council Attendees:

Mariann Goff-Dumont
Michele Varulo Cole
Jim Rinaldo
Sara Ross

Other Attendees:

Fr. Aaron Damboise, Pastor
Nancy Gionet, business coordinator
Linda Pepin, office assistant

The meeting opened at 4:31 pm with prayer by Fr. Aaron.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Tom Puia made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 6 meeting.
Laura Koch seconded.

VOTE: Motion carried (unanimous). Minutes approved.

Introduction of business coordinator

- Fr. Aaron introduced Nancy Gionet, the parish's new business coordinator. Nancy is a parishioner who lives in the Bethel area and has a business background with companies including Coca-Cola and Bancroft, as well as running her own business. Attendees introduced themselves and gave a quick background.

2027 Budget approval

- A primary purpose of this meeting was for the Finance Council to present the budget to the Pastoral Council for approval. Fr. Aaron and Linda reviewed updates made as approved at the last Finance Council meeting.
 - Parish portion of the diocese-wide clergy pay increase is now reflected in the budget.
 - Removed allocation for health benefits for business coordinator, as Nancy is not using that benefit. All three benefited parish lay employees use military health care, saving the parish approximately \$40,000.
 - The parish budget doesn't balance. Combined budget of the parish and cemetery is balanced with net gain of \$10,703. However, in reality, the cemetery and parish

budgets are separate: cemetery has net gain of \$33,120; parish has net loss of \$22,418. In future years, the budgets will be reported separately.

- Nancy will ascertain whether office work related to cemetery is paid (payroll) out of cemetery funds, or if parish has been funding that full amount. Maintenance payroll is already taken from both.
- Discussion regarding the diocesan assessment (12.5%) and what that covers. Fr. Aaron advised individuals may not pay bills on behalf of the parish; funds must flow through the diocese.
- Discussion regarding contracted services (e.g. lawncare at OLS, bookkeeping) and the value for the money.
- Sara suggested again putting QR codes in the pews to make it easy for visitors to donate online.
- Mariann noted that creating a budget is a ‘best guess,’ and while the budget doesn’t balance there is no clear place to make cuts.
- Laura asked about the inclusion of faith formation. Existing programs are in the budget; a classroom space for Good Shepherd (Montessori-style faith formation) is not.
- Margaret asked about the Word Among Us booklets, which are popular but not inexpensive. Fr. Aaron advised if a parishioner had their own subscription and chose to share the books with the parish, that would be permissible (paying for the parish’s subscription would not be). Laura suggested putting a donation box next to the booklets so people could donate to help defray the cost.
- The office will research the donations expenses and provide Finance Council a breakout of the fees/expenses.

MOTION: Tom Puia made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Shannon Glover seconded.

Discussion: Jim Rinaldo recommended next time the budget is presented, it be made clear what is cast in stone—non-negotiable must-pays—and what isn’t.

VOTE: Motion carried (unanimous). Minutes approved.

Solar lights at St. John’s Cemetery

Shannon noted she has been asked by parishioners why solar lights are not permitted at St. John’s Cemetery. Fr. Aaron explained that in 2023 the Cemetery Committee update the bylaws, which had not been updated since 1985. [The update includes specifically prohibiting solar lights.]

- Health & Safety. Fr. Aaron noted portions of the policy (pg 8) related to safety and the hazard small items present when mowing.
- Dignity. Fr. Aaron noted the policy is intended to be appropriate to preserving the dignity of the burial ground. The intent is to have a respectful appearance and honor the dead in a place of eternal rest. Solar lights may detract from the sense of sacred burial grounds.

When cemetery staff remove prohibited items, the items are placed in a bin and may be retrieved by the family members who placed them. [Contact the office to make arrangements.]

Pastor's Comments

- **VBS** is set for 17-21 August this year. Diane Breton and Donna Gilbert are heading it up, and Fr. Aaron asked for prayer for VBS. He also advised people to let Diane know if they would like to volunteer.
- There is a training session for **St. Vincent de Paul** August 8 at Prince of Peace. Interested parishioners should talk to Eric Knowles about getting involved.
 - There is now a Holy Savior Parish conference of St. Vincent de Paul under the national organization—the first SVdP conference in Maine. The group will serve the indigent—visit, pray, and help with immediate needs. The goal isn't for long-term assistance but to help connect people to local resources.
 - The board is set up and includes four Catholic board members. The national organization also encourages non-Catholic associate members on the board.

Meeting adjourned at 5:47 pm with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Pepin
Office Assistant

Next Meetings:

- **21 Sept 2026** (4:30 pm) – Update from Cemetery committee
- **7 Dec 2026** (4:30 pm) – Update from Buildings & Grounds committee