

**EPIPHANY PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**APRIL 12, 2011**  
**Meeting Rooms**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michael Bauman, Richard Burke, Tom Conneran, Amy DeRaad, Mary Beth Ineson, Mike Kraft, Mike Lentz, Steve Sorsen, Tim Sullivan, Lisa Zastoupil, Fr. Dennis Zehren

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Robert Breitbach, Gail Mikolich

The minutes of the March meeting were approved with the submitted change.

**OPEN MIC**

There were no open mic participants this evening

**FIT BY 50**

The campaign is going good with 342 pledge cards returned. \$773,063 have been pledged to date with \$225,283 already turned in. There are 700 parishioners using the Lenten black book. The school students are praying for the campaign and the weekly challenge continues to be posted. A goal of 1000 returned pledge cards has been set. We are aiming at reaching this number by May 28. If we accomplish the goal, there will be an ice cream party. The challenge at hand now is to keep the enthusiasm alive and keep the word out among the parishioners.

**STRATEGIC VISION – KEY TOPICS**

The initial findings have been gathered and the team has created a list of key topics, many that surfaced several times. The team took their time accumulating the data to insure that all avenues were covered. The key topics are:

Changing Demographics – Epiphany must respond to the changing demographics in and around the parish community.

Communication – While communication has been better in recent years within the Epiphany Parish, the need for improvement is still evident.

Engagement – Increasing parishioner's sense of belonging within the Epiphany family.

Financial Stewardship – Epiphany must continue to concentrate on budgeting and managing finances, watching both expenses and revenue and minimize long term debt in order to meet evolving priorities of its programs, goals and vision.

Life-Long Faith Formation – To enable life-long growth in faith, multiple opportunities for parishioners of all ages to be welcomed, initiated, engaged, educated and nurtured are provided to our faith community.

Parish Ministries – Epiphany has a large and varied number of current parish ministries and the potential for future parish ministries to meet the evolving needs of the parish and the community it serves.

Parish Vision – The large size, diversity of ministries, groups and parishioners presents a unique challenge in developing, implementing and evaluating a common vision.

Sacraments – As a Catholic Community, Epiphany must put God first through the Sacraments.

This list highlights the majority of feelings and thoughts that surfaced. There may be other things missing but many will fall under the above categories. These are not negative issues. The team is simply identifying them and stating there is room for improvement. There may be other things missing but many will fall under the above categories.

A list of questions was given to the Council. The team asked for their input on these topics by April 19<sup>th</sup>. Their answers will let the team know if they are on track. They stressed the importance of the input as it will enhance what will be set up in the future. They will use the input, make any revisions and present them to the Council in June.

Some comments that surfaced in the discussion were:

- 7% decrease in salaries in this area
- 2400 homes in foreclosure
- Larger crime rate in Anoka County
- Anoka County schools have seen a decline, but not Charter Schools
- Ways need to be identified to engage people so their gifts are used
- How can we best educate when there are many different needs?
- Define ways to welcome people to our Parish
- Review who we are and where we are going
- What are the expectations of parishioners?
- Identify the varied reasons that people has chosen to be a parishioner
- Increase Mass attendance by 20% with a three year plan
- Check with people who have left to identify causes that made them leave
- Don't underestimate the power of personal invitation
- Need to look at collaboration with other parishes

### **STATE FAIR DINER UPDATE**

Father Zehren sent a letter to the State Fair offering our structure for sale. There has been no official written response. However, there is a potential buyer who has offered \$125,000. They will not, however, be ready to participate in this year's fair. So Epiphany will have one last year. There will be much discussion in the coming weeks as to how we want this last year to look. It will be important to celebration all the years that our Parish has participated in the Fair. There are many memories and some type of closure will ease the sadness. There was talk about a memorabilia area, as well as some marketing announcing this is our last year. Due to budgetary restraints, we will

only do minimal repairs. A walk through with the new owner will happen in about a month. At that time, we will find out if they are interested in any of our equipment.

### **FACILITY USAGE POLICY DRAFT**

Mike Lentz handed out a draft on facility usage for review by the Council. This will be added to the agenda in May. He requested the Council to study the document as we have limited space at Epiphany and want to use it wisely. Having a policy will avoid some of the conflicts that might arise. Discussion must occur on the decisions that need to be made when there are long term requests for space usage.

### **MINISTRY FAIR**

The results of the 2009 Ministry Fair indicated the general consensus was that the Ministry Fair is helpful. The fair is meant to be educational in nature, not necessarily looking for sign-ups. One of the things being discussed is providing a seminar on how to identify one's gifts and which ministry would those gifts be most beneficial and rewarding. One immediate need is to identify a person who can be charge of this project. There was a request to the Council for names of people who might consider taking on the responsibility of the Fair. One of the problems that occur during the Fair is booth coverage. One solution might be to group ministries together. It is felt that the scavenger hunt that is usually held on Sunday night does not help the ministries booth. It was thought that the ministries could host the hospitality. There was also a suggestion to change the configuration of the tables, making it more welcoming to walk through the booths.

### **PARISH COUNCIL LEADERSHIP ORIENTATION**

The proposed timeline on forming new Commission members and Council members was presented. In July, the mailing and bulletin announcements will have the "calling forth" phase of the process. In August, the discernment sessions will be held. Candidates must attend one of the meetings. On August 22, appointments by the Pastor will be announced. Orientation for all new Commission and Council Members will be held on August 30, 2011. There is hope that more nominees will come forward this year. There is a job description for the members of a Commission and Council with an eligibility criteria for lay leadership. Each Commission is asked to spend some time thinking of names of potential parish leaders for the upcoming 3 year term. There will also be some kind of a guide of what is expected. This will look more like a reference guide listing what is available to help a new member fulfill their responsibility. This process could look like leadership boot camp.

### **COMMISSION REPORTS**

#### **Operations – Mike Kraft**

There is no report this month

#### **Pastoral Care and Outreach – Steve Sorsen**

At their meeting, they discussed a project at the YMCA for homeless youth. These are kids who are 21 or younger that have no permanent resident.

They either live in a vehicle or camp out on someone's couch. The YMCA has a food shelter where the kids can help themselves. Sometimes they can take the food to the family who lets them sleep on the couch. They are looking for programs with churches who can have food shelters and also provide clothing. We will be looking at helping in this area and developing a program along the same lines as Family Promise.

### **Community Life – Richard Burke**

This Commission reviewed the policy of fundraising, as well as discussed the Epiphany business knowledge network and the proposed changes to the Lending library. They are looking for another couple to help with the new Parish Mentoring Program.

### **Education – Lisa Zastoupil**

A request for a new Epiphany initiative/ministry has been submitted by the Catholic Writers Guild. The process for approving a new initiative/ministry requires that they work with a staff director in determining if the ministry fits our mission and is something we would want to pursue. They have done so with Katie Gebhard and will likely fall within the Education Commission ministries.

### **Finance – Mike Lentz**

The first draft of the budget has been prepared. It will be available to you in May. We are within our budget at this time and we will finish this year in the black. There has been a big drop in faith formation participation. The Extended Day Care and the summer programs are also down from last year.

### **Liturgy – Amy DeRaad**

The Commission met in March to plan for Palm Sunday through Easter.

### **Michael Bauman – Member at Large**

There was a review of the how fundraisers are handled by Mike and Tom Conneran and recommendations were given to Father Zehren. 53 parishioners helped the 5 families that hosted Family Promise. This is an outstanding ministry and the leaders with all their helpers are acknowledged and thanked for their wonderful work.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

There was a request to put on the next agenda the topic of monthly Commission and Council meetings. There is some feeling that there is a disconnect within the parish leadership with this year's framework. Since we are approaching the end of this year, it is a good time for the review.

Our next Council meeting will be held on May 10 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm.