

St. Mark Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes † March 3, 2009

In Attendance: Tom Donahue, Rick Bonen-Clark, Scott Campbell, Dennis Coleman, Mark Conter, Kim Antolini, Lizzie Espendez, Arthur Packard, Tom Rider, Theresa Rouse, Lisa Strickland Ralph Wearsch, Msgr. Richard Bellow, Father Pat Hoare, Deacon Ron Sherwood, Deacon Louis Pais

Excused: Eileen Gallagher

Guest: Ron Charbonneau, Joann Turek

Tom Donahue welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with a prayer.

Cancer Support Group: Joann Turek, a cancer survivor, established the cancer support group, which comforts and supports people dealing with cancer. The support group is open to caregivers, survivors, and any others interested in participating. Currently, approximately 30 people attend their monthly meetings, where guest speakers, such as medical professionals or financial planning experts, are brought in to educate the participants. This ministry serves the community at large, in addition to St. Mark parishioners, under the philosophy that no one should feel alone. Joann already advertises this in the Charlotte Observer, the church bulletin, local medical offices, and at hospitals.

Construction Update: Ron Charbonneau provided an update on church construction. The construction team is on schedule and on budget. Upcoming events include: working with the finance council to obtain the necessary debt financing, awarding the contract for the stained glass window (a picture was shared with the council), and commencing construction on the bell tower. As a reminder, there will be approximately 1,400 seats in the new church, assuming 20 inches per seat. Some of the seating capacity was lost from the original plan, for various building adjustments such as adding room for handicapped access/seating, support pillars for the choir loft, and an aisle for the nave. It was noted that the piazza, which will be included in Phase 1, will require town approvals. Open issues include pavement repair and parking lights.

Minutes: The February 3, 2009 meeting minutes were approved.

Commissions:

At the last commissions meeting, Father Pat Hoare facilitated a brainstorming session on the vision for St. Mark. The redesigned bulletin was reviewed and approval to adopt the new design was granted during the meeting by Msgr. The Communications Commission will take over the bulletin production and are looking for volunteers to support them. While our commissions will continue to collect email addresses for those interested in receiving an email newsletter, development of a regular process to populate and distribute an email newsletter is temporarily on hold.

Goals and Objectives Review:

Discernment - The new process for selecting pastoral council members is ready. A bulletin announcement will be released in March.

St. Mark Learning Center -St. Mark's existing education ministry has great programs, but they are disjointed and terminal. Also, the classes are offered once and not repeated. The St. Mark Learning Center team recommends, among other things, that religious education be coordinated across all demographics, with the added benefit of taking advantage of having parents in the same place as the children. They recommend making the Adult Education commission into a committee of the Education

Commission. The Education Commission would potentially be comprised of: one clergy, someone with a professional education background, a pastoral council representative, the director of religious education, and various demographics of the parish represented. This facilitator team will work with Msgr. to organize a meeting with Donna Smith, Deacon Louis, and others, with a goal of starting a new approach to education in September 2009.

Prayerful Reflection: The prayerful reflection was led by Ralph Wearsch.

Vision/Brainstorming: Father Pat facilitated three brainstorming sessions with the Parish Staff, the PC, and the Commission Heads from the past 3 months. The results were shared and the following next steps were suggested:

1. Send the list to the commission heads and ask them to take the first pass at prioritizing the ideas. Let the mission statement direct strategy for the commission heads.
2. Bring the ideas back to the Pastoral Council retreat in the summer, for the new PC to work through at the beginning of the next year.

Msgr. suggested that the PC consider reworking the mission statement to make it more specific to St. Mark.

Old Business/Updates: In response to a request from H.E.L.P for ideas, the PC suggested the following three ideas:

- 1) a community center is needed in Huntersville, which could provide services (sex education, tutoring for children having problems in school) needed by a number demographic groups;
- 2) consider establishing a mentoring program for people experiences troublesome times;
- 3) there's no DMV in the Huntersville, Cornelius, Davidson area, making it difficult for local workers to handle vehicle and licensing issues during DMV work hours.
- 4) Young girls are having children - can we address this with education programs?

Church Dedication - The social coordinators are well organized. The liturgy group is engaged. There is some concern about the slow start on the dedication book. Kim continues to work push for progress in that area.

The issue of the MACS request for covering operating costs at the school is still open.

New Business/Updates: Stewardship conference is at the end of April in Atlanta.

Thank You Notes: John Buckner for the Joseph's People and Joann Turek for the cancer support group.

Closing Comments: Nothing further.

Closing Prayer: Deacon Ron led the closing prayer.