

**Come To the Water ACC Pastoral Council Meeting**  
**Alexandria, Minnesota**  
**June 18, 2024**

Present: Father Matthew Kuhn, Father Rick Aubol, Deacon Nathaniel Daubner, Todd Wentworth, Margaret Zidon, Tim Baas, Nathan Eisel, Veronica Haavig, Darcie Boogaard, Terri Anderson, Bev Paul, Jake Mach, Josh Waltzing, Adrian Panther, Rodney Roers, Randy Kinney, Mark Maloney, Francie Peterson and Carol Gaffaney. Absent: Mary Gorghuber and Tonya Marthaler.

Guests were the newly elected Pastoral Council Members: Leon Breun and John Loomis from St. Mary's (SM), Michael Ponicki from St. Nicholas (SN), and Craig Highet from Immaculate Conception (ICC).

1. Opening prayer. After the prayer, a pot-luck meal was shared by those attending the meeting.
2. Minutes from April 18, 2024 were approved. (There was no meeting in May, 2024.)
3. One item was added to the agenda: Report from Subcommittee on Strategic Planning Objectives.
4. Outgoing pastoral council members Margaret Zidon, Randy Kinney, Terri Anderson and Mary Gorghuber were recognized and thanked for their service to the Come to the Water ACC. New pastoral council members were introduced: Leon Breun and John Loomis from St. Mary's, Michael Ponicki from St. Nicholas, and Craig Highet from Immaculate Conception.
5. There was discussion on Chapters 8-12 of "Radical Hospitality, Benedict's Way of Love." This completes the review of the book. Several positive comments were shared.
6. Individual Standing Committee Reports were reviewed with the following additions:
  - Cemetery – Rodney reported that a clean-up day was held at the St. Mary's Cemetery on May 18. Mike Ponicki said SN fixed the sign by their cemetery. Darcie noted that the ICC cemetery committee meets 2x/year. They have hired a person to do lawn mowing and are putting in a new fence.
  - Finance Council – Bev said there are a lot of repair and restoration projects occurring at ICC. They have been working on the John Massman Scholarship; it can be used for tuition costs for children of Catholic families to attend Catholic schools in Alexandria, Sauk Centre and Long Prairie and a separate scholarship for faith formation activities. Randy reported the SM Finance Council approved the purchase of the new parish house. There will be further discussion on the purchase of a new crucifix.
  - Liturgy – Adrian said the Liturgy Committee has elected a chair, vice-chair and a secretary. Their discussions deal with all aspects of liturgy and the mass. 40-Hours Devotion will be held at SN this fall. Going forward, the Liturgy Committee will include SN and ICC in planning for special events, such as Holy Week.
  - Parish Life – Margaret and Veronica reported SN has been holding more parish events (Mother's Day, Father's Day, Coffee & Rolls). Bev noted ICC has also scheduled more events and is working on planning something for each month. The SM parish life committee is looking for a new chair or co-chairs.
  - Stewardship – Bev said they are working on increasing hospitality at ICC; ministry sign-up went well. Josh said the SM Legacy Dinner has been cancelled for this year because

of a lack of time to plan. There will be a Diocesan Stewardship day with Dr. Bernie Evans. The next McGread Conference in Wichita will be held in March 2025.

- JPIC – Francie reported on the Sanctity of Life committee which is under JPIC. They are supporting pregnancy resources in the area. They will have a shower to support Life Connections, our pregnancy resource center in Alexandria.

7. Committee Liaisons for 2024-2025:

- Board of Education – SM: Jake Mach
- Cemetery – SM: Rodney Roers
- Finance Council – SM: Leon Breun; ICC: Craig Highet; SN- Tim Baas & Mike Ponicki
- Liturgy – SM: Adrian Panther; ICC: Bev Paul, SN – Mike Ponicki
- Parish Life – SM: John Loomis
- Stewardship – SM: Josh Waltzing; ICC – Bev Paul; SN – Veronica Haavig
- JPIC – Father Dan Ruprecht
- Evangelization – No current committee

8. Election of Council Officers - Consensus was reached on the following ACC pastoral council officers for the 2024-2025 fiscal year:

- President – Jake Mach
- Vice President – Josh Waltzing
- Secretary – Darcie Boogaard

Carol Gaffaney will continue to serve as recording secretary.

9. Administrative Update – Todd reported the following:

- Tonya Beulke and Julie Desautels (St. Mary's) went to New Orleans to learn about the new Family Formation program, Pathways.
- Facilities – Gutters and downspouts have been installed at SN and the handicap entrance now has a keycode. At ICC, tuckpointing the front of the church, a 5-10 year plan for tuckpointing all else, and sanctuary flooring are the major projects in process. The cooler/freezer work at St. Mary's School should be completed next week. The new parish house was purchased with the closing on May 10. They are working with HGA Architects to research ideas to solve the leaks by the large diamond shaped windows at SM.
- The IT livestreaming at SM has been down for several weeks; they are recording the mass and uploading it later. It was the result of a power surge.
- Enrollment at St. Mary's School for fall 2024 is at 275 at this time – another new record.
- Annual Plans (budgets) were approved at all 3 parishes by the respective finance council. At St. Mary's, the council is strongly supporting efforts to pay fair and just wages to the teachers and all lay staff. The target goal for teachers is to achieve 92.5% of district equivalent in 2024-25 and 95% in 2025-26. This will require a nearly 9% increase in regular sacrificial offerings next year and likely a similar increase in the year following. We will see if our stewardship philosophy will come through. This initiative also aligns with Bishop Neary's priorities. At SN and ICC, the increases are much less with 3% at SN and 5% at ICC.

10. Strategic Plan Update – Josh, Rodney and Father Rick discussed the recommendations from their sub-committee. They want to help people feel not only initially welcome but like they've belonged in the church their whole life. Recommendations and ideas discussed include the following:

- Various environmental upgrades
- Empowering and encouraging parishioners to enjoy one another's company; doing things they already love doing.
- Building up the practice and understanding of the faith in the adults of the ACC, so that they better know Christ and can easily overcome fears and obstacles to witnessing to him in the world.
- Bring back an Evangelization Committee
- Have a "bulletin board" to put events/activities that are happening within the ACC parishes; and a format or forum to start or create a new group/gathering/event.
- Stress that "everyone" can evangelize.

11. Future Meeting Schedule: There was consensus to move the meeting date for the ACC pastoral council to the fourth Tuesday of the month. It was noted that the ACC pastoral council does not meet in July or December. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church in Belle River.