

St. Edward Annual Parish Meeting
August 11, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Fr. Walter opened the meeting with a prayer at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: First order of business was approval of the August 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes. Jerry Ebben moved to approve the 2020 minutes; Mary Kreutzberg seconded the move. The motion was carried and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Father Walter's Report: Fr. welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming, acknowledging the increase in attendance from other years.

- Fr. would like to see an increase in regular contributions (parish support) to St. Edward to better our financial status and thus take pressure off fundraisers.
- Fr. noted attendance at Mass has been declining over the last 20 years. He would like to propose the challenge for parishioners to attend 40 Sundays per year.

Pastoral Life: – Deacon Jeff

- Over 30 families are visited and offered Communion in area household and facilities.
- Facilities are now allowing these visits after a variety of requirements are met.
- Communion services and Masses are being offered at Country Villa in Freedom, while Communion services are offered at Primrose, Willows Assisted Living and other facilities by Deacon Jeff. Fr. Walter and Deacon Gary.
- Sacramental preparations are being offered for those requesting baptism and marriage.
- The Knights of Columbus continue to organize fundraisers for various organizations
- After 18 months, training for Mass servers has resumed.
- We continue to help families with funeral services and selecting cemetery lots. Funeral lunches can now be offered as long as students are not present in the building.

Trustees' Reports:

- **Treasurer Trustee – Doug Hawley:** Elected to this position in October, Doug is looking forward to becoming more involved in the parish, with a goal of improving communication. His son, Jackson, attends St. Edward School.
- **Secretary Trustee - Merle Verhagen:** Also new to this position, Merle is looking forward to becoming more involved in this role. His two older children are graduates of St. Edward and a son, Josh, is currently attending St. Edward.

Pastoral Council – Tim Lamers

- This will be Tim's final report as he is transitioning off the Council. He stated how fortunate he was to serve with such great people. He specifically thanked Jane Varick for her years of service and dedication and being so helpful to him over the years.
- One very important Pastoral Council project is Mission Planning, which will be discussed later in the meeting.
- A major goal of Pastoral Council is to ensure all the committees, councils and everyone working or volunteering in the parish and school are all "rowing in the same direction".

Finance Council – Terry Woelfel

- Terry recognized Erin Ebben for her tremendous help in budget planning this year as he transitioned into the role of chairman of the Finance Council.
- Terry stated while veteran council members transitioned off the board, new members replaced them and are ready to take on the challenge of the budget process.

- Council members have been named “Communication Liaisons” to specific areas:
 - Liz Harp / Nicole Pietsch: Home & School, Harvest Moon Festival, St Edward School
 - Tim Westphal: Buildings & Grounds
 - Tom Pethan: Cemetery, Finance Investments/ Insurance
 - Terry Woelfel: Tractor Pull (Temporary), Fish Fry, Pastoral Council
- **Balance Sheet Notes** - Considering the high impact of Covid-19 in past year we had a favorable year with a net income of \$224,709 as a whole (Parish, School, NE, Cemetery, etc.) This in part was from the Government support PPP (Payment Protection Program) loan of \$137,600 which was a forgiven loan. We currently have a PPP2 loan in the amount of \$137,675.00 we assume will also be forgiven. Our Parish Support and Offertory collect has increased from previous years... \$345,105 ... 2020 prior was \$336,353 and 2019 \$332,629.
- The Council is working on different ways to bring more visibility to our parish support numbers against the proposed budget. More to come on this topic in the bulletin.

Maintenance Report – Cathy Schwieso

- **Projects completed in 2020-2021:** All state and diocesan Covid-19 mandates were continually met in both the school and church; painting of church trim completed and the cupola windows glazed, caulked and painted; mulching kits installed on cemetery lawnmowers to eliminate grass on headstones; an additional concrete entrance was installed on the north school entrance; damaged windows were replaced throughout church facility where needed; signage has been updated to two digital signs with rotating messages; four potholes have been repaired in the parish blacktop.
- Updates to East Rental Property include: new carpeting, basement painted, roof repaired, new garage windows installed, improvements to landscape; updates to West Rental Property include: septic system problems resolved, leaks in bathroom repaired, gutters and downspouts repaired; rental agreements have been updated;
- **Scheduled Projects:** Enhanced lighting in the church gathering area as well as the St. Nicholas Room; relocation and installation of new school playground equipment; existing windows need to be sanded, stained and varnished; discussion has begun as to building a pavilion on the east side of the tractor pull track and moving the track to the north is being looked into.
- **Note:** Fr. Walter added the Steering Committee reviews a maintenance spreadsheet quarterly to keep abreast of all the projects completed and yet to be completed. This spreadsheet is maintained by the custodian.

Cemetery Report – Ervin Van Camp was not present. Both Deacon Jeff and Fr. Walter commented that we are grateful to our dedicated team of volunteers as our cemetery is very well-maintained. Fr. also stated there are numerous cemetery plots available.

New Evangelization – Deacon Jeff presented for Celia McKee

- Despite challenges, the 2020-21 school year was open to creativity and flexibility.
- Sacraments of First Eucharist and Confirmation were held in late summer/fall 2020 and again in Spring, 2021.
- Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent were very well-received and well attended.
- Five Faith & Fun days were coordinated with St. Nicholas Parish through the summer.
- The new Directory of Catechesis was released in Summer 2020 and will be a part of our volunteer and staff development throughout the year.
- We are looking for a Coordinator of New Evangelization for Adults.

School – Renee Cowart

- Renee expressed her gratitude for the support shown the school staff and students
- 13 new students enrolled during 2021-20 due to Covid; 7 of those students have returned for this school year; 80 students are presently enrolled, with many new families.
- School remained open all school year; there were a few classes who had to quarantine. Staff and students cooperated with all Covid requirements.
- School Choice and Audit requirements were completed. Special thank you to Erin Ebben for her help in successfully finalizing these important programs.
- A new 4th grade teacher has been hired; Mrs. Lenaburg.
- Renee thanked the Home & School committee for their hard work and dedication.

Home & School – Bethany Brincks

- Bethany introduced herself as a new co-president, along with Travis Woelfel and Jacky Schreiber.
- A United States map has been repainted on the playground area, and a painted obstacle course will soon be finished.
- New playground equipment has been purchased. Installation will take place in the spring of 2022. Fundraising activities are in place to raise the funds to raise the remaining \$10,000.
- Plans are in progress to build an outdoor Learning Center on the current playground site.
- The Home & School Committee is providing funds for new desks and chrome books.

Worship: Music/Organ – Mike Collom

- **Technology:** Streaming interface was installed last fall to provide St. Edward Masses online. We also upgraded to wireless microphones for Fr. and Deacon Jeff.
- **Music:** Full choir will return in September, with several new members. Thank you to those who participated in the virtual choir for Christmas and Easter, and to those cantors who stepped up to maintain our music program through the past 18 months. A Lawrence University student has agreed to accompany cantors at Masses when needed. New lights for the cantors and choir have been installed thanks to a donation.
- **Organ:** Funds have been reached to purchase the new organ and installation (\$56K) with 12 speakers; 4 subwoofers. Now awaiting Diocese proxy approval. Donations collected (\$69K) exceed the cost of the organ, allowing creation of an endowment fund was for future upgrades, training, etc. Target date for implementation is Christmas, 2021.

Worship: Audio/Livestreaming – Bob Varick

- Our media system and screens have proven to be beneficial; no heavy books, better voice projection, participation, etc. Silent Gathering Prayers are displayed before Mass along with some brief announcements. We can also record weddings, funerals and special events, which enables us to reach many more home or facility-bound people.
- The ability to live stream Sunday Masses as well as weekday Masses has been well received. Some viewing numbers include: Thanksgiving – 220; Good Friday – 157; Palm Sunday – 158; Easter – 147; Christmas Eve - 265; Christmas Day - 246. We will continue to live stream the Sunday Mass.

Tractor Pull Committee – Lynn Schuh

- St. Edward's 45th Annual Truck and Tractor Pull was very successful with proceeds totally \$119,000. The event was well attended.
- **Changes made this year:** Prices increased slightly; the local pull was switched to Thursday night; the National pulls were Friday and Saturday nights; new attractions included a bag toss tournament, remote control pulls and a truck and tractor show.
- **Changes for next year:** Additional attendance booths available; additional lighting installed.
- **Volunteers:** New chairpersons transitioned well. Still a need for more volunteers. Next year will try a more personal approach.

Harvest Moon Committee – Bethany Brincks

- The event is being planned for October 16. A number of people have left the committee; so they are looking for more members to join the committee. 20th year theme is being discussed.

Fish Fry Committee – Denise Brincks

- Only “take out” dinners were offered; we averaged 686 each night, for a total of 4,802 meals. Total profit was \$45,258. Great volunteer turnout with lots of new faces. Phone orders were overwhelming for one line; three additional lines were added by the 3rd week.
- “Dine in” fish fries are planned for Fridays in Lent, 2022.

Parish Mission Planning – Patrick Berg

- Eleven members on this committee worked together, using tools from the Diocese along with surveys to arrive at four goals, which were presented to both the Pastoral and Finance Councils.
- **Goals:** **1.** Expand the use of technology as a missionary tool. **2.** Create, develop and implement a marketing plan in three years. **3.** Increase growth in the number of parish family contributing units by 15% over three years and to increase School and NE enrollment by 5% each year over the next three years. **4.** Increase engagement by 10% in volunteer and ministry areas that include multiple generations and families.
- The committee turned these goals over to the Pastoral Council for implementation.

Living Justice Committee – Fr. Walter

- Outreach sources are listed in Annual Report.
- Fr. is hopeful the all night prayer vigils, Love God & Neighbor, can be reestablished.
- Fr. Raja, our Missionary Priest, appreciated the good experience at St. Edward.

Additional Comments – Fr. Walter

- St. Edward School will be using he/him and she/her pronouns. While we are sensitive to those who have crosses they bear with gender identity, we will be following the natural law and revealed truth gracefully and respectfully.
- Mark Lang is no longer employed at St. Edward. Thus far there are two applicants for the position, but Fr. stated he would accept more applicants. He thanked the volunteers who are stepping up to help with maintenance tasks and projects. Fr. stated Breleigh VanCamp is doing a great job as a part-time maintenance helper and he hopes to have her continue on through her college career when her schedule allows.
- Seminary Collection – Fr. stated last year's collection totaled \$9,570. He encouraged us to set a goal to increase that amount this year as there is a great need.

Q & A Session:

- Jerry Ebben asked about the custodian's duties, if this included some type of management role. Fr. replied, no, but a custodian is to take "custody" of all that needs to be done on St. Edward properties. A janitor would be a level below a custodian; a custodian would be a level below a facility manager.
- Jerry also brought up that the soffit at the top of the cupola needs to be repaired.
- Terry Woelfel then stressed that if anyone sees something that needs to be done or repaired around the property, to please notify the appropriate person.
- Vicky Weiland asked if the numbers attending mass counted for those live streaming. Fr. answered no, they did not.
- Maurice Brinks asked why we are considering moving the tractor pull track to the north. Fr. answered to relieve parking congestion on the south side.

Fr. Walter led the closing prayers and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathy Schwieso