

**Church of Corpus Christi
Parish Council Special Meeting
Minutes August 20, 2019**

In Attendance: Father Paveglio, Sandy Banaszak (Chair), Luke Burza, Jim Colten, Kathy DiGiorno, Kirk Enzenauer (Secretary), Toni Leach (Staff), Denice Malone, Alisa Weber

Absent: Eric Iverson (Vice Chair)

Guests: Marie Barnum (Trustee), Dave Boxrud (Finance), Collen Ciaccio (Staff), Mike Cole, Vince DiGiorno, John DiGiorno, Olivia DiGiorno, Tom Martin (Trustee), Sue Valois (Staff)

Call Meeting to order: 7:01 (Sandy)

Prayer (Sandy)

Introductions & Welcome new members (Sandy): Luke Burza, Kathy DiGiorno, Denice Malone, Eric Iverson (absent)

New Business (Fr. Paveglio)

Fr. Paveglio explained that he had called this meeting to introduce a new opportunity for Corpus Christi. He went on to discuss a proposal that CC explore a merger with St. Adalbert (SA), a community near the capitol in St. Paul that is the primary home for a significant group of twin cities Catholics of Vietnamese heritage. Fr. Paveglio was approached with this opportunity in April and has been working with a group of five parishioners for the past couple of months to explore the opportunity.

SA currently has three masses each weekend—two in English and one in Vietnamese. Their weekly mass attendance is approximately 800. There is a significant population who attend the Vietnamese mass, then stay for an afternoon that includes faith formation, Vietnamese language classes, and fellowship for the Vietnamese community from across the Twin Cities. Their priest, Fr. Mihn Vu, speaks Vietnamese, and Fr. Paveglio stated that the SA pastor will be bilingual. They have a large youth group/faith formation program and share confirmation with St. Columba.

Fr. Paveglio stated that if CC merged with SA, CC would no longer be in a cluster and would have an assigned pastor. He represented that CC would retain its name and property, and that SA would eventually sell its property. He further represented that SA has funds and ability to fix their property, and that they have no debt.

A group of parishioners and priest from SA toured our property on Sunday.

Discussion included the following questions/answers:

Is this a new model, where parishes are asked to identify merger partners and bring forth proposals to the archdiocese?

Fr. Paveglio is not aware of any new model; listening and discernment are important. He will follow up with Deacon Rip Riordan.

What are the demographics of SA?

No information other than general 800 weekend attendance and strong Vietnamese cultural heritage link. Vietnamese population comes from all over.

Who would the pastor be?

Fr. Paveglio does not know, but eventually the pastor would be bilingual.

Why CC, with our smaller church? Why not SRL?

Fr. Paveglio stated that he was approached about the opportunity and allowed to bring it forward to either parish. He states that he thinks CC would be better for this opportunity, referencing diversity, different ethnicities, etc.

What is their liturgical style? What about their mission statement?

They characterize themselves as “more contemporary than traditional,” and they liked our social justice work. Other than that, we don’t really know. Their Sunday cultural experience is very important to them

Other topics that were raised include:

- Is SA interested in integrating our two communities?
- What would this mean for the school? Would we reopen the school?
- What kind of resources does the archdiocese have to assist us in exploring this opportunity?
- Does our previous experience with the Korean Catholic Community have any relevance here?
- What is SA’s relationship with St. Columba, which also has a significant Vietnamese community, and why aren’t they exploring merger with them?
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CC staff was not receptive to the proposal; wanting to get the CC house in order by strengthening and grow CC’s present position. Not wanting more change on top of all of the change we have had during the last few years.

Members of the council expressed interest in exploring the opportunity in order to support Fr. Paveglio and because this may be a way for us to live out our mission, especially our commitment to be a welcoming community. They also expressed concern that merging with a community that is so focused on a specific culture will raise many issues. The council supported developing a process to discuss this and other potential possibilities.

Other attendees at the meeting suggested that we need to do significant due diligence with the diocese. There were concerns raised about whether the parish can tolerate change of the type that a merger with SA would involve.

There was a strong consensus among all lay attendees that if the diocese has already made a determination about CC—whether specific to this merger or otherwise—the community deserves to know. Numerous attendees asked “Do we really have a choice?” Fr. Paveglio said yes, that the decision has not been made by the archdiocese, and that he believes we need to embark on a parish-wide discernment process.

Fr. Paveglio intends to send a letter to the entire parish and to include it with the bulletin. A listening session is planned on September 12th.

Members of the council discussed the logistics of such a listening session, including the importance of having it facilitated by a neutral party. They also discussed other means of gathering questions/feedback.

Motion to extend meeting to 8:30 failed. One person approved, others declined.

Closing Prayer: (Father Paveglio)

Adjournment: 8:11 (Sandy)

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 7pm