Saint Bridget Parish Council Minutes  
**Wednesday; February 19, 2025 (virtual)**

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| Father Ken Shuping PRESENT  Rev. Seth Seaman PRESENT  Bruce Slough, Chairperson PRESENT  Allie Strollo, Secretary PRESENT  Pat Accardo PRESENT  Julia Williams PRESENT  Mike Wilder PRESENT | Frank Devenoge PRESENT  Tom Giannasi ABSENT  Kristine Keeney PRESENT  Mack Rich PRESENT  John Rogers PRESENT  Tara Chiudian PRESENT |

# Opening

* 6:01 PM – Meeting was called to order by Bruce Slough
* Opening prayer, Father Ken

# Approval of Minutes

* 6:03 PM Meeting minutes from January 2025 meeting were approved by the council

# Liaison Reports

## Liturgy – Mack Rich

* Placed order for Lenten Season
* March 4 is a likely date for King Cake and discussion after Confessions at 7pm
* Stations at 5:30 on Fridays, including Good Friday. April 11 is planned for a ‘neighborhood-wide’ Stations of the Cross. 14 parishioners have been identified to approach on hosting station
* Altar Server Commissioning after the 9am Mass on March 23
* Additional planning is scheduled to consider Alter server and Mass server needs for Holy Week
* April 1 is the tentative date for a parish ‘Day of Reconciliation' service
* Special Blessing to be planned for the Jubilee year

## Christian Formation-Kristine Keeney

* Shannon Jones shared feedback for Reconciliation Retreats. Positive feedback was received. Thank you to our volunteers.
* Schedule of some upcoming events
  + 1st Reconciliation services will be held on March 8 & 15.
  + Diocesan Youth Conference will be the weekend of Feb 7-9.
  + 1st Communion Retreats will be held on March 29 and April 5.
  + Students will receive 1st Communion on May 3-4 and May 10-11.
  + Students will receive Confirmation on May 8.
  + We are starting to plan for VBS this summer. It will be held the week of June 16.
  + Work Camp for high school youth will be the week of June 23.
  + Lifeteen Summer Camp will be the week of July 20 (for both middle school and high school this year).

## Social Ministry- Julia Williams

* Things are picking up and will continue to do so through this spring. Events planned for the fall and spring are listed below.
  + 4/2/25- VA March for Life here in Richmond
  + 5/11/25- Mother’s Day Tea 2-4 pm
  + 5/13 or 5/15/25- SVDP Spaghetti Dinner
  + 9/7/25- Ministry Fair event- still in initial planning stages
  + 7/1/25- Human Concerns Grant will be available with return date of 9/30/25
  + 9/26/25- Cardboard Box City with MS/HS Youth- will be in fenced parking area overnight
  + 10/1/25- Christmas Sharing applications open. Close 11/1/25
  + 12/12-12/15/25- Christmas Sharing collection and event
* Jo Ellen was asked to be a part of the Diocesan Social Ministries Advisory Board last week, which meets 3 times a year and helps provide direction on needs for the social ministers across the Diocese. A good response/feedback from the Social Ministry Spotlights in the bulletin and will continue to do those. March’s feature is Habitat for Humanity. Lastly, the first half of the Human Concerns grant awards have been coordinated. The next batch will be done the first week of July.
* The Feeding Ministry
  + Currently surveying their members for input on possibly adding a new group to help serve during the 3rd week of the month which is currently open. They are also checking to see if folks who would like a more personal hands on experience from the Salvation Army and LVS groups would like to join St. Peter’s Door group as some of their members may be aging out.
* Haiti Ministry
  + There will be a webinar with the Diocese next month (3/18) to talk about increased communications and support with our twin partner. We are also continuing to gather new people to this group.
* Respect Life
  + There is a multi-church group that is meeting about the current legislation and many of those folks were involved in the Capitol Day last month. I helped with check in and went to the event.
  + Dan Harms is also involved from the Diocese and working to get additional volunteers and communication to support the VCC and VHSL in the groundwork of work that needs to be done over the next year.
* Walking with Moms
  + We had a successful meeting last month and will hold our second meeting on 2/24/25. I met with the WWM Chair at St. Michaels and they would like to join forces as they are not getting as much support as they would like. We also two people coming from St. Mary’s. We are planning a Mother’s Day Tea on 5/11/25 from 2 -4 pm. for our Respect Life partners/moms currently in the programs. Our Feeding ministries are planning to help with the food and our Mom’s Ministry are also interested in hosting and participating.
* Saint Vincent De Paul
  + The need is great all around RVA. There was a Tri-Council meeting between us, St. Michael’s and Sacred Heart last Thursday here at the church and the amount of calls has significantly increased. Our conference is developing additional fundraising needs and recruiting more folks to get involved to handle the case work involved. They are also planning a spaghetti dinner in May as a benefit and discussing the logistics of that with the Knights of Columbus to plan a successful event.
* Blackwell/Elementary outreach
  + They are hitting a roadblock for new volunteers and we need a VIRTUS training event to get these people into.
  + We received additional input/interest in two ministries that have been previously been active and we are now looking at bringing some life back to them. Pastoral Care with Deacon John. We are talking about expanding this group to be available for parishioners in distress and connect with our homebound senior community. We also had someone interested in Prison Ministry, which is more developed at adjacent churches but have connected that individual to a K of C person involved in prison ministry here from Saint Bridget.
  + We had a very successful Diaper Drive this past month, collecting at least 1400 diapers and 1500 wipes for this event. We are currently advertising the Art of Housing for Housing Families First and Habitat is providing us some opportunities to get involved in current build project and other needs for March.

## Community Life and Evangelization – John Rogers

* Nursery
  + getting more regular use after Sunday Mass, during children's choir, etc.
  + Kim Lunardi has led a refresh of the space: sorted and labeled toys, replaced old bulletin board decor to reflect the church instead of the school, now that the primary use is ad-hoc by church attendees, worked with the parish office to get the floors waxed and the walls painted
* Donuts
  + Very popular! Many comments of appreciation, requests to keep going, and affirmation that it adds a lot to the warmth and engagement of the Sunday Mass to support social interaction afterwards like this. (Frank D to add additional comments)
  + Donuts will be paused during Lent
  + Looking into funding and donations to keep the momentum going
* Final 75th Anniversary events
  + The gala had 165 guests. Food and band were both great, dancing went past 10.
  + The organ concert the Friday before was also a success.
  + Huge thank you to the committee for their support

# Pastor Report

## Fr Ken

* Looking for help to staff/volunteers to help with Lenten Soup

# Principal Report

* Missed school days ​​
  + Tomorrow will be the final “built in” snow day for the school. After that, we will need to make up time.
  + Few have asked why we have not incorporated asynchronous/virtual learning on days we are closed for snow/water issues. There are several requirements, including necessary utilities, such as power, internet, and access for all students and staff. Previously, I’ve shared my personal belief that in person learning is the most effective way to make up for lost instructional time. Finally, when schools are closed during a state of emergency, the state of emergency offers support for a waiver request, but it does not automatically mean that the time missed does not have to be made up.
  + Here is information about snow days and instructional time:
    - What counts as a full day of school?
      * Anything over 5 hours. So a two hour delay still counts as a full day. An 11:30AM dismissal only counts as a half day of instruction.
    - How many days can we miss before the school schedule is impacted?
      * Eight Days-Thursday is the last day Saint Bridget can be closed before falling below the required number of instructional hours.
    - If one additional day (9 days total) is missed after Thursday
      * March 14 and either March 5 or April 17 (TBD) will be made full school days. On the current calendar, both of those days are scheduled to be 11:30 AM early dismissal days.
    - If a second day (10 days total) is missed
      * March 17 will be a full day of school. This day was added into the calendar as a holiday.
    - If additional dates are needed, we will work with the Diocese to apply for a waiver.
* Campaign Updates
  + The school has purchased a charter bus. It’s being built and should arrive in August/September 2025.
  + ES bathrooms are on schedule for a “refresh” this summer.
  + Security upgrades with video surveillance and a few access doors are scheduled for this summer as well. Possibly even this spring.
  + The school server upgrade is complete.
  + All remaining funds (currently estimated around $400K depending on the final costs of the projects above) will go into the Capital Improvement Fund and Endowment.
* Congratulations to Colleen Blazsak who was selected as this year’s Excellence in Catholic Education Award for Saint Bridget.
* Enrollment
  + Re-enrollment went very well this year. We will confidently have 525 students next year after all new offers go out. We continue to have to turn families away in our younger grades. Especially in grades JK and K.
* All of our staff participated in CPR and First Aid training thanks to our PTO. This is way above the requirement. Teachers only need to participate in this training when recertifying (which could be up to 10 years).
* Important Upcoming Dates
  + March 3-14 Military Supply Drive
  + March 19/20 Disciple Spotlight Recognition after daily Mass

# Old Business

* **Disciple Maker Index Survey**
  + Representation from school, parish, and staff participating in 7/8 working sessions with a consultant to set priorities and goals
    - The working group includes Fr. Ken, Fr. Seth, Deacon Charlie, Jon Rogers, Meghan Hess, Jo Ellen Schneider, and Elizabeth Self, as well as the consultant from DMI we work with.
  + See New Business for updates

# New Business

* **Disciple Maker Index Survey**
  + Steps
    - Analyze Data-complete
    - Choose Priorities-complete
    - Define Goals-complete
    - Draft Strategies
    - Communicate Plan to Parish
    - Nominate Priority Leaders
  + Priorities and Goals set [Click Here for Presentation](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1La5zY68QKKRG1GelvmNnwcMG_5qXWIKbRqzVU23VYqw/edit?usp=drive_link)
    - 1. Engagement
      * Increase % of Parishioners feeling welcomed
      * Increase attendance at Mass
    - 2. Formation
      * Create opportunities for the “formation as a disciple” through retreats and workshops
      * Increase the % of Parishioners who feel confident to have conversations with family and friends about the teachings of the Church
    - 3. Discipleship
      * Create a mentoring program, where individuals and families mentor others, with at least 24 families
      * Increase the % of parishioners who report that they’ve accompanied someone else spiritually on a weekly basis
  + Parish Council is charged with reviewing goals and brainstorming priorities
* New Director of Religious Ed
* Need to begin recruiting for Parish Council Meetings
* Speakers for Diocesan Annual Appeal (Allie, Bruce, and Mac so far)

# Parishioner Feedback/Suggestion Box

* Have examination of conscience pamphlets placed out during confession - Bulldog Catholic has a good one we could use.
* Have Father visit the Children's Liturgy on the last Sunday that the 2nd graders attend before First Communion, for the kids to see Father down in "their" space and to connect that they're preparing to return to the church where Father's homily is the adult equivalent of what they've been getting downstairs.

# Adjournment

* Meeting adjourned 7:13 PM