

**Annual Parish Meeting**  
**Sunday, September 10, 2023**  
**UNAPPROVED Minutes**

*Annual Parish Report was provided for all in attendance*

**Meeting called to order** at 11:32 a.m.

**Opening Prayer:** Father Robert said a welcome prayer

**Financial Trustee – Will Van Rossum**

Will has been an active parish committee and council member for about 4 years now. Father Walter helped give him a gentle nudge to join the School Advisory Committee after Will said he didn't have time. It turns out, he wasn't as busy as he thought he was and made time for many more obligations with the church over the next few years. We cannot support the church with monetary donations alone. Time and talent are just as important as Treasures! Our Strategic Planning Committee has implemented a plan that includes 5 goals with 3 objections for each goal. A few goals are to improve the number of helping hands we have in our parish, engage people and grow our parish and school family! Another major component to our St. Nicholas family is the Freedom community. What would our community be like without our church? We don't want to find out the answer to this question so please reach out to engage others to get involved in any way they feel comfortable through their time talent and treasure.

**REPORTS**

**A) Statement of Finances – Craig Schommer**

Craig is here because of his love of Jesus. Jesus said, "No one gets to the Father except through me." Our parish is truly blessed. Overall our funds needs are met. However, our budget is decreasing due to higher costs including insurance, staffing wages, heating, ect. We are currently at 43% of giving households in our parish. The amounts are set for specific needs as listed in the Financial Position Statement, so we are hopeful that the giving increases. Please continue prayers for our church and community and how we are each called to grow our faith in Christ 😊

**B) Saint Nicholas School – Abby Linwood**

Our 2022-2023 Winterfest was a success and helped to purchase new science books for the school. Our technology is improved and is cost effective. We have been updating our security and should be complete in the next few weeks. This includes film on all the windows as well as door lock card systems throughout the entire school. We have also implemented a new tuition management program to update funds in a timely manner. This year we have 138 students with an average of about 12 students per class. Our largest class is 23 and our smallest is 7. We look forward to a great year of learning and sharing the light of Christ with all we meet!

**C) New Evangelization – Jenny Jochman**

As part of the St. Nicholas Discipleship Team, we want to continue creating disciples and witnesses of Christ. This past year we have had 36 communicants, 20 confirmants, held 3 Better Together evenings and 3 Lady Nights, discipled 225 young children of God, had 10 middle school students attend Love Begins Here and 15 High School students go to Steubenville! This year we will journey through our faith with about 220 students. We began our adventure with 26 of our confirmants to Our Lady of Champion for a retreat in August. Our parish will be hosting a parish wide movie featuring Sound of Freedom. We are looking forward to many more ways to bring Christ to our parish through scripture study nights, men's group, parish activities and other events. If you or someone you know is looking for ways to get involved we would love to have them on our team!

**D) Cemetery – Brian Higgins**

Brian Higgins is on the cemetery committee along with Terry Van Hoof, our sexton, Lynne Idhe, Tom Wisneski, Vicky Randerson, Laurie Thompson, Dave Bowers, Deacon Gary and Father Robert. Thank you to Vernon Newhouse, Ted Vosters and our maintenance crew of Jim and Beaver Greiner along with many others who helped get our cemetery to where it is today. We moved the rear fence back to add our new columbarium. Our columbarium has 48 niches that can hold 1-2 urns each. Each side can hold 24 niches in a 8x3 design. More information including our cemetery rules, regulations, and prices can be found on our parish website or in the mailbox in the cemetery. For those interested, we will be having more detailed informational meetings this fall.

**E) Maintenance/Facilities Manager – Paul Mattek- read by Randy Conrad**

Randy is a liaison to the Building and Grounds Committee. Our first question is how can we keep our middle school students here at St. Nicholas School? This should be a parish wide mission so these students can continue to grow confidently in their faith. As for the our maintenance we have completed the front parking lot, thanks to the many people who helped keep it cost effective for us! Landscaping was complete by Kirk Schuh, Hofacker, Bob Schommer and many others. Some of our classrooms were updated by Fuzzy and Darrell Vosters. Gary VerVoort was able to raise funds for new snow equipment. The Delforge family very kindly donated 10k to update our baseball field. The roof damage was approved and we should be all finished with repair in the spring of 2024. Thank you to Ethan Roskowski and many others who help make our parish and school beautiful!

**Q&A- Open Discussion-**

How many families do we currently have and how many are giving? Currently we have 1,049 families registered. Out of those families, 457 are currently giving. This has been a struggle and we are looking to go through our list of active and inactive members.

Our middle school students are leaving, what is our focus to keeping them here? Historically speaking, students in 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grade end up leaving. If we can continue to build the strength in the lower grades to keep them here, it will help with students transferring in wanting to stay. We have options for families to help with financial needs to get tuition assistance or school choice. That's why we are here. Please ask for help or you won't know what is available.

Father Robert has had one very grateful year in at St. Nicholas. He is looking forward to another wonderful year! He would like to have more parishioners be involved in our annual meetings so they are more informed to help make St. Nicholas the best parish it can be. The one by one campaign donations have already begun to come in! We will begin by replacing the boiler. The Building and Grounds Committee has been working on getting new quotes to get things started. Thank you to everyone for your generosity and time! He is very grateful to the staff, principal and committee members!

Approval of Minutes 1<sup>st</sup>) Sue Van Camp 2<sup>nd</sup>) Jim Newhouse

**Closing** 12:06 pm

*Submitted by Jennifer Otto*