ST. GERARD MAJELLA
PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Date of Meeting: October 27, 2026
Time of Meeting: 7:25 P.M.
Location of Meeting: St. Gerard Majella Garden Room
Present at Meeting:
Rev. Charles Lachowitzer, *Pastor*
Steve Robinson, *Trustee*
Peg Louiselle, *Trustee*
Mark Scherschligt, *Finance Council*
Janet Byrnes*, Faith Formation*
Charity Carroll*, Faith Formation*
Debby Boyd, *Liturgy Ministry*
Sue Dupay, *Pastoral Care Ministry*
Donna Scheck, *Community Life, Social Justice Outreach*
Celeste Erickson, *Liturgy*

Absent from Meeting: Maredith Toweh, *Parish Administration, Director of Faith Formation*, Jean Schultz, *Safe Environment Coordinator & Faith Formation Admin.,* An Trinh, *Representative at large for Vietnamese Community,* Rev. Paul Phong Le*, Parochial Vicar, (Vietnamese),*

The regular meeting of the Pastoral Council of St. Gerard Majella was called to order at 7:25 p.m. on October 27, 2026 by Rev. Charles Lachowitzer, *Pastor*

AGENDA:

The agenda stated at Leadership at Table was to identify potential themes that each ministry would like to pursue for the next five meetings through May 2027 (November, January, February, April and May)

Donna Scheck, *Community Life, Social Justice Outreach:*

The group submitted these ideas in response to Father's question:

- Evangelization (either internal or external to the parish)
- Archdiocesan updates - what is going on around the Archdiocese
- Adult education/ spirituality topic
- Catholic social teaching/ discussion of Pope Leo's Magnifica Humanitas
- Tips for more effective meetings (given how brief the time is for discussion)
- The designing of an interest survey to be conducted in the parish, asking parishioners to respond on their interests, concerns, and ideas on parish life

Charity Carroll*, Faith Formation:*

- Archdiocese updates
- Adult education and spiritual topics
- Raised concern regarding Fr. Charlie's tenure. There is concern about a good transition.

Fr. Charlie's comments:
Fr. Charlie shared that since he would be going into retirement instead of another parish, there is likely some flexibility regarding the timing and potential overlap with a future pastor.

Celeste Erickson, *Liturgy:*

- Suggested inviting some Faith Formation young adults to attend Leadership at Table.

Sue Dupay, *Pastoral Care Ministry:*

- Desire for more diversity at Leadership at Table.
- Question was raised about how to invite more Vietnamese representation
- Can MSP software be used for Adoration schedule?
- Would like to see "crowning of Mary" in the main church in May.
- A retreat would be welcome

Fr. Charlie's comments:
Fr. Charlie addressed technology challenges. There is a concern about how well are utilizing our IT service contract.

Fr. questioned the type of retreat that should be considered—scripture, church teachings?
Charity Carroll suggested a Lenten teaching, similar to the Holy Land evening given by Fr. Charlie.

Janet Byrnes, *Faith Formation:*

- Suggested a ministry fair with tables and booths to attract new volunteers and encouraged personal invitation.

Charity Carroll*, Faith Formation:*

- Suggested printed cards to use when inviting new volunteers to explain a particular ministry; ask them to try it for a period of time to see if they might be called to the ministry.

Fr. Charlie:
Fr. Charlie suggested some thought should be given to the land on the corner and whether it should be sold. The value would be determined by Brooklyn Park zoning codes. This requires more serious discussion. Brooklyn Park also uses it for overflow parking in addition to our community garden. There had been discussion about putting a sign on the corner, but it was not a top priority and couldn't be considered until other projects are done.

Donna Scheck noted that community garden is filled and has a waiting list.
Debby Boyd confirmed that the garden produce is used for both sharing and take home.
Sue Dupay added that the garden also has a plot devoted to CEAP.

Debby Boyd, *Liturgy Ministry:*

- More Eucharistic Ministers and Mass Coordinators are needed. We have a good number of Lectors who are needed only once a month.
- The training this spring brought in seven (7) new Eucharistic Ministers.
- Using Mass Coordinators to bring Communion to the disabled has been working well.
- Suggested a well-done ministry fair with follow-up could help us grow
- Suggested some attention could be given to welcoming new members
- Question raised regarding the 'gift spotters' that were identified at a previous meeting.

Fr. Charlie's comments: He needs to prepare an invitation letter to be mailed to those who were suggested. Margaret provided the draft letter and list to him.

Regarding recruiting volunteers, Fr. Charlie confirmed that Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers must be confirmed. The exceptions are that servers and cantors do not need to be confirmed. The Vietnamese masses are now welcoming women Lectors, but they are not Eucharistic Ministers yet, as this is disturbing to the elders.

Other Areas or Themes:

Fr. Charlie's comments:

- Consideration for redoing St. Gerard's Mission Statement and core values could be a future topic
- Fr. will get back with information on transition options. He will make a transition plan.
- Regarding recruiting new choir members, most effective way is invitation.
- Regarding a question raised about a children's choir, Karen Blomgren must be consulted
- Fr. will keep us informed on open staff positions
- Staff will continue to communicate status of current building projects with all parishioners.
- Fr. commented on his perception of the parish, noting that St. Gerard's has the right gifts with the right people. He couldn't imagine a better, more welcoming parish.
- Regarding the issue of a larger chapel, Fr. believes a larger chapel should be prioritized over the needs of the rectory. He noted that we can expand chapel seating by 2/3rds without substantial work, using the space behind the chapel altar.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held at St. Gerard Majella on **November 19, at 7:15 p.m.**

Closing blessing by: Rev. Charles Lachowitzer, *Pastor*
Meeting adjourned at: 8:30 p.m. by Rev. Charles Lachowitzer, *Pastor*
Minutes submitted by: Margaret Pavlik
Minutes reviewed, edited and revised by: Peg Louiselle