

STEWARDSHIP CORE GROUP MINUTES – ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING

6/8/11

The Stewardship Core Community met for our annual retreat and planning meeting at 5 pm in the Community Center on Wednesday, June 8. Attendees: Fr. Michael Foley, Bill and Cookie Zimmer, Shawn and Cathy Sturmer, Tom and JoAnne McBrearty, Pat and Bill Beckett

For our Prayer and Faith Sharing, we read the Introduction to the US Bishop's 1992 Letter: Stewardship: A Disciple's Response. Following the reading, we answered the questions: What aspect of this letter speaks to me most right now? How does it relate to my personal experience and our experience at Good Shepherd?

Review of year – what we are currently doing:

Time and Talent

- Annual Stewardship of Time and Talent lay witnesses
- Ministry Fair
- Ministry booklet
- Stewardship calendar
- Stewardship thoughts in bulletin
- Stewardship prayers of the faithful
- Annual Lay Ministry Retreat
- Semi-annual Ministry Leader's Gatherings
- Appreciation Dinner
- Annual Stewardship report

Treasure

- Annual Stewardship of Treasure lay witnesses
- Mail out to all contributing parishioners with intention form
- Mail out to all non-contributing parishioners without intention form
- Financial Peace University
- Annual Stewardship report

Creation

- Formation of Green Team
- Rain Garden
- Changes in parish procedures to encourage green practices
- Idle Free zone

We considered the question: Should we discontinue or change anything we are doing that is no longer effective? Using the Shared Wisdom process and the following comments were recorded.

- Stewardship Thoughts are hard to remember to read
- Liked the “featured” ministry at the Appreciation Dinner and would like to see it done more often – people really seemed to be listening.
- Lay Witnesses – are we getting boring? Do people just expect it and tune out when the person begins speaking?

- Change to a witness by Fr. Mike on the changes he sees at Good Shepherd as a result of stewardship
- But witness of lay people is really important so that people can see that ordinary people can do it and that there are struggles, but also joys
- Already hear from the clergy in the homily.
- Publicize the Rain Garden more so that people know what it is. Find out if it is still featured on the TAPP website and recognize that in a flyer or on our web site
- Help ministries that are struggling to possibly combine
- Needs bulletin board – as we discussed during the Ministry Gathering in August, 2010. How can we implement?
- Mail outs for Treasure – are they effective? How many are returned? Review the intention form next year and possibly change the entire brochure
- There is a perception that too much money is going to the Diocese.
- Appreciation Dinner is held at a time of year that is already very busy and full of other types of Appreciation gatherings.
- Change date to January when there are fewer conflicts for families. May be a problem for older people who won't drive in the darkness of winter. We will try it next year and see how it goes.
- After looking at the parish schedule, the dinner was scheduled for Friday, January 13.

We then did a separate shared wisdom review of Financial Peace University since it was new this year. Cathy and Shawn prepared a report with the statistics and results of the evaluations that were completed by the participants. Additional comments by the Core Community:

- Practical points and teaching were very good
- Would appreciate more about the spirituality of stewardship and an earlier focus on New Testament scriptures and the focus on true financial peace only coming through trust in God and generosity.
- Crown and FPU did not contradict each other and that was affirming.
- It was hard to get people to complete the homework.
- Many people experienced renewal and enthusiasm.
- Statistics used by Dave were out of date for the current financial situation
- Some topics were specific to different age groups. On those evenings, there wasn't enough concrete information. For example, waiting for retirement section, but didn't have enough practical advice.
- There was more sharing as the weeks went on and it was good that the small groups could get to know each other over the entire course
- Start earlier in the year – attendance dropped off as it got into April and May
- Need to find ways to recruit younger families. The older families all wished they had done it earlier.
- Not enough focus on the scriptural foundations of giving and importance of giving back to God first. The session on giving was the last one and attendance had dropped so many didn't hear it. Would like to see this message proclaimed at every meeting.

During discussion, we decided to offer FPU next year only starting earlier. Dates were tentatively set for January 12, 19, 26, February 2, 9, 16, 23, March 1, 8, 15, 29, April 12, and 19. We would like to include some more teaching on stewardship concepts and possibly some lay

witness talks in each session. A ministry for the newly married is beginning and we will work with that group to recruit younger couples. Cathy and Shawn said that they would coordinate (God willing.)

We then discussed any other changes that we would like to make for next year. Pastoral Council suggested that we hold another "Gift Discernment" workshop. We decided to have this workshop in February as sort of a combination of our Lay Ministry Retreat and Ministry Gathering. It will be a covered dish gathering in the evening with the workshop following. We need a volunteer from the Core Community to design and organize the evening. Pat has a book of materials received at one of the ICSC Conferences that can be used as a resource. And there are others in the parish who have worked in the area of gift discernment: Bob Schuchts and Dee Lopez.

We watched a short video by Fr. Douglas Doussan, 2004 ICSC, on the description of a stewardship parish that emphasized some key points on inclusivity and welcoming others. He talked about the importance of knowing names and interacting with people one on one, that every contact can make a difference and told several stories about ways to be unwelcoming. He emphasized encouragement and affirmation.

We reviewed our Proposed Annual Plan and dates for next year. The revised plan is attached. Date changes discussed at the retreat are included.

The Ministry Fair will be held on September 24-25 using the same format and theme as last year.

We ran out of time before we could really discuss the Ministry Leader's Gathering on August 9. We did decide that it will be a covered dish with the theme of including prayer in your ministry, including both personal forms of prayer and communal prayer. Pat will work on some ideas and e-mail them to the Core Community. The evening will conclude with a presentation on the changes in the Mass.

Pat passed out the brochure for the International Catholic Stewardship Conference that will be held in Orlando this year, October 23-26. The registration is \$499 and \$474 for additional persons. Pat asked everyone to review the information and let her know if they are interested in attending. She will discuss the funding with Fr. Michael.

Kathy and Rick have resigned as Stewardship Core Community members, but may be able to come back in the future. Pat asked everyone to consider nominees for new members who can be invited to join us. Irene Johnston was asking about the group at the Appreciation Dinner and Pat will call her to invite her to find out more. Cindy Berta on the Finance Council asked about Pastoral Council, but Pastoral Council has completed their membership so Pat will talk to her about joining the Stewardship Core Group.

Next meeting, Sunday, August 28, 7:30 pm. Thanks to all for the great input!