# St. Bernard Catholic Community Joint Planning

**January 14, 2021** 









### **Agenda**

- 1. Opening prayer (2 min.)
- 2. Introductions/Review agenda (5 min.)
- 3. School initiatives Ms. Finley, Principal (10 min.)
- 4. "State of the Community" update (25 min.)
- 5. Plan parish activities for Lent (10 min.)
- 6. Discuss how to support/promote upcoming events (5 min.)
- 7. Committee updates (10 min.)
- 8. Note upcoming meeting dates (1 min.)
- 9. Other
- 10. Closing prayer (1 min.)



### Community Engagement

#### 1. Pandemic Curtailed Some Parish Activities But Others Started/Continued

- Public Masses resumed 5/4 with precautions, but dispensation still in effect, so still livestreaming Sunday 10am Masses
- Began a Parish Outreach Program at Start of Pandemic: Called most vulnerable members of our parish, then those who appeared to be single/alone; Offered encouragement and support
  - We're thankful for the graces that came from this initiative.
  - Calls were discontinued due to volunteer limitations. If anyone wants to take the lead and/or recruit
    help to continue this ministry, we welcome that. Interested parties should contact Valerie Niemeyer at
    (402)502-2198 or joe.valerieniemeyer@gmail.com
- Prayer requests are still welcome for the Hozana e-mail based "prayer chain" send them to outreach.stbernard@gmail.com
- Two editions of a parish newsletter (eClairvaux) were sent/posted/provided in church when weekly bulletins were temporarily suspended
- Update letters were mailed to parishioners in March and July

Community Engagement (continued)



#### 2. Annual Benefit Auction was ON and ONLINE October 16!

- This year's virtual Benefit & Auction was a success!
- Event raised over \$93,000, 32% above the previous 6-year average of \$70,315
- Greater school family involvement with raffle sales was a plus
- Post-event survey responses were very positive. Overall guest satisfaction of 88.2%, which beat the historical average of 86.5%, but was down from last year's high of 92%.
  - Guests remarked that given circumstances (pandemic) organizers/volunteers did an excellent job
  - Also received some good suggestions for improvement



# **2020 RAISE THE PADDLE!**

Funds that Were Donated Will Help Raise the Roof, Provide Tuition Assistance, and Renovate Classrooms!







- Community Engagement (continued)
  - 3. St. VdP Society has continued pantry services, with safety precautions
  - 4. Thanks to Zesto's and to Scooter's at 4040 N. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street for sharing proceeds from Community Day events with St. Bernard School





- 5. Archdiocese Annual Appeal
  - Thank you to all who have generously supported this appeal
  - St. Bernard currently has reached 82.7% of it's goal, with
     63 donors contributing a total of \$16,612



Community Engagement (continued)

6. "Santa's elves" purchased and wrapped a gift for each of our PK through

8<sup>th</sup> grade students











# THANK YOU, SANTA'S HELPERS!

(Even with their masks on, you can tell the students are smiling!)



- Community Engagement (continued)
  - 7. Parishioners donated to the St. Bernard SVdP Pantry through this year's Reverse Advent Calendar, in honor of Deacon Ed Osterhaus
  - 8. Supporting missionaries and other religious
    - At our last Joint Planning Meeting, a discussion of how to support missionaries when families' budgets may be tight led to an idea of sending letters of encouragement and gratitude to the homebound in our parish and to retired religious sisters
    - Our School Principal, Ms. Finley, offered to have students write letters to our homebound parishioners, and to retired sisters from the Mercy, Servants of Mary, and Notre Dame orders in Omaha
    - The names and addresses for these sisters were gathered, and Ms. Finley delivered the notes from the students just in time for Christmas!

Community Engagement (continued) Holiday Hugs for the Homebound



9. Parishioners sent a bit of Christmas cheer to our homebound parishioners who may have been feeling especially isolated due to the pandemic.

They wrote cards and notes that were included with Christmas gift bags provided by our parish, with generous help from St. Wenceslaus parish

Community Engagement (continued)

#### 10. "Hugs for the Homebound" Continues...

• The parish received many expressions of appreciation for the cards and letters they received for Christmas. They "felt the love!" So we've decided to keep sending them sunshine!



Due to the pandemic, many parishioners are unable to attend Mass in person, and feel isolated.

So let's not wait for another holiday to send them a bit of sunshine!

If you would like to give more smiles to our homebound parishioners

Just take just a few minutes... Write a cheery note in a letter or card

Place your note(s) in the collection basket at Mass, or drop off at/mail to the Parish Office and we'll deliver them.

Your quick note will help parishioners feel God's love <u>through you</u> during this pandemic



Community Engagement (continued)



- 11. Vote for St. Bernard in Spirit Catholic Radio's 2021 Superstar Catholic School Contest!
  - See spiritcatholicradio.com for details February 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Schools compete by enrollment size
  - Prizes for winning schools:
    - Trophy, bragging rights, and prizes!
    - \$1,000 worth of on-air promotion + LIVE, on-air interview
    - Spirit Catholic Radio visits school
    - Customized banner for inside & outside of school



Your Vote Is Needed for St. Bernard to Win Again This Year! Please Mark Your Calendar Now!



Community Engagement (continued)

12. Annual Fund year-end appeal letters sent in December

Donations help with tuition assistance and operating expenses

Annual Fund Appeal results (June-May)

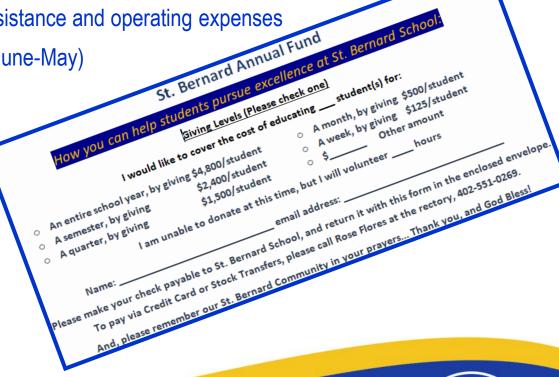
2017-18: Over \$41K

2018-19: Over \$50K

– 2019-20: Only \$42K

2020-21: Over \$65K to-date!







# "State of the Community"

### **Financial Viability**

- Long-term debt eliminated in 2018, but our expenses continue to exceed our Sunday collection and school tuition/child care fee revenues
- \$35K for new parking lot
  - Additional maintenance is now needed
  - Collected only \$10.7K to-date (\$24.3K remaining)
  - So neither initial cost nor preventive maintenance is covered
  - We don't want Fr. Dan to have to mow the parking lots, too! ☺
- 3. Church roof repair cost \$22,705
  - Raised \$5,260 thus far
  - \$17,445 to go...



### Financial Viability (continued)

#### 4. Due to pandemic, School and Child Care revenue down:

- School enrollment dropped (partly due to limiting class size to 20 to allow social distancing)
  - Enrolled 4 new students in January, so now we have 152
- Child Care enrollment dropped from 90 to 50 due to the pandemic.
  - Enrollment's now up to 75
- Fixed Costs per child higher + Operating Costs higher due to labor and supplies to implement extra COVID19-related cleaning/disinfecting procedures
- CARES Act covered costs of some initial supplies, but then a freeze was placed on funds for non-public schools.
  - OPS graciously agreed that anything submitted before September 11 would still be granted
  - Just learned that new federal stimulus package includes
     Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools (EANS)



- Financial Viability (continued)
  - 5. Sunday collections since June are \$7.6K less than budgeted
  - 6. Support through our Annual Fund, fundraising events, donations, and memorial scholarships, are key to parish and school viability
  - 7. Thankfully, Annual Fund response has been good: Over \$65K to-date!
  - 8. Tuition Assistance
    - 22 students qualified for Children's Scholarship Fund, adding up to \$31,525 of scholarship money for our school. Due to COVID, CSF did not have extra funds for new students
    - We now have 11 total Memorial Scholarships to help grow our tuition assistance program (3 new ones in the last 4 months that will have first time recipients in May, 2021)
  - 9. We've been keeping a tight reign on expenses
  - 10. Generous year-end donations placed us ahead in revenue



### 2020 Fundraisers Budgeted / Actual

- **Dodgeball Tournament for Athletic Club** Fund (Feb 21) - \$1.8K
- 7. Golf Tournament for Athletic Club Fund (June 20) - \$8.4K Cancelled
- Irish Hooley (Mar 14) \$5.2K Cancelled
- 8. Dinner Auction/Raffle (Oct 16) \$93K
- 3. Fish Fry Dinner (Mar 27) \$4K Cancelled 9. Calendar Lottery (Oct Dec) \$9.2K

Carnival (May 3) – \$5K Cancelled

10. SCRIP Sales (ongoing) – \$0.6K

5. Omaha Gives! (May 20) – \$5.3K

- 11. Cookie Sales for CFM Fund (Nov Dec) Cancelled
- 6. 2019-20 Annual Fund (Jun-May) \$42.7K



### **2021 Fundraisers Budgeted / Actual**

- 1. Dodgeball Tournament for Athletic Club Fund\* (TBD) – \$1.8K
- 2. Irish Hooley\* (Mar 13) \$4K
- 3. Fish Fry Dinner\* (Mar 25) \$2.5K
- 4. Carnival\* (May 3) \$5K
- 5. Omaha Gives! Discontinued by OCF\*\* 11. Cookie Sales for CFM Fund (Nov Dec)
- 6. 2020-21 Annual Fund (Jun-May) \$65.7K to-date
- \* Working on ideas for fundraising during pandemic
- \*\* Omaha Community Foundation/SHARE Omaha are discontinuing Omaha Gives! and are not including schools and churches in their online platforms. The Archdiocese may help us develop something similar...

- 7. Golf Tournament for Athletic Club Fund (Jun 26)
- 8. Dinner Auction/Raffle (Oct 8) \$51.5K
- 9. Calendar Lottery (Oct Dec) \$7.9K
- 10. SCRIP Sales (ongoing) \$1K

#### Enhance Infrastructure

### 1. Improve Church Facilities

Viewers spent 28,093 minutes watching our videos in 2020!

- Thanks to financial and logistical support of various good souls, Joe Niemeyer was able to run internet cable under the church and achieve access to Wi-Fi in the church, which simplifies livestreaming Masses and also gives public Wi-Fi access to anyone in the church in a way that is safe for the parish
- At the same time, a secure Wi-Fi network was set up so that Scrip Payments, etc. could be processed in the church after Masses
- We have 81 subscribers to our St. Bernard Outreach YouTube Channel, and would like to reach 100 to unlock additional advantages!
  - Please Subscribe if you haven't, even if you don't watch.
- Received donation of new vacuum cleaners for our church cleaning volunteers to use



#### Enhance Infrastructure

### 2. Improve School and Child Care Facilities

- In the fall, Yard Market (owned by a St. Bernard alum) graciously placed new mulch along the east and west side of 65<sup>th</sup> Street
- Fr. Dan is making plans for summer renovations to classrooms.
   He is working with the school to select rooms.
- Assessing/ Fixing Locks/Doorknobs on school classrooms
  - Some are finicky (sometimes stick, or are difficult to lock/unlock)
  - Alan is fixing some, others may need to be replaced
  - Having a single master key would be nice
  - Long-term ideal (but costly) would be a FOB system to replace keys (so can change codes if needed)







#### Educational Excellence

 Began school year with five day on-site learning for all students, with contingency plans for handling limited infections as well as remote learning

#### 2. St. Bernard School received 150 Chromebooks in December

- Funded by a \$34K CARES grant
- These devices will enable 1-to-1 coverage in our upper grades
- Will also allow dedicated computers for lower grade students

### 3. Congratulations to new School Board members

- Cathie Bell
- Erin Brungardt
- Stephanie Jackson
- Joe Wiegand
- Have been working on COVID-19 procedures and approved part-time IT position





Educational Excellence (continued)

#### 4. Student activities:

- No Halloween parade due to COVID-19, but a little party was held in each classroom
- 2<sup>nd</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls played a full season of volleyball following COVID-19 protocols
- Basketball is now being played
- Sign up now open for Soccer, and clinics for Micro-Soccer and Micro-Basketball
- Band (Grades 5 8)
  - Practicing twice per week in cafeteria
  - No performances yet, but Cloe Steinbock did play her flute for the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Christmas Program
- Melodrama was pushed to Spring, subject to pandemic precaution guidelines
- No choir at this time
- Christmas program was held virtually





#### **Spring Soccer**

- Available for grades PreK through 8th Grade
- Practice times vary per coach schedule
- Season from March19 through May 27
- No games Thursday April 1- Sunday April 4 (Easter weekend)

#### \$60 Registration Fee

Register online at

https://www.stbernardomaha.org/parish/athletic-registration/

Questions? - Call or email Michele at 402-657-1389 or bernardsathletics@gmail.com

MUST REGISTER BY Monday, February 1 at 5 PM!



The clinic will focus on developing basic fundamentals such as dribbling, passing, shooting, and staying in a defensive stance. Players will rotate through specific skill stations. We stress the importance of hard work, communication, and a positive attitude while maintaining a fun environment. Students will also play a game at the end of each session. We also have the ability to lower our baskets for our younger players.

Sundays for 4 Weeks! March 7.14,21,28

12-1 PM in the Gym
Pre-K - 3rd Grade Girls and Boys
\$25 Registration Fee

#### Register online at

https://www.stbernardomaha.org/parish/athletic-registration/

Questions? - Call or email Michele at 402-657-1389 or bernardsathletics@gmail.com

**MUST REGISTER BY February 28!!!** 



#### **Micro Soccer**

Attention all 3-5 year olds!

Learn the fundamentals of soccer and scrimmage against your friends.
On Sundays for 4 weeks from 12-1pm. The fee is \$25.

Sunday, April 11 Sunday, April 18 Sunday, April 25 Sunday, May 2

Located at St. Bernard Field

Register online at

https://www.stbernardomaha.org/parish/athletic-registration/

Questions? - Call or email Michele at 402-657-1389 or bernardsathletics@gmail.com

**MUST REGISTER BY March 31!** 



### Educational Excellence (continued)

- 5. New Director, Alexandra Frahm hired for Child Care
  - Mrs. Frahm has children at the school and child care, and was excited to begin
  - Well-liked Assistant Director Kara States provides continuity for staff, parents, and children

#### 6. Religious Education Program

- 2<sup>nd</sup> graders made their First Reconciliation this fall
- 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are preparing for their Confirmation by Archbishop Lucas April 12th



### **Community Outreach**

#### St. Bernard Serves its Parish Community

(Figures since September 17th)

- Welcomed 3 new parishioners
- Celebrated the Sacraments
  - 6 Baptisms
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders celebrated their First Reconciliation
  - 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Graders are preparing their hearts for Confirmation on April 12
  - Offered Rite of Reconciliation / the Eucharist / Sacrament of the Sick before / during /after Masses, and for the sick in their homes, and at hospitals and nursing homes
- Offered 8 funeral Masses, sharing our hope in Christ's resurrection
- Continued offering daily and weekend Masses
- Offfer monthly Mass in French on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at noon



#### 2020 First Reconciliation

Tyler Adams Sophie Fili William Jackson Sophia Koci Aaron Madden Erin McLaughlin

Nolan Moore Charlotte Roshone Boone Sorensen **Trevor Wiegand** Tucker Yarbrough



- Community Outreach (continued)
  - 2. Fall Bible Study facilitated by Deacon Chuck via Zoom video conferencing
  - 3. Daily Advent Inspiration
    - 'Let Your Soul Shine' based on gospel readings
    - Was made available free via email through Dynamic Catholic's Matthew Kelly
  - 4. Parish Penance Service held December 13
  - 5. Religious Calendars and Dynamic Catholic Advent/Christmas books were given to parishioners (and were delivered to the homebound in their Christmas gift bags)





### Community Outreach (continued)

### 6. The Saturday Morning Men's Group

- This group makes use of various Formed.org resources as they ponder and pray together in their journey of faith and life
- They meet virtually via WebEx and hope to re-extend their welcome to all men of the parish some time prior to the beginning of Lent, with the hopes that more will jump in at that point
- One needn't commit to weekly attendance
- If people need tech support to participate in any of these online activities, they can contact Joe and Valerie at 402-502-2198 or joe.valerieniemeyer@gmail.com



### Community Outreach (continued)

### 7. Welcomed a group of French-speaking immigrants into our parish

- When asked, Fr. Dan gladly welcomed the group into our parish.
- Because they had already found a priest who speaks their language, St. Bernard now has a Mass offered in French on the fourth Sunday of each month at noon
- The members also speak English, so they are able to attend our regular Masses, too
- We are looking forward to the end of pandemic-related precautions so we can properly welcome them!

L'église Saint-Bernard vous invite à célébrer une messe en Français



### Community Outreach (continued)

#### 8. Parish Pastoral Conference

- Online conference 10/01 conducted by Archbishop Lucas and the Office of Evangelization
- Reviewed Pastoral Vision: "One Church: Encountering Jesus, Equipping Disciples, and Living Mercy and Pastoral Priorities:
  - Two years ago the Vision and Priorities for the Archdiocese of Omaha were rolled out. In the words of Archbishop Lucas, "The vision is not a project so much as a hope, of the kind of church we can be, the people that we are called to be in Jesus Christ and in our time."
    - » Vision: One Church: Encountering Jesus, Equipping Disciples, and Living Mercy.
    - » Priority 1: Create a culture of encountering Jesus and equipping disciples.
    - » Priority 2: Create a culture that enables God's mercy to be received and lived.
    - » Priority 3: Create a culture of unity.
  - We are experiencing a diminishment. If we are going to move into the future, cooperating with grace, we need to know the world we are living in and be honest about what our current efforts are yielding as a harvest. The Church as a whole is shrinking dramatically.



### Community Outreach (continued)

#### 8. Parish Pastoral Conference (continued)

- There is a grace being offered right now. It is a grace that has been offered to all generations: A deep, personal, and powerful relationship with God. The encounter with Jesus is at the heart of our pastoral vision, and the lack of this encounter is at the heart of the diminishment the Church is experiencing.
- "The Big Goal": Within 6 years each parish in the Archdiocese of Omaha will become a missional community
- The Lord is inviting us to accept His commission to go to our brothers and sisters and share with them, the light and mercy of the Gospel
- Our Parish Council has reviewed the Pastoral Conference information and has discussed how our parish can progress these evangelization ideas
- See attached Pastoral Conference summary and action items document for more details



### Community Outreach (continued)

#### 9. Parish Pastoral Conference follow-up:

- Parish Council needs to incorporate Pastor Conference ideas into our annual goals
- Because of Pastoral Conference discussions, Annual Goals discussion moved to February Parish Council meeting
- "Clear Path of Discipleship" coming on-stream soon
  - Will encourage St. Bernard leadership team to complete self-assessments
  - Capitalize on results to pinpoint opportunities to improve communications
  - Generate ideas on recruiting new volunteers and refreshing Parish website
  - Jim Jansen, Director of Archdiocese Pastoral Services will help analyze results



### Community Outreach (continued)

#### 10. Recruitment and Retention / Marketing and Branding

- Ms. Finley worked with Rose Flores and our Ignatian Volunteer Corps volunteer, Craig Collins, to develop a marketing strategy for the school's spring recruiting
- Craig will work to incorporate the Child Care and Pre-K in new web design and marketing initiatives
- Zoom Roundup on Feb 4 will be promoted through Catholic Voice, Benson News, and new, large-sized banners
- Writing an Excellence Grant Request to obtain funds from the Archdiocese to refresh our school website, create a new interactive interface, add a new Pre-K page targeted at young families, and install Google Analytics to monitor and track trends in school site visits
- Catholic Schools Week celebrates the value Catholic education provides to young people and its contributions to our church, our communities, and our nation





### St. Bernard Events and Initiatives

### **January – December 2021**



- Pancake Breakfast
- Catholic Schools

- School Open House

JAN

**FEB** 

Week

#### **MAR**

- Irish Dinner

**MAR** 

**APR** 

- Carnival

**APR** 

MAY

JUL - Fish Fry Dinner - Omaha Gives! - Benson Days

JUL

#### **SEP**

- RCIA Begins

**SEP** 

- Pancake Breakfast
- Pancake Breakfast CFM Cookie Sales

NOV

NOV

FEB

- School Show & Tell for Pancake Breakfast prospective families
- CFM Undie Sunday
- Valentine's Dance
- Dodgeball Tourney
- \* Events and Community Potluck Dinners (held monthly on third Sundays) subject to pandemic precaution guidelines

#### JUN

MAY

- Annual Fund **Program Begins** 

JUN

- Dinner Auction Underwriting **Event**
- Athletic Club **Golf Tournament**

#### **AUG**

- New Family Welcome Event

AUG

- School Year Begins
- Fall raffle sales begin

#### **OCT**

- Annual Life Chain - Calendar Lottery

OCT

- Calendar Lotterv sales begin
- Home & School Wreath Sale
- Benson Boo Bash
- Benefit Auction

#### **DEC**

- 8th Grade VB **Fundraiser**

DEC



### Plans for Lent and Easter

#### Plans for Lent and Easter

- Based on strong demand for <u>I Heard God Laugh</u> book from Dynamic Catholic, we will provide another 50 copies for use during Lent
- Promote "Best Lent Ever" daily videos from Dynamic Catholic
- Lenten Journey in the Word
  - The Niemeyers are again willing to donate <u>Lenten Gospel Reflections books by Fr. Robert Barron</u> to encourage individual and group encounters with God's Word
  - They plan to again provide handouts for journaling daily graces, as well as support for folks who wish to journey and share alongside others through Facebook and Webex video-conferencing, or inperson small groups, according to the interest level
    - Last year's small group of women, after two in-person meetings, transitioned to online Webex meet-ups, and even continued to meet after Lent was over
    - We hope more will join us this Lent on Saturdays from 9-10:30 a.m. Other self-directed Web-ex sessions can be arranged upon request
    - If people need tech support to participate in any of these online activities, they can contact Joe and Valerie at 402-502-2198 or joe.valerieniemeyer@gmail.com



### **Plans for Lent and Easter**

#### Plans for Lent and Easter

- Other?
  - » ?? St. Vincent de Paul Society may consider a drive-by donation drop off for the pantry
  - » ?? Lenten penance service
  - » ?? Last year, school children practiced almsgiving by collecting money for the Saint Augustine Indian Mission. Parishioners were invited to join this effort.



### Strategic Plan Annual Goals – need to update 2021 goals!

#### 2019

- Increase the number of people in our St. Bernard Community
  - Increase Mass Attendance
  - Encourage more youth involvement
  - Promote life-long faith formation
  - Establish Alumni Association
  - Expand welcoming activities
  - Make school known for "STREAM" Excellence
  - Provide and publicize programs for seniors / homebound / those in nursing homes
- · Balance the budget
  - Reestablish Development Committee
  - Garner greater support from Community for fundraisers
- Expand services for needy in our parish / community by offering a career assistance event (help with resumes and provide interviewing tips)
- Establish centralized database for contact information
- Improve church, school and child care facilities (on-going)

#### 2020

- Increase the number of people in St. Bernard community (on-going)
  - · Increase Mass attendance
  - Encourage more youth involvement by conducting activities/forming groups for jr. high – high school students and young adults
  - Promote life-long faith formation
  - · Establish Alumni Assoc.
  - · Expand welcoming activ.
  - Make school known for STREAM excellence
  - Provide and publicize programs for seniors/ homebound/those in nursing homes
  - Balance the budget
  - · Reestablish Dev. Comm.
  - Garner greater support from Community for fundraisers
  - Expand services for needy in our parish/community by coordinating with Bridges Out of Poverty Program
  - Create a centralized database for contact info
  - Improve church, school and child care facilities (on-going)

#### 2021

- Increase the number of people in St. Bernard community (on-going)
  - Increase Mass attendance (on-going)
  - Promote life-long faith formation (on-going)
- Balance the budget (ongoing)
- Improve church, school and child care facilities (on-going)

#### 2022

- Increase the number of people in St. Bernard community (on-going)
  - Increase Mass attendance (on-going)
  - Promote life-long faith formation (on-going)
- Balance the budget (ongoing)
- Improve church, school and child care facilities (ongoing)

#### 2023

- Increase the number of people in St. Bernard community (on-going)
  - Increase Mass attendance (on-going)
- Promote life-long faith formation (on-going)
- Balance the budget (ongoing)
- Improve church, school and child care facilities (on-going)
- Develop the next Five Year Strategic Plan



### **Committee Updates – See Handout**

- 1. Committee chair introduction
- 2. Brief update and lessons learned from previous quarter events and/or initiatives
- 3. Events or initiatives planned or proposed for the next quarter (noting any collaboration needed)
- 4. Issues or barriers for the next quarter, and possible solution(s)



# **Meeting Schedule**

- Next Parish Council Meeting Date:
  - Thursday, February 11
  - 7pm (via Zoom video conference)
- Proposed Next Joint Planning Meeting:
  - Thursday, April 15, 2021 ???
  - 7pm (via Zoom video conference)



# THANK YOU!



