PAX General Meeting

November 24, 2019

Notes

We were reminded of our PAX Ministries Cross developed quite some time ago at a retreat/workshop (inspired by Gerry Creedon then of St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Arlington) where Liturgy is at the heart of all we are/do.

 Formation

 Community Stewardship

 [ **LITURGY** ]

 [ ]

 Building

 Outreach

**Casting Our Nets**

During our 50th Anniversary Year, Vince Cushing challenged us to keep our PAX way of doing church energized and ongoing. Several members (Steve Brown, Sylvia Diss, Paula Hillery, Leslie Kaplan, Mike Messinger, Tao Shen, and Beth Slater) formed the “Casting Our Nets”(CON) group to suggest renewal and growth opportunities for PAX in the next 5 years.. Mike updated us on what they’ve discussed and done.

**PAX in a New Wineskin**: keeping our traditions (e.g., mass planning, Eucharist in both species, ….) while becoming different enough to attract new and younger members:

* A later Mass time – it was negotiated with St. Luke’s Orthodox for PAX start mass at 9:00 a.m. (vs. 8:45 a.m.);
* New venues for gathering (which could afford a later start of mass time) (e.g., Missionhurst, Blueberry Hill, etc.);
* Cost of renting space and available storage space
	+ St. Luke’s - $1,500/month – is this cost reasonable for lack of flexibility on mass time and lack of regular fellowship opportunities (this applies to Sunday morning worship time only)
	+ Blueberry Hill - $1 per person per event (it’s not a rental facility, so this is the suggested donation), smaller storage space than we have at St. Luke’s
	+ Missionhurst (Chapel) – requests a donation of $150 per use and limited storage space
* Research on website search engines indicated we need to put more searchable tags (e.g., “Progressive Catholic,” “Liberal Catholic,” etc.) on our website;

**PAX on the True Vine:** whether we need the synergy of merging with another group to maintain our energy and grow membership:

* Our Lady Queen of Peace (OLQP) in Arlington – while they have recorded all our sacraments (they are a mission church not under the Arlington Diocese: Joe Nangle is an associate pastor), they have informed us they are “filled to the gills” and would not be able to offer us a mass time of our own;
* NOVA Community (currently worships at Kenmore Middle School in Arlington) – their worship service starts at 10:15 a.m.
* St. Luke’s Catholic Church\* (down the street) – the current pastor\*\* is retiring and might be able/willing to introduce PAX to the new pastor (to see if we really can go home again and have a PAX mass there)
* Missionhurst – we’ve been told their 9:00 a.m. mass is FULL. Missionhurst is a mission church; they require all presiders be in good standing
* Another Catholic parish – see if Vince Cushing can help us liaise with other parish priests (and see whether we’d be welcome in their parish)
* Another Intentional Eucharistic Community (IEC)
* Crossman United Methodist in Falls Church – they are currently discussing how/whether they welcome the LGBTQ Community
* Emmanuel Presbyterian Church (Route 123)
* Tyson’s Interfaith which is focused on community and social justice

Instead of merging, we might also consider participating with other communities on sustained projects, especially social justice issues.

\*Myrtle reminded us St. Luke’s Catholic Church is run by a board and not just the priest; she says there is still anger on the part of some parishioners toward PAX and we’d need to engage in dialogue before proceeding,

\*\*Rhonda Eldridge and Mafalda Marrocco had GREAT things to say about the retiring pastor and Rhonda subsequently told Marian Klymkowsky that he’d like to preside with PAX.

**PAX Beyond Roman Catholicism:** whether we need to consider (more) Community lay-lead liturgies, non-member lay presiders, presiders from different denominations. These are viewed as “Outreach Liturgies” – maybe once a month.

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**Member Comments/Concerns**

* Concern with any venue requiring us to “set up space” every week
* Need to publicize PAX’s existence to attract new members (i.e., social media)
* Other’s rules may not allow us freedom with our music ministry (aka Folk Group)
* If we merge with another parish/community, will we be seen as poaching members?
* How important is it for PAX to maintain our uniqueness? Independence? Identity?
* Do we have any non-negotiables?
* Are we prepared to change as new people join us?
* Preference for a simple space
* How can we attract people who have been hurt by the Church?
* How important is it that we attract young families? Is this an overriding priority?
* Other IECs may feel like siblings with whom we may not always converge
* How do we guarantee regular time for fellowship after our weekly liturgies?
* How do we define our charism to make other communities want to merge or partner with us?
* Travel considerations for Maryland residents who may not want to travel further into VA
* Approach St. Luke’s Orthodox about having room set up the evening before our liturgy to reduce stress on sacristans (reminder: the mass planners are responsible for setting up our liturgical space, not the sacristans, who feel it’s fallen to them more regularly); negotiate how to allow fellowship at the end of our space

(Note: St. Luke’s subsequently purchased “sliders” for the round tables which we move to set up our worship space and must move back after liturgy. This seems to make the job easier, but it still has to be done).

**Renovations at St. Luke’s Orthodox**

St. Luke’s is anticipating a $2 million expansion of their facilities (they raised around $950,000 so far). The work is not anticipated for another 3-4 years, but plans are underway.