

ST. MARY OF THE WOODS / ST. ALOYSIUS ~ PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

June 10, 2026; 6:00pm, St. Mary Of the Woods

1. Attendees: Linda Root, Jo Ann Pero, Kate Burchess, Bonnie Fish, Jim Grant, Richard Wentzel, Dan Ingalls, Jim Malloy and Denise Elsenheimer. Missing: Dawn Staley
2. Prayer
3. Review minutes of last meeting held on May 13, 2026. The minutes were approved without corrections.
4. Old Business:
 - A. Father Michael Verschaeve's Ordination Celebration (3-19-2027):
 - Denise Elsenheimer updated the board on plans to celebrate Father Michael Verschaeve's 50th Ordination.
 - Denise Elsenheimer visited the "Mill Pond" Park and learned that a \$2,000 a day rental fee is required.
 - Denise Elsenheimer investigated United Ministries Church in Kalkaska, which has a large reception hall. They rent out that hall for \$175, with a \$50 security deposit.
 - The Fife Lake Legion was recommended as a gathering place for Father Mike's Ordination celebration as it is large.
 - Carina Conklin is investigating caterers.
 - B. Google Document Update: Dawn Staley and Denise Elsenheimer are meeting at the end of July to set up the system which will aid in taking meeting minutes and make the handling of Parish Council business more efficient.
 - C. Update of Building Projects: Jim Grant reported:
 - St. Aloysius: roofing is currently being worked on by Greg Birgy and should be completed by tomorrow. He is installing snow stops and flashing (\$6,340)
 - St. Aloysius: The paving of the East & West parking lots, (Phase 1 & 2 for \$41,050) has been awarded to the company, Integrity. A loan for \$40,000 has been secured for the project, but \$23,000 from the St. Aloysius' account will be used for security and down payment. The remainder (\$18,050) for the completion of the project will be borrowed out of the \$40,000 loan which has been secured.
 - St. Mary Roof Repair: Greg Birgy has been awarded for the work at \$2,565.
 - St. Mary Flat Roof Repair: Personnel from the company Springfield met with Denise Elsenheimer and Tom to review their quote. 20,536.00
 - St. Mary Masonry and St. Mary Statue Repair in Front of Church. Brian Berger has been chosen to do the repairs estimated at \$6,750. The price for the work has not yet been firmly set yet as we haven't decided if the statue should be moved or secured with a better foundation in the same location.
 - St. Mary Parking Lot Repair: Quality Sealcoating has been selected with a bid of \$13,135. Price includes painting for parking.
5. New Business:
 - A. MINISTRY/DEPARTMENT BRIEF UPDATES
 - Dan Ingalls reviewed the Knights of Columbus updates. The Knights are considering an increase of their college scholarship award amount. They have sponsored a foreign child, who is graduating from high school, and are planning to sponsor another child this year. They have supported Father Fred's charitable activities in Travers City and will continue to participate in that activity. The Knights are planning on doing their Tootsie roll drive later this spring.
 - Jo Ann Pero and Kate Burchess updated the council about St. Aloysius's Parish Council of Catholic Women (PCCW) plans. They will forward an excess in their fund to Christ Rowe, a parishioner at St. Als whose husband, Bruce is fighting cancer. They

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frequently drive down to Grand Rapids for medical treatments, and the money will help defray travel costs. The PCCW also will use excess funding to purchase a Pastel Candle holder which is needed at St. Als. Carina Conklin reminded PCCW members that Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be held on July 21, 22, 23 at St. Mary and help is needed.

- Denise Elsenheimer reviewed Faith Formation and Youth Ministry updates. She mentioned that Faith Formation and Youth Ministry programs will meet twice monthly. She also mentioned that the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) for children is expecting about six individuals who will be participating in the program next year.
- Jim Grant and Denise Elsenheimer reviewed Buildings and Grounds Maintenance events and plans and Finance Council updates. Jim Grant mentioned that light bulbs at St. Aloysius are being replaced and trees need to be trimmed prior to paving the parking lots. He reminded the Council that windows in the old sanctuary which were glazed last winter need to be painted. The Statue of Saint Mary in front of Church building on the north side of St. Mary of the Woods, needs to be re-set on a firmer footing, and possibly moved to another location.
- Denise Elsenheimer reviewed Cemetery Committee Updates: She mentioned that both cemeteries have had a lot of burials and that the Sextants of both cemeteries are working out well.

B. Jo Ann Piro's resignation from the Parish Council was noted. She was thanked for her service. Jim Grant and Richard Wentzel presented Denise Elsenheimer with lists of candidates from St. Als to replace Jo Ann on the Council.

C. Past/Upcoming Events

1. The Council discussed that Maria, a foreign exchange student from Spain attending Kalkaska High School, will return home at the end of June. Denise Elsenheimer mentioned that we should acknowledge her graduation from Kalkaska High School. Her host family is planning some vacation site seeing trips before she leaves.
2. Father Verschaeve will be absent on June 27, July 11 & 12, and August 15 & 22. Denise Elsenheimer is arranging for substitute priests to celebrate mass on those dates.
3. Vacation Bible School (VBS): Denise Elsenheimer reminded the Council that VBS will be held at St. Mary Church on July 21, 22, 23.
4. Summer:
 - Service Project from August 12 - 15: Denise Elsenheimer reviewed the Ecumenical project involving churches of differing denominations in the Kalkaska area. The churches will participate in the project to benefit the Kalkaska area. The organization, "Freedom Builders" is working with the churches to facilitate the project.
 - Parish Picnic: The Parish Council voted and approved the changing of the picnic date from August 16 to August 23.
 - The Council considered hosting a social event for the month of July. Because of the holidays and the fact that many families will be taking vacations, the council recommended skipping the event for July.
 - Selling Crosses at the Fife Lake Farmers Market. Jim Staley, a parishioner at St. Als has cut up an old Pieu to make elegant crosses. The council approved their sale at the Fife Lake Farmer Market every other weekend at a previous meeting. Volunteers are needed to help with the sales on every other Saturday mornings and early afternoons.
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D: Where should we relocate the Statue of Saint Mary: The statue of Mary outside the church will need a temporary home while the front of the church is repaired and the pedestal that Mary is currently on has to be replaced. Council gave some ideas. And definitely need to rope off the area where she will be.

E. Attendance of Parish Council members is Important: Jim Grant and Denise Elsenheimer reminded Parish Council members of the importance to attend meetings. The Parish Council needs to advise the Finance Council when projects requiring funding are needed. There was a brief discussion of using Zoom meeting resources when members can't report to a meeting in person.

F. God's Garden: Denise Elsenheimer reported that the garden is going well now that the weather has improved.

G. Closing Prayer.

G. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

H. Next Meeting: The Parish Council will not meet during the month of July. The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on August 12, starting at 6:00 pm at St. Aloysius Church.