

## **CEMETERY MEETING 3/26/2017**

Attending: Father Noah, Larry Shaheen, David Horoschak, Jerry Burke, Justin Gohl, Don and Maryann Reigle, and (via telephone) Philip Morrash.

- 1) Minutes from meeting of April 12, 2016 were approved.
- 2) Financial Report (Philip):
  - a) gross recent sales \$11,000/donations received \$375
  - b) operating expenses (mowing and landscaping) approximately \$3,000
  - c) monies invested in Vanguard Mutual Funds
  - d) recommended target balance is \$150,000 to account for any market fluctuations and dramatic economic downturns
- 3) Brochures: The township has assigned the cemetery an address...new address is 2010 Sunny Road. This address will only be important to the police and EMTs
- 4) Donation envelopes will again be given to parishioners for St. Thomas Sunday. Quantity is sufficient.
- 5) Cemetery Cleanup
  - a) A very heartfelt thanks to our very special stewards: Peter and Sue Psomiadis for having provided mulch, equipment and their own physical labor to upkeep the cemetery. They will continue to provide the mulch. Jerry Burke will check on landscaping services for the best bid for mulching and maintenance of grounds.
  - b) Also the crabapple tree branches need to be pruned.
- 6) Benches: Is there a need for benches? Committee decided not to pursue at this time.
- 7) Also it has been mentioned that there is a lack of water in the cemetery for the watering of plants and filling vases. The only viable option may be to drill a shallow well. The expense would be high. Tabled.
- 8) Grave Gifting Project - What is more needed, and requested by Father Noah, is to fulfill a very special need. Some of our parishioners have found themselves in need of a 'special blessing' when a loved one has died. The parishioner has been overwhelmed with the suddenness of death and the related expenses that are required. Our church has been very blessed that Father has been able to offer pre-paid grave sites that were no longer needed by another family and donated back to the church. The committee has recommended that the parish be made aware of this need and that the St. Thomas envelopes be used to purchase a "beloved one" plot.
- 9) Get estimates for lawn care (spring and fall). Concerning recent snow fall and the plowing of church parking lot it was not well done. Currently the cemetery is not plowed at all during snowfalls. It is only done if there is a funeral. The church office then calls the contractor and requests to be plowed. The committee would like for the cemetery to be plowed at the same time as the church is done. This will have to be priced out to see if feasible. Jerry Burke will include this in his bids.
- 10) Burial Directory: A request was made that a guide be made listing funeral directors, florists, grave diggers, banquet halls and mercy meal providers be done. Maryann Reigle to contact Huff and Lakjer Funeral Home for recommendations.

- 11) Please note cemetery brochure is not a stated contract/nor a binding statement of offerings. The plot sale contract is binding and addresses all regulations and obligations.
- 12) Plots will continue to be sold at \$1,000 @
- 13) Green Burials: a number of parishioners have approached committee members concerning a “green burial”. What this committee has found that this is a very broad subject. We are offering a 'hybrid green burial'. Definition: (to our understanding subject to further research) is that you the consumer, need to make a well informed decision. Father Noah has asked that you speak to him concerning your final wishes, that you read *A Christian Ending* by Mark Barns and discuss with a funeral director. If a person requests no embalming and if it can be done by your funeral home, you will need to bring Father Noah into the conversation immediately. Arrangements need to be done in a specific time frame which impacts the viewing and interment times. The burial itself-there is normally a concrete vault that is placed into the earth to accept the casket. A cement lid is then placed over the vault and the casket sealing the earth out. To be green, you may request that the casket is lowered to the earth directly and the concrete vault be inverted over the casket. In this manner, the casket is cradled by earth, allowing for nature to run its course. The placement of the vault guarantees the integrity of the burial site and there will be no sinking of the earth above the tomb. Still others of our parish have requested a different type of green burial. This is with no casket under the trees past the retention pond. At this time, we have Jim Eggers researching this matter. That area of the cemetery would need the engineer to come back and mark it off and then place grave site markers appropriately. It may also need to be reviewed by township authorities.
- 14) It has also been recommended that Jonathan Black be requested to be part of this committee since he was instrumental, along with Father Boniface and Steve Smith, in the marking of the grave sites and has knowledge that would benefit the church cemetery committee.

Prayers were said by Father Noah. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Maryann Reigle