

Council Corner

*Dog Days bright and clear
Indicate a happy year;
But when accompanied by rain
For better times, our hopes are vain.*

According to the astrological calendar, we have been in the Dog Days of Summer for a few weeks now. The Dog Days begin following the rise of Sirius, the “Dog Star,” a time when Sirius appears to rise alongside the sun. Greek mythology connected these events with extreme heat, drought, sudden thunderstorms, lethargy, fever, mad dogs, and bad luck. Although the season typically runs from July 3 through August 11, this year all indications suggest that it may well continue through early September. Just ask the resourceful people of Phoenix, Arizona, now experiencing a full month of temperatures exceeding 110 degrees. Although we haven’t faced anything remotely approaching that weather in Northeast Pennsylvania, it has been uncomfortably warm and humid, and our air conditioners and fans have certainly been working overtime. The good news for next week is that the daily temperatures, day and night, should improve for us; the bad news is that we may once again face smoke -filled skies from the record Canadian forest fires to the north. We are facing new weather challenges in every region of our country, and the future will be even more challenging—not just this summer but for the next few decades until we solve some of the climate problems we have brought upon ourselves.

I’m shortening the August column this month because we had a lengthy Council meeting with a number of important concerns that need to be addressed in a timely manner. Here is an update on the Council and Congregational concerns discussed at our July 27 meeting.

1. Council addressed six items of correspondence including rate increases for our *Servant Keeper* and *One Call Now* software.
2. Council authorized the purchase of new pads for our AED units; these pads need to be replaced periodically in order to ensure the effectiveness of the machines.

3. Council discussed the Parish Administrator's report and the recent announcement that Leanna will be moving to Harrisburg at the end of August to assist with family health needs. Council has discussed the possibility of having Leanna continue our Sunday bulletin and newsletter publications temporarily until we can employ a new administrator with the appropriate skills. We are currently working with Leanna to review the many responsibilities she has taken on willingly in order to serve St. Paul well.
4. Council reviewed the Department of Environmental Protection's current status in guiding Pure Water System's continued work to improve the quality of our well and water system. We are passing monthly water tests without problems, but we will be required to purchase a water softener system to keep the system fully operational in the future. Final certification is granted by the DEP.
5. Council reviewed the most recent plumbing breakdown in one of the lower-level classrooms of the education wing. Scott Mraz made the necessary repair with pex (polyethylene) pipe but also suggested that we be proactive by replacing all copper piping with pex in the next year. (We have had three pinhole leaks within a twenty-foot radius in the past eighteen months. Each has involved ceiling repair as well; we are considering using drop ceilings in those areas for easy access.) Council approved seeking estimates for this work.
6. Council reviewed the recent success of the *Vendor, Craft, and Yard Sale* event held in the St. Paul parking lot on July 15. Based upon the success of the event, the planners are looking to hold a Christmas Craft Fair in conjunction with the return visit of the Bach and Handel Chorale of Jim Thorpe on December 9 at 3:00 PM. Council gave approval for the preliminary planning of the craft fair for that day.
7. Council is awaiting estimates for the stripping and waxing of the Spies Hall floor. Council would like to complete this work before the start of the new GILCS year.
8. Council will convene the Personnel Committee to review our present needs for Leanna's replacement as Parish Administrator.

9. Council discussed a possible *Faith and Blue* event (support of local and State Police) for the weekend of October 7-9. Pastor Woody suggested a possible activity with the youth group.
- 10. Council approved the dates for previously funded parking lot crack repair and sealing. The work is to be done this week, Friday, August 4th and Saturday, August 5. All events using the parking lot on those two days will be cancelled or moved. The parking lot will reopen for use on Sunday, August 6.**

We hope you have been able to make the best of this difficult period of heat and humidity. Remain indoors as needed, stay out of the direct sunlight, and limit your chores and errands to early morning or after six pm. Better days (and nights) are coming soon!

Bill Below

For the Council