**Minutes of the March 2, 2017 food pantry meeting**

**Attendance:** Jan Balder, Berny Balkonis, Katie Bell, Janet Bertelsen, Mary Clark, Mary Cook, Karen Durnin, Therese Frana, Judy Jakes, Greg Jameson, Pam Jameson, Barb Loken, Rita Patton, Lisa Reid, Alex Rodenberg, Julie Rodenberg, Sue Ann Ross, Patty Stetzer, Sister Bridget, Kathy Warzynski

The meeting began with the Prayer for Lent and an exhortation by Pope Francis on lenten fasting. There were no additions or corrections to the minutes for the last meeting. New members were welcomed to the committee.

Under old business, we reviewed the Caring and Sharing event. sister Bridget thanked all of the committee members for all of their efforts before and during the Caring and Sharing event. She noted that Mary Clark and Barb Loken spent countless hours sorting and cleaning items donated for the event. Judy Jakes reported that 230 boxes were given out to parishioners who returned 190 boxes. While having the food boxes in the trailer helped with people getting their food, it was suggested that the trailer needed to be located elsewhere. In front of the steps was suggested. For next time, the need for more extra large clothes was noted. Discontinuing books and dressy clothes (men’s shirts with collars, women’s dresses, etc.) was also mentioned.

The group also reviewed Rotary Lights. St. Elizabeth was assigned 5 nights, but due to bad weather on several of the nights, the food received was less than what was collected last year. On the one night that the trailer was not available, the weather was good, and the Warzynskis and Cantlons needed another vehicle to help haul the food. When John Stubler was called, he was unavailable because someone had told him that he would not be needed. Two shifts of sorters had been scheduled to sort and shelve the food. Generally, the second shift was not needed, so next time, one shift will be scheduled and another shift will be on-call.

The Super Bowl cereal drive brought in 84 boxes on Sunday and another 7-8 were at church on Monday. Therese Frana has contacted the LaCrosse Tribune about publishing a request for hygiene items in the “For Goodness Sakes” column, which runs when the paper has room for it. It is impossible to know whether this will be an effective way to solicit items, since the items are just to be brought to church during parish office hours. There were two other small food drives: Holmen High School and Heritage Village, but every item brought in helps.

In checking with Sister Bridget on the Tuesday/Friday distributions, it was determined that 15 totes of each size should be brought to the church with another 15 of each size packed and available at the pantry. Additional help is needed for the Friday distribution; Patty Stetzer will send an e-mail requesting this assistance.

Greg Jameson has been researching the Hunger Task Force application process and met with a representative of the Hunger Task Force. There is no fee to receive food, but a donation could be requested, which the food pantry could choose to not make. The food pantry might donate surplus items instead. Greg will go through the contract with Sister Bridget and Deacon Ludick.

Under new business, the election of a new committee chair, subcommittee chairs, and secretary was discussed. All officers will remain in place for this year.

The Scout food drive is scheduled for March 11. Again this year, we have requested that the scouts deliver the food to the pantry as it is counted, rather than all at once. Staggered delivery allows the volunteers at the food pantry sorting and shelving to keep up. Judy Jakes volunteered to be at the pantry in advance to prepare for the incoming food. At 9:30 am, Barb Loken, Mary Clark, and Kathy Warzynski (9:30-11am) will sort and shelve, at 11am, Patty Stetzer, Lisa Reid, and Kathy Warzynski (11-12:30 pm) will sort and shelve.

Under subcommittee reports, the Administration subcommittee checked whether everyone could open the e-mailed packing schedule. It was noted that the schedule is on the parish website for those having difficulty opening the schedule.

Lisa Reid, chair of the Food donation subcommittee, reported on the Riverland Energy Coop food drive that was held in February, which was more successful than last year The food pantry will receive some of the food donated at the Onalaska office on March 8. Coop members who donate food receive LED light bulbs. Notice of the food drive is published in the church bulletin to encourage donations.

There will also be a Middle School food drive in April. The expected date to pick up and deliver the food to the pantry is April 28. Lisa took the names of several people who volunteered to pick up and sort and shelve the food. Lisa also took the names of volunteers for the Letter Carriers mail drive, which will be May 13. Greg Jameson will be able to recruit his tennis team to help with loading/unloading the food for that drive.

Sister Bridget noted that St. Elizabeth Huberters have funds from a successful Wild Game Feed, and asked what the pantry needed. It was suggested that the sidewalk to the rectory basement be repaired and the lighting improved. It was also suggested that the driveway that was recently added to the kitchen end of the parish center be widened.

Greg Jameson, chair of the Research/future planning subcommittee, reported that he is looking for 1-2 more people for the subcommittee. There was a suggestion to give parishioners a paper bag and ask them to fill it with the makings of a meal. The theme suggested was Christmas in July/ meal in a bag. This would assist the pantry in late summer/fall when the shelves are bare. Greg has also checked when the Festival Food brat barn would be available. He suggested that the food pantry do this fundraiser, and use the proceeds to purchase food from Festival. He was confident that Festival would provide an incentive. Those operating the brat barn purchase the brats, buns, etc., from Festival. When that cost has been met, any additional money earned goes to those raising funds. He has done this with his tennis team with success; he said it takes about 20 people to run the barn from 10am-6pm (actual selling time is 11am-5 pm). The group settled on three possible dates: July 1 or June 24, and August 5 - all Saturdays. Greg will check with Festival to see what date(s) we might schedule.

Judy Jakes noted that the Kwik Trip pickup on Thursday was being handled by a rotation of three people and asked whether anyone would be willing to join the rotation by taking a month to do the pickups. Patty Stetzer said that she would send out an e-mail request to the entire committee.

No reverse collections were scheduled.

At the next meeting, the group will plan for the Festival Foods brat barn fundraiser and review the scout, middle school, and letter carriers food drives. The next meeting will be Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 6:30 pm in the gathering place.

The meeting adjourned with a Hail Mary at 7:55 pm

Respectfully submitted March 3, 2017

Kathy Warzynski