

**Weekend Experience Recommendations**  
**Assembly of Leaders**  
**Updates for February 17, 2024**

**Point of First Contact-from the public street to the doors of the building**

- Improve Outdoor Signage (20 votes)
  - More signage, bigger & more up to date – Since we are in a residential area, we must comply with the City of Montgomery’s Residential Code. The Code states that ground mounted signs in residential districts shall be permitted per street frontage in residential districts for residential developments, and institutional uses in compliance with the following regulations:
    - (1) The design of such signs shall be compatible with the character of the neighborhood.
    - (2) Such signs shall not exceed 25 square feet in size or five feet in height.
    - (3) Such signs shall be located no closer than 13 feet from the back of the curb or two feet beyond the right-of-way, whichever is greater, except as otherwise permitted below.Several years ago, we asked to put a sign at the corner of Weller and Kemper Roads, and we were denied. We confirmed this code with the City of Montgomery on January 31, 2024.
  - Illuminated (mentioned 2 times), directional, informational & prominent – This is not permitted. Please see the electric sign recommendation below.
  - More visible and identifying entrance and wayfinding – We have maps of the facility on the monitors as people enter the building. We also have directional signs to various parts of the building in the parking lot. We will investigate this further to determine what other improvements we can make.
  - Electric sign (mentioned 4 times) with announcements, especially on Weller Road - The City of Montgomery prohibits electronic signs. We approached the city with this proposal several years ago, and we were denied. The signs you see at the Montgomery Community Church, and elsewhere, are part of Symmes Township, not Montgomery. We verified this with the City on November 1, 2023.
  - Indicate directions for outside entrances by number – Staff have been asked to include door numbers on all flyers, posters, and bulletin ads.
  - Move signage to street – Signs are not permitted to be on the street per the City of Montgomery’s Residential Code. We are limited to two signs.
  - Make exterior cross more prominent (15 votes) – In October of 2023, new lighting was installed to highlight the cross.
    - Refinish or replace
    - Improve light – New lighting was installed in October of 2023.
- Exterior Lights (4 votes)
  - Motion-detected, especially front & back door – Regular permanent lighting will be installed (not motion detected). Currently work is being done to install lighting at the covered entrance, which will shower light down from the entranceway onto the lot. The circular lights currently in the sidewalk will be filled with brass plates and engraved with religious art (the seven sacraments and a bible). The lighting at Doors 5 & 7 (Kemper and Weller Road entrances), along with any other areas, will be evaluated and lighting will be added where needed.
  - Low-level lightning in the parking lots – We have secured bids for new low-level lighting in the parking lot and along the driveways. This is part of the ten-year project list presented to the AOL at the June 2024 meeting. New lights will be installed in November.

- Improve landscape (mentioned 2 times) (4 vote)
  - Overgrown plants block view – The plants have been trimmed/removed.
  - Cut back on Weller side...not safe. – The landscaping has been trimmed/removed.
  - Add more color to the front of church – This is in progress. Bulbs and annuals will be added.
  - Overhaul landscape to freshen – Landscaping has been added to the beds. We will add more in the spring.
  - Statue of Mary – This is a project that we put out to the congregation for #GivingTuesday. Over \$16,000 was received. In May, we received bids from two contractors. We are now waiting to get prices on new benches, and to bury the electric underground. On Thursday, May 30, Teri Cunningham met with Marlene Williams from the Healing Christ Ministry to discuss the possibility of incorporating a rosary in the renovated area. Unfortunately, a decision was made not to move forward with incorporating a rosary in this area. The renovation was finished in October, 2024.
- Reinstitute greeters (4 votes)
  - Meet & greet
  - Assist handicapped attendees – We had greeters for the Easter Masses and will have people at the doors handing out Innkeeper Prayer Cards at the Christmas Masses.
- Stained glass (4 votes)
  - Entrance? Solar panels? – We are investigating location/size of solar panels to see what is best suited for Good Shepherd. \*Note: It is \$5 a watt, so a 10KW solar panel system would be in the ballpark of \$50,000.
- Covered entrances (3 votes)
  - Especially at north & Weller Road – This project is on our ten-year project list that was approved at the AOL in June 2024.
  - Also, more curb cuts – This was completed at doors 3, 5, and 7 in October 2024.
- Improve Indoor Signage (1 vote)
  - Indicate (at entrance) where rooms are located, possibly color code.
  - Make sure doors are unlocked one hour before Mass (1 vote) – This has been addressed with the maintenance staff.
  - Improved chapel entrance (1 vote) – One side of the chapel entrance was renovated by a student from Mount Notre Dame High School for her Capstone Project. On May 1, 2024 we placed a statue of St. Joseph in the area and planted flowers. The statue was a gift from the Hils family in memory of their father Ray. A special service was held after the 6:15 p.m. Mass on May 1. The Hils family attended. A light was installed in the area on November 3, 2024, and a new bench has been ordered.
- Automatic door openers for bathrooms to assist permanent or temporarily disabled and elderly (1 vote)
  - We will seek a price quote in FY 2024-2025.
- Handicap parking (mentioned 2 times)
  - We have the required number of spaces. In 2023, we did add three additional spaces. We have 21 handicap spaces available.
- Meeting notifications
  - Room & door number – We have asked the staff to include this in the information that goes out to parishioners and to the community at large.
  - Widen driveway at Kemper entrance - This was widened in October of 2024.

## Phase Two-from the doors of the building to the doors of the worship space

- Enhance monitor/greeter visibility (11 votes)
  - Make monitors more effective.
  - Provide greeters at all doors & in the welcoming space.
  - Have Welcome Desk closer to the front door.
- Improve restrooms (6 votes)
  - Better signage
    - Cleanliness could be improved – In July of 2024, we hired a full-time custodian who focuses on cleanliness.
    - Calibrate flushing (timing and sensors) – We changed calibration of the flushing valves from every three months to every two months.
    - Update restrooms – The first set of restrooms by the bronze doors to the church was renovated in October of 2024.
- Make each entrance appear to be a church entrance (5 votes)
- Holy water at all exits of worship space (e.g., Room 4) (4 votes) – This was not done due to the moveable walls in the church. The walls could be closed, and the back rooms could be used as meeting rooms or classrooms and therefore they would not be accessible to everyone.
- Renovate bathrooms; add more signs (4 votes) – See above note under “Update Restrooms.”
- Signage/map inside to direct within the building (4 votes)
  - “You are here” sticker.
  - Permanent map other than monitor.
- Make the entrance near the chapel more welcoming/inviting (3 votes)
  - Might need to be a larger space (outside the box)
  - People using that entrance don’t get exposed to things at Activity Centers. Maybe some signage there would direct people to the main areas. We will investigate this a bit more.
- Religious icons in the lobby (3 votes)
- Use screen for all readings and songs (eliminate hymnals) (1 vote) – Liturgically, this would be an impossible venture because of the software available at this time. Also, the readings are meant to be listened to and not be read along with by the assembly. In the Roman Missal, under the Order of Mass and The Liturgy of the Word, #10 reads, “The reader goes to the ambo and reads while all sit and listen.” However, because of hearing issues, we want to have the capability of people reading along with the Scriptures. We put the reading numbers from the hymnal on the screen to facilitate that. Currently, we put up the lyrics for all the hymns that we are singing at Mass on the screens, as well as the actual music notation for most of the other parts of the Mass. We are looking into new hymnals and new software that might be able to put words and music on the screen. We have included the reading numbers at the start of Mass that can be found in the hymnals.
- Better station for Eucharistic Ministry sign-ups (1 vote) – We are looking at the set up for the Head Distributor station and what the possibility would be to change this around.
- Promote one or two ministries in the foyer each week – We will work on this with our current year initiative.
- Bulletins placed closer to the door
- Cleanliness behind the scenes – In July of 2024, we hired a full-time custodian who focuses on cleanliness.

### Phase Three Recommendations—From the doors of the church to your seat

- More armchairs (20 votes)
  - Put two together
  - Chair alignment – We are open to recommendations for chair alignment, but we need to make sure that fire safety is considered, and the flow of Communion is considered when chair arrangements are made.
  - A method to identify people who need Communion at their seat (announcement)
- Outside the box: statues in church/stained glass (8 votes) – The church design does not allow for more of this, our screens are meant to be a modern stained-glass window.
- More prominent Blessed Mother statue and some other beautiful artwork (4 votes)
- Music before Mass sets the tone (3 votes)
- Scavenge from other churches when/if they close (2 votes) – Art work would be need to be evaluated, and a plan put in place, due to the layout of the church and the opening and closing of the walls in the back of the church that could be converted to meeting spaces.
- Invite people to use the chapel for reflection (1 vote) – Instead of them coming into the church?
- Ramp to the altar or lift – This was investigated multiple times over the years, and the space does not allow for a ramp to meet ADA guidelines, and be easily accessible to the altar. A lift would be possible, but the statue of Mary and the Baptismal Font would have to be relocated or moved. The decision made at the time was that this was not wanted. Also, lifts at the time were very noticeable and loud and would not be very feasible.
- Sacred space reminder – What are people asking for as a reminder?
- Opportunity for better advertisement of ability to fund flower donations during ordinary times (Christmas & Easter have special collection) – What is the need for more donations?
- Bring back greeters (with previews)
  - Need more ushers, greeters, more welcoming – Note the difference between greeters and ushers responsibilities.

### Phase Four Recommendations—Announcements and prologue music

- More greeters (recruitment campaign) (9 votes)
- Promote more contemporary music (7 votes) – Contemporary music is subjective because it has different meaning to different people. The music that we do is of different styles and different time periods. We look to the music based on the readings from scripture and how the lyrics of the songs match with the liturgical season and time within the Mass. For example, music at communion time should be related to the Body and Blood of Christ.
- List announcements on slide and discourage clapping (7 votes) – Clapping is something that has been discouraged multiple times over the years, but this is the way the people show appreciation. And, as many times as we have tried to stop it, people will not pay attention. Regarding the slides, we do not want to use the slides for anything other than for images or as a worship aid.
- Clearer signal to transition to meditative state (4 votes) – When are they asking for this signal to happen?
- Reconsider time of announcements (3 votes) – The placement of the announcements has been discussed at different times throughout the years, but their current placement has been determined to be optimal

and does not interfere with the Liturgy.

- Identify the readings from the song book (3 votes) – The number for the readings is put up on the screens at the start of the Mass so that those who need to follow along with the readings, due to hearing issues, have that ability to do so.
- More time for prologue music (no clapping) (3 votes) – The Mass time is set and based on the availability and movement of the liturgical norms which can be discussed at a later date.
- Combine announcements; announce who Mass is for (1 vote) – See note above.
- Remind during announcements that people should also finish their conversations (1 vote)
- Save clapping until the end of celebration of the Mass (1 vote)
- List name of celebrant on the screen. We include the list of presiders on the monitors at all the entrances of the church. I would not see this as a liturgical necessity since they can view this information before they come into the space.
- Play music in narthex: The prelude music and the Mass are available in the foyer. We are currently having issues with the sound system in the foyer, but it is in the process of getting fixed.
- Outside box: Tune/clean instruments professionally. Make sanctuary more acoustic. We have the instruments tuned and cleaned on a regular basis and as needed.
- Close sacristy door at the five of mark (when bell rings or prelude starts) Movement and other necessary responsibilities make this hard to do.

#### Phase Five Recommendations—Liturgy of the Word

- Recruit youth group kids to be lectors (10 votes) – We have worked with each of the youth ministers over the last number of years, and have encouraged many youth to lector, but the youth feel that this is very difficult and can't stand in front of over 500 people to read. We have worked hard with Grace and have trained several young people to be lectors. They presently do 8:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Masses.
- Opportunity for deacons to give homily (10 votes) – This is based on the pastor and not the deacons. The primary homilist is the priest at Mass, but when a deacon has the faculties to preach on the weekend, they are given the opportunity based on the pastor of the parish. Since Bishop Joe has arrived, our deacons have been given the opportunity to preach at least once a month. This is also based on the deacons wish to do so, and the faculty to preach on the weekend.
- Revisit duties of gift bearers so handwashing is not included. Then we can get more people who aren't intimidated by the role. (8 votes) – This is a possibility, but the need for gift bearers is something that is not just handwashing.
  - Idea for sacristan to ask for cross bearer & offertory procession volunteers
  - Could Grace possibly recruit some younger volunteers?
- Improve congregation participation, sync lyrics on screen to singing, more uplifting music, include children's choir, handbells (6 votes) – We try, but we are human, and we make mistakes.
- Continue to improve the sound system (5 votes)
  - Address areas that have poor sound quality, e.g., corners – This is in the works.
- Fine-tune sound system—especially at lectern vs. altar (5 votes) - This is being worked on.
- Continue to remind all parishioners to get involved (do something twice a year) (3 votes)
- New sound system needs balancing (3 votes)
- Need a broader base of volunteers for cross bearer, offertory gifts, lectors, announcers, etc. (2 votes)

- Procession is efficient, but needs to be more upbeat, more upbeat music
- Bring candles back into procession – We can if we have the volunteers.
- Have vocalists lead/not overpower congregation – We will look into this.
- Proofread slides – This is being worked on.
- Outside the box: build choir loft – This is not something that can happen in the present space.

## Phase Six Recommendations—The Liturgy of the Eucharist

- **Eucharist (28 votes)**
  - “Amen” after receiving – from pulpit, presence of Jesus in bread and wine (2 votes) - This is an educational piece that we can work on in the bulletin.
  - Commotion of traffic during distribution (3 votes). - Communion involves movement and we can't have over 500 people moving at Mass at one time and not have some commotion.
  - Offer online training to increase volunteers. Sign up online versus at the church. (4 votes) - Training to distribute the Body and Blood of Christ is a hands-on experience that can't be accomplished.
  - Acknowledge Eucharist by bowing or genuflecting upon entering church (10 votes) - This is an educational piece that can be worked into the bulletin and website. We are also doing some of this through the parish mission this year.
  - More training for Eucharistic Distributors. Yearly review of Eucharistic Distributors. Reduce busyness and confusion at distribution. (6 votes)
  - Refresher notes for Eucharistic Ministers (on altar) - positions (3 votes) - We do have a Minister Guideline book that is available on-line for a refresher.
- **Participation (19 votes)**
  - Get more youth involved in the Mass (lectors, gift bearers, etc.) Fill these positions from Faith Formation classes. Acknowledge them in the bulletin. (11 votes)
  - Invite participation before Mass (ushers, faith formation) (8 votes)
- **Miscellaneous Ideas**
  - Celebratory music including Bell Choir (4 votes)
  - Provide stations for individual cups of wine (5 votes) – This is liturgically not correct.

## Phase Seven Recommendations—From the end of Communion to the end of Mass

- **Involving more kids – processions, at foot of altar (6 votes) – This was also mentioned in Phase Nine with 13 votes for a total of 19 votes.**
- **Good byers (11 votes) – This was mentioned in Phase 10 with eight votes for a total of 19 votes.**
- **Announcements and AV (15 votes) – We have specific guidelines for the announcements. They are limited to six each weekend. We attempt to keep each announcement to less than thirty words.**
  - Reduce verbal to top three most imminent in importance (4 votes)
  - Events that weekend (after Mass) should be prioritized for announcements (1 vote)
  - Keep announcements as is and continue with pictures and key phrase to take away (6 votes)
  - Enhance AV, announcements – invitation to action (4 votes)
- Applause at the end of Mass (1 vote)



- Project lyrics for cantor's song on the screen. Difficulty understanding lyrics. (2 votes) – We will work with our cantors, but not sure which lyrics are needed to be projected. I (Steve) presume that the lyrics they are talking about is the meditation hymn and putting the words up with the images. This is not possible because the meditation is set to a recorded version of the song and not a live version. Liturgy calls for live music not to be recorded. All other song lyrics are on the screen.
- Happy with the way things are (0 votes)

### Phase Eight Recommendations—Sunday Social

- **Change Sunday Social to monthly full breakfast (Sunday) or wine/cheese (Saturday) with the goal to involve more people (12 votes)** – This could be something the AOL hosts once a month. It would be a good way for people to get to know the AOL members.
- Add background music, have special guests (3 votes) – There is music playing now, however, it's difficult to hear with many people in the room.
- Socialization – name tags, learning – topics, commissions (4 votes)
- Have a social after the 4:00 p.m. Mass (0 votes)
- Invite with coffee cart having seasonal goodies – emphasis on kids and announce before Mass (3 votes) – The Sunday Social is announced each week it occurs unless circumstances prevent otherwise. Perhaps we can be at an Activity Center as people leave Mass to encourage them to attend.
- Use compostable plates, cups, and flatware (6 votes)
- No need for improvement (2 votes)
- Eliminate donation jar, other social events – wine and cheese, softball team, progressive dinner, yoga (4 votes) – The elimination of the donation jar was discussed when it was brought up before the weekend experience review, and it was determined by the ministry members that we would eliminate the recommended donations, but felt strongly that a donation jar to offset the cost was not harmful in any way.
- Ministry of the week at Social with greeters at door (5 votes) – This has been discussed as part of the Stewardship Initiative for this fiscal year.

### Phase Nine Recommendations—Sunday formation efforts

- **More children involvement – processions, steps (13 votes) – This was also noted above in Phase Seven which received six votes.**
- Online classes for kids – stories of the Bible (4 votes)
- No need for improvement (2 votes)
- Continue to support Children's Liturgy of the Word (6 votes)
- Re-evaluate age groups of Lambtenders and Sunday Preschool religious education (3 votes)
- Add to bulletin – musician needed for CLOW, reminder about location and availability of cry room (4 votes)
- Well done as is (0 votes)
- Is great, no comment (0 votes)

### Phase Ten Recommendations—Leaving Good Shepherd

- **Have greeters at all exits (8 votes) – This was mentioned in Phase Seven with 11 votes for a total of 19 votes.**

- Consider putting bulletins out after Mass (8 votes)
- Appreciate the opportunity to talk with presider/deacon after Mass (3 votes)
- Continue to have officer to direct traffic (7 votes) – mentioned by two tables – *We have no intention to eliminate this service.*
- No need for improvement (1 vote)
- Another exit that takes parishioners to Montgomery Road (2 votes) – *We do not see any feasible way to achieve this recommendation.*
- Kudos to the exit process (2 votes)
- Express that we are happy they came, kindness in the parking lot, early leaving collection box (7 votes) – *Bishop Joe each week from the altar, along with the ushers, etc. express their thanksgiving for people who come to worship with us at Good Shepherd. People live-streaming are also acknowledged.*

**Other comments not associated with this phase of the review**

- Can we revisit the return of Sunday evening Mass? (4 votes)
- Confessions – more privacy (0 votes)

*Green: Updates to AOL on February 17, 2024*

*Blue: Updates to AOL on November 16, 2024*