

**SS ALBAN AND STEPHEN RC CHURCH
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 11th November 2013**

Persons Present: Fr Charles Sweeney, Fr Tom Hewitt, Rev Steve Pickard, Peter Berners Lee, Joanna Roche, Brendan Day, Mike White, James O'Hare and Helen Bassill

Apologies received: Fr Jimmy Stubbs and Cath White

Parish Assembly and Pastoral Council Objectives:

1. To make the Church more alive and open to the Spirit and to further the spread of the Kingdom of God;
2. To provide a structure for constructive dialogue with the Parish Community and thus serve as a means of consultation and communication in the Parish;
3. To ensure an ongoing assessment of the spiritual, social and human needs of the Parish and to foster ways to meet these needs; and

To draw out, draw together, and draw upon the talents and gifts of the Christian Community in the Parish. "As each one has received a gift use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 Peter 4:10)

1. Matters arising from previous meeting

No Matters arising.

Minutes accepted.

2. Reports from groups

Worship - Mike Walsh had offered his resignation as PPC representative for the Worship Group. This was accepted. It is hoped in the new year to restructure the Worship Group, Fr Charles will ask Fr Jimmy to become more involved.

Mission – There has been a lot going on, but report not available as the group not meeting until later this week.

Christmas Card is now ready to go to the printers. Discussion on whether it should be a children's nativity or liturgy service on Christmas Eve. Fr Charles favoured 'liturgy' in the end decided to call it 'Children's Nativity Service'.

Alpha Course due to begin in the New Year will be referred to on the Christmas Card. Not decided yet whether it will run on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, this is dependent on volunteers to help.

Justice and Peace - Roma Mills spoke to the group as part of an interfaith gathering at St Columba's on Saturday about the impact of recent Government legislation. Further talks have been arranged with speakers from our three 'parish' charities

10th December – a representative from the Living Room

9th January – Graham from Centre 33

February – Scott from the Workers Farm

'Feed' is a local organisation working out of the Vineyard Church. It is a food bank for all those who need/want it. There are an alarming number of people using it. As a church do we want to become involved either as a collection centre or distribution centre? All the local churches and the District are working with the Vineyard on this issue. They do not turn anyone away and reckon that 90% of those benefiting are in genuine need. Joanna will contact Feed and see how Ss Alban and Stephen could become more involved, possibly start off with a monthly collection in the church. (Peter to provide contact details).

Parish Friends – no matters arising.

Safeguarding – no matters arising.

Youth – Numbers on the First Communion Programme are now up to 130. We are still looking for Confirmation Catechists, please encourage people to sign up for this valuable role.

Communications – Magazine has gone to the printers. It will not go on the website until we have tried to sell it after the masses for about 3 weeks.

3. Priest's Report

Fr Charles apologised that he had been so tied up with many things – Growing in Faith and the Building work in particular – over the last 9 months and felt slightly neglectful of the rest of the Parish. Hopefully 2014 will be calmer and we can work on trying to encourage all the priests to have at least one day off a week.

The work on the hall is finally finishing, there have been a few snags recently which Fr Charles is in discussion with the builders and architects about. The lift is going in this week and hopefully it will be ready to be opened by Bishop John on 30th November. Fr Jerry and Fr Pat will also be present and the architects and builders have been invited to this service. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Life's Healing Journey finished this weekend, another very successful programme. Thank you to all involved.

Sr Anita will be arriving in the Parish at the beginning of January. We will try and arrange a social as soon as possible for her to meet the PPC so she has some familiar faces to turn to.

It has been suggested that a large luminated Crib is displayed in the window of the new hall. Ideas please to Fr Charles. It was also requested we have a Christmas tree at the front of the Presbytery on the lawn.

It is now time to claim back the money from 'Growing in Faith'. It is thought that we will be able to claim approximately £12,000. This will be distributed to Centre 33, The Living Room and the Catholic Workers Farm. In addition we may be able to give a sum to the Food Bank rather than using it towards the hall. Each of the Charities will be asked to write an article for the Parish Magazine on how they are using it or what they do, over the coming months.

Disaster in the Philippines

MSCs have a large presence in the Philippines and it would be nice to support these parishes at this difficult time. A service will be arranged as soon as possible to pray for all those affected and a second collection will be arranged between now and Christmas. This money will go direct to MSC parishes out there. It was requested that the collection at the Carols by Candlelight would be for this appeal (Joanna to write to CBC organisers).

4. Christmas

Christmas Day – lunch will be served in the hall for all those needing it. About 20/25 helpers have come forward as a result of the advert in the newsletter. Now we need some guests, if you know anyone in need please do invite them or let their names be known to the priests so they can.

Attendance at the Christmas Day services is always high. It is therefore requested that each member of the PPC be a point of contact for the mass they will be attending. They can then insure that welcomers are in place and recruit any more, that readers have arrived, that we have enough Eucharistic Ministers and Collectors. They can also, if needed, provide marshals for Communion and for seating arrangements before Mass begins.

7pm Mass – Joanna and Brendan

Midnight Mass – Helen

8am Mass – James

9.30 – to be recruited

11.30 – to be recruited

5. Any Other Business

a. Family Synod Consultation

The laity have been invited to take part in this consultation and a questionnaire is available for completion on the Westminster Diocese website –

<http://rcdow.org.uk/news/synod-of-bishops-on-the-family-2014/>

It has to be said that the questions are not easy to answer. However it was felt that everyone should be encouraged to fill in the form with their views. Articles have been published in the Catholic press.

It was decided that a representative from the PPC would speak at all masses this weekend encouraging people to read the articles and complete the forms. They do not have to provide answers to every question.

5pm Maryland – Peter
6pm –
9am Marshalswick – Mike White
9.30am – Brendan
11.30 – David
7pm - Joanna

b. Keeping the Church open for longer hours

This will be discussed at our next meeting

6. Date of next meeting

Monday 9th December 2013, James to lead the opening prayer.
A meal will be served in the hall so we have a chance to test whether the equipment is working properly!