

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

Persons Present: Fr Charles Sweeney, Fr Tom Hewitt, Fr Jimmy Stubbs, Steve Pickard, Peter Berners Lee, Joanna French, Joanna Roche, Brendan Day and Helen Bassill

Apologies received: Mike Walsh, Mike White, James O'Hare 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

Minutes accepted.

2. Reports from groups

Mission – it is great to see so much going on.

There was a discussion on the desirability of the Carols by Candlelight clashing with the Abbey service. Decided to leave the date as the 20th December as it is the only date some of the organising people can manage.

Peter highlighted the 'Finding Silence' retreat at Worth, a wonderful weekend with the best healing service he had ever seen.

Parish Friends

The group were applauded for their Christmas gifts idea, Fr Tom will investigate providing the group with a list of special needs people. The list of children will come from the SVP.

Safeguarding – no matters arising.

Youth The First Communion programme has started well with 127 children enrolled on the course.

The Confirmation programme will be advertised after half term. We need more catechists for this programme, many of the previous catechists are unavailable this year. If you know anyone who may help please urge them to volunteer.

Communications – a lot of work going on.

The website has improved enormously recently but unfortunately it is still not entirely up to date. Fr Jerry is still showing as one of the priests. Helen had a met a woman in the morning looking for the Mothers and Toddlers group, unfortunately it does not say on the site it is closed during the rebuilding work.

Justice and Peace

No report submitted.

3. Up date on the Hall

The new date for the builders finishing the work on the hall is 8th November. There will need to be a period of at least a week to clean and organise so it will not be used until the week beginning 24th November. We will try to arrange for volunteers to come in and help with the cleaning the week end of 16/17th November.

Bp John will be coming to celebrate the opening on 30th November at the 6pm Mass. Drinks and nibbles will be served afterwards.

The groups were thanked for their detailed plans as to when they would want to use the halls during the coming months. There is an overwhelming demand for some days of the week. It has been decided that Sacramental preparation will **always** be given precedence for their demands over any other group, even if this means another group will have to make adjustments to their plans.

4. The Worship group

There is concern over this group and how it is running. There are many positive things which have come out of the group particularly the use of the sacristans. The PPC asked the priests what they would like from the group. This is a topic we will raise again in the new year when people have had time to reflect on this.

5. Priests' Report

The loan which was arranged with the diocese amounted to £180,000 to be paid back over 7 years. This has not been drawn upon yet and it is hoped that we will only need to draw £150,000.

In the Growing in Faith campaign we managed to raise £109,000 over the target of which 75% coming back to the parish.

The Murco building is up for sale, this could lead to problems for our parking.

Fr Dermot, an MSC priest will now be stationed here and occasionally say mass for us. He will continue his work giving lectures and writing. Fr Charles drew our attention to someone who teaches meditation to children. He would like to arrange for her to come in and teach the techniques to the teachers in our schools.

Henry Green, our finance manager, would like to step down from the job. This is a voluntary role, if anyone knows a recently retired accountant who would be willing to take on this role please let Fr Charles know.

6. Any other business

Christmas Day Lunch – This has now been running in the parish for several years and has about eight people who regularly attend. The people who have run this recently are either not available or not sure that they are available this year. A notice will go in the newsletter for new volunteers before deciding how to move forward on this.

7. Date of next meeting

Monday 11th November 2013, Peter to lead the opening prayer.