

## Minutes of the Parish Advisory Committee Meeting 23/10/2023.

Attendees: Fr John, Stephen Badcock (Chairman), David Richardson (Treasurer),

Haley Dossor, John Conlan, Barbara Lamberton.

Apologies: Alan Lamberton.

After the initial welcome, Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

We took a moment to remember our friend Doug Birchall, our PAC minute taker, who was a loyal and faithful member of our PAC team. He will be sadly missed.

Fr John has asked Mrs Teresa Whitley to take on the role of PAC minute taker and she has kindly agreed. Unfortunately, she cannot be with us tonight, so SB will take the minutes on this occasion.

- 1) DR – gave us a financial update. We have a healthy balance in our current parish account, and this is after the invoice for the new church windows has been settled in full. We have requested a VAT refund on the purchase and we are hopeful that this will be accepted by HMRC.
- 2) SB gave an update on the recent and current Parish Projects:
  - The new church windows are now fully installed and paid for. We all agreed what an improvement on the old windows they are.
  - The redecoration of the Church Hall is progressing well. Chris O’Brian has completed the new tiling in the kitchen and is now in the process of finishing off the tiling in the toilets. He will then proceed with renovating the cupboards in the kitchen and the internal woodwork in the main hall and Cooper room that requires attention.
  - The exterior repairs and redecoration will get underway in the Spring.
  - New spot lights are being fitted in the church to illuminate the Stations of The Cross on Wednesday 25th October and hopefully this will be completed by the weekend.
  - Parish Health and Safety updates are being undertaken, and much of this has already been instigated. The main remaining audits are a Specialised Fire Safety Inspection now that we are a Grade 2 Listed Church, a Legionella assessment and an Asbestos assessment which will be completed by specialist advisors in due course.

- The Monday morning Mother and Toddler group continues to go from strength to strength and is a highly valued community resource.
- We are in need of willing volunteers to support the M&T group and indeed other, ongoing parish activities and initiatives.
- The DONA – ‘digital collection plate’ - in the church porch, has been in place now for a year.

Those who are using it report that they find it easy and very convenient.

Almost every church in the diocese has this facility, and we were one of the last remaining churches to install a DONA system.

It would seem, however, that some parishioners are still reluctant to use the DONA giving system, and we suspect that this is mainly due to the misconception that it is difficult to use.

This is not the case and we agreed that a note encouraging people to use the DONA would appear in the Parish News Letter this week.

- We discussed the merits of a Security CCTV Camera to improve the security and safety of our church and church hall.

This topic remains under review by Fr John and the Finance Committee and it was decided that SB and HD will seek advice from the diocese when they attend a diocese finance meeting in December.

3) Fr John discussed the plans for the bishop’s visit this Sunday to bless our new church windows. The Mass is to be followed by a Parish Bring and Share Lunch. The event is being co-ordinated by Edwina and Ian Hughes.

- A statue of St Felix, our patron saint, has been delivered and is ready to be installed in the church.

The statue has been gifted to the parish by a friend of Fr John and has been hand carved and painted by Austrian craftsmen.

We have applied to the diocese by means of a ‘faculty application’ to have the statue placed on a shelf / plinth in the church.

Because of our Grade 2 listed status we are obliged to ask permission from the Historic Churches Commission before any change / alteration / installation can take place.

We await a formal reply from the diocese.

- Fr John has planned a 'Quiet Afternoon in Advent' on Thursday December 7<sup>th</sup>.  
This will be led by Fr Joseph Welch, Parish Priest at St Pancras Church in Ipswich. There will be two addresses by Fr Joseph, exposition of the blessed sacrament, time for private prayer and an opportunity for confession. This will be a wonderful way to start our preparations for Advent.
- Fr John planning for us to be part of 'The Mission for Evangelisation', more of that in due course.
- This year's Penitential Service will be held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December in the afternoon.
- Fr John reports that so far, we have four Confirmation Candidates for confirmation next year.  
The date for the Confirmation Service celebrated by the bishop is Thursday May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The bishop also plans to use this opportunity to meet members of the Finance Committee and PAC.

4) There were no items raised in AOB,

5) Finally, we reflected on the poor attendance at this meeting.

We suspect that this was partly due to the evening timing of 7pm on a damp and cold October night, but we also felt that there was little excuse for a least one representative from the various groups in the parish not to attend. We hope therefore, that next time a delegate from these groups, will make the time to attend.

We all have a stake in the life of our parish and it is important that we have a meeting to reflect the various opinions, skills and wishes of our parishioners.

6) Stephen summarised the main items raised at the meeting and Fr John closed the meeting with a prayer.

7) The next PAC meeting will be in the New Year, in the afternoon. Date TBC.

S.B