

MINUTES of the 258th meeting of the Parish Pastoral Council held on Tuesday 28th September 2021 at 7.15pm in the Upper Church Hall.

PRESENT: Father Simon Leworthy, President of the Council, Mrs Josephine Lea, in the Chair, Mrs Maureen Favager, Mrs Carole Kelly, Ms Debbie Kerry, Ms Rosemary Muntus, Mr Allan Scott and Mrs Pat Smith.

APOLOGIES: Mrs Gillian Millyard, Mrs Mary Robinson

IN ATTENDANCE: Frank Lea, Clerk to the Council

11/21 OPENING PRAYER: Father Simon formally opened the meeting with a prayer.

12/21 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME: Jo welcomed everybody to the meeting.

13/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: It was agreed that the MINUTES of the 257th meeting of the PPC, held on 2nd February 2021, a ZOOM meeting, constituted a true record. They were signed and dated by the Chairman.

14/21 MATTERS ARISING: There were none.

15/21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS NOT SCHEDULED ON THE AGENDA: Mary Robinson had sent a list of points for discussion and it was agreed that these be addressed later in the meeting.

16/21 REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE: The Chairman reported on the Finance Committee meeting that had taken place on 31st August:

- Presentation by Mrs Sandra Portas, Diocesan Stewardship & Fundraising Coordinator. She was one of the officers leading and implementing the "Time, Talents and Treasure" project throughout the diocese. It was stated that this was not a follow up to Alive in Faith, but a project to allow parishes to look at its finances, and how they could be best managed, and to encourage parishioners to give of, and use, their talents in various roles within the parish. It was intended that the project be delivered over three consecutive weeks with a series of pre-scripted presentations. Father Simon was still looking at the detail of the scheme and the Finance Committee concurred that the implementation should not be until early 2022.
- The Hall works had now been completed. Simon Millyard had completed the Fire Risk assessment and improvement to lighting and sanding of the floor in the hall would be undertaken in due course.
- The Tabernacle had been installed by Ormsby in August and the final cost, c £3,200, had been settled.
- The church carpets are to be cleaned, probably in early December.
- The Finance Committee's next meeting will be on 30th November 2021.

17/21 REPORT FROM THE DEANERY COUNCIL OF LAITY: The last meeting had been held on Wednesday 8th September on ZOOM. Due to technical difficulties Frank, who had been designated to attend, was unable to join the meeting. The report from Our Lady's had been

emailed to Maureen Costello, the Chairman of the Council, and this had been included in the final MINUTES. No events are planned by St Edmund's Deanery in the immediate future. The next meeting of the Council will take place on Wednesday 23rd March 2022.

18/21 REPORT FROM THE PASTORAL GROUP: In her absence the report from Gillian Millyard was read by the clerk.

- With the lifting of restrictions slowly happening it is time to consider having a Mass for the Sick, Housebound and Elderly. I have added 'elderly' as there are an increasing number of parishioners who have become frail with age rather than specifically ill.
- Father Simon Leworthy has agreed to celebrate a Mass for the sick on Tuesday 16th November 2021 at 2pm and this will be followed by afternoon tea in the Parish Centre. Together we have gone through a list of suggested parishioners to invite. Unfortunately, we cannot use the newly refurbished hall above the church as it has limited capacity for people who are not able to use the stairs in the case of a fire.
- Over the two years since our last Mass, we have sadly had a number of parishioners die and we were not able to be present at their funerals because of the limited numbers allowed at these events. It would be good to remember them in the bidding prayers at this Mass.
- Emails have been sent to parishioners who have helped in the past or who have offered help for such events, to gauge manpower. and the invitations will be posted towards the end of October.

19/21 REPORT FROM CHURCHES TOGETHER: Carole Kelly reported on the meeting that had taken place on 15 September, in the Upper Church Hall, and that was also attended by Father Simon and Frank Lea from Our Lady's.

Matters discussed/decided:

- WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY: Will take place 18 to 25 January 2022. United Service to take place in Our Lady's at 6pm on Sunday 23rd January. Father Simon stated that this would be Vespers inclusive of an address by Alison Fenning from the New Life Church. Refreshments afterwards in the upper hall.
- DAILY PRAYERS (WEEK OF CHRISTIAN UNITY): In URC, 9.30 to 10am. Lead churches to be agreed later.
- UNITED (SUMMER) SERVICE. Planned to take place in Salvation Army Citadel at 6pm on Sunday 1st May 2022.
- TOWN PASTORS: This has now closed in Stowmarket – lack of volunteers. Funds have been dispersed to The Mix and Town Pastors Central.
- FINANCES: Standing at around £1,100. It was decided not to re-start annual church contributions, £50, for the time being.
- CHRISTIAN AID: Collections this year £2,634.17 plus £615 from e-envelopes. Gift Aid not included in figures.
- FOOD BANK: Now moved and co-located with the egg vending facility on Coombs Lane. 2020 figures very high due to pandemic. 2021 still quite high.

All Stowmarket supermarkets and Needham Market Co-ops have collection points. ALDI, new store, being negotiated.

- PULPIT EXCHANGE 2022: To be arranged between churches agreeing to take part.
- ADVENT SERVICE 2021: Will take place in the Parish Church at 6pm on Sunday 28 November. Father Simon agreed to preach.
- REMEMBRANCE: At the Regal. Saturday 6th November 2021 at 3pm.
- FUTURE EVENTS: Community Fun Day planned for Saturday 27 August 2022. Much as 2019 event with everything free.
- PRESENTATION: A representative from Chilton Hall Community Church spoke with a view to joining Stowmarket Churches Together.
- FUTURE MEETINGS: Next meeting, Wednesday 12 January 2022. AGM, Wednesday 11th May 2022. Both meetings to start at 7.30pm and will take place at Our Lady's in the Upper Hall.

20/21 REPORT FROM CATECHISM GROUP: Debbie Kerry read Mary Robinson's report and a copy is attached to these MINUTES in the Minute Book.

21/21 REPORT FROM PARISH SOCIAL COMMITTEE: Carole Kelly reported. She said that since the onset of COVID there had been a dearth of social activity, but plans were now being considered to re-open the social life of the parish. Pat Smith and Carole Kelly have planned an Afternoon Tea event to take place on Thursday 14th October, 2 till 4pm, and this is being advertised widely. Tea & Coffee after both Stowmarket Masses had restarted. Jo Lea is organising the event after 8.30 Mass and Pat Smith would be the organiser after the 10.15 Mass. These events will take place once a month as advised in the weekly bulletin. Carole said that she would like to have a meeting of the Social Committee to plan future events. This will take place on Wednesday 20th October at 1.30pm at Carole's home.

22/21 UPDATE ON THE STOWMARKET FOOD BANK: Jo said that the up to date position had been reported in the Churches Together update. She did comment on the generosity of the farmer on whose land the Food Bank now operated. She also said that it was not yet known what rent would be charged for the new premises, but this was likely to be somewhat less than that previously charged at the Hillside Community Centre.

23/21 ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- HOME WORSHIP – NEEDHAM MARKET: Jo had received a request for a member of the parish to lead a session of this group on 3rd July 2022 at 10am at the home of Mrs Wendy Marchant, 127 High Street, Needham Market. Father Simon was unable to undertake this clashes with the time of Mass at Our Lady's. Jo had already led three sessions of the Home Worship group and asked that a member of the PPC consider undertaking the lead at the July 2022 event.

Mary Robinson's email, copy attached to these MINUTES, was tabled for members at the meeting and the various points raised were discussed:

- **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP:** At present there was one vacancy for an elected member and there were two vacancies for members nominated by the Parish Priest. After discussion it was agreed that an election should take place in October 2022 when two of the present members were due to finish their term of office. Father Simon agreed to consider the matter of nominating his own appointees.
- **WEEKLY COFFEE MORNING OR AFTERNOON TEA WITH GAMES:** It was agreed that if there was a demand from any parishioners for this sort of activity, their first approach should be to Father Simon. If members heard of any requests, they should direct these to the Father Simon. It is likely that the Parish Centre would be available for activities of this kind.
- **SOCIAL GATHERINGS FOR MOTHERS AND TODDLERS:** This again should be directed to Father Simon in the first instance, as in the previous sub-paragraph.
- **TEENAGERS:** How to attract them to participate. Simon Millyard has worked tirelessly over the years to encourage activities for them. It was thought that Simon might once again be instrumental in engaging with them. It was agreed that an approach might be made to enlist his support.
- **CAFÉ PROGRAMME:** The parish had undertaken a Café programme some years ago, but it was thought that it could be something that could be investigated as a means to bring a spiritual uplift to the parish. Allan Scott agreed to look into the possibility of organising another course which he and Rosemary could lead.
- **PARISH COMMITTEES:** Mary suggested the need for sub-committees. It was observed that the parish already had several committees/groups to deal with various aspects of parish life, viz, Finance Committee, Pastoral Group, CAFOD Group, Social Committee all of which had continued to operate throughout the pandemic, albeit at a reduced level of activity. As the general situation returns to some normality these groups would increase their own activity for the benefit of the parish.
- **CAFOD MATTERS:** Item from Rosemary and Allan. It was observed that this autumn's CAFOD project was the Brazilian Rainforest. They offered to run an event to highlight COP 26, a CAFOD project. Their proposal was to hold the event on Thursday 21st October accompanied by a light supper. This was agreed. Details to be promulgated through the newsletter and parish website.
- **HISTORIC CHURCHES CYCLE RIDE:** Item from Debbie Kerry. She reported that she had had no support for this event this year and would not be prepared to do it in the future. Jo said that this was something that the youth of the parish might be prepared to get involved in next year and asked Debbie not to abandon the participation of our parish until we could enlist more help.

24/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting would take place in the same location on Tuesday 7th December 2021 at 7.15pm following the evening Mass.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8.32pm and Father Simon closed proceedings with a prayer.

Signed Date

PPC Mins 258