

**Present:**

Father Michael Weymes - Parish Priest

Jo Shepherd - Chair

Susan Stoddart- Minutes

Rose Anderson, Ged Downey, Pat Downey, Joan Donnelly, Olive Donnelly Wood, Hilda Dixon, Barbara Dowling, Angela Hawthorne, Pat Hedley, Waveney Miller, Bill Miller, Flo Nilsson, Carl Nilsson, Paolo Nardini, Amanda Pritchard, Gareth Pritchard, Anthony Searle, Gerard Shepherd, Christine Weddell, Robert Wilson  
Apologies were received from Michael Ratliff and Christina Nardini

**1. Opening Prayer**

Father Michael opened the meeting with a prayer.

**2. Minutes of Meeting October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

These were agreed as a correct record.

**3. Safeguarding Update**

Jo confirmed that safeguarding procedures were currently up to date, and new volunteers to the parish had completed DBS applications.

Rose Anderson, a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee gave updates on the progress made by the national and Diocesan bodies in all areas of safeguarding.

**4. Finance Report**

Gerard reported that the parish finances were in deficit and had never recovered from Covid19. The absence of cash usage was also having a detrimental effect on parish finances. The digital donations were beneficial, but more revenue is needed as there are considerable maintenance repairs in the church buildings, grounds and hall that require urgent attention soon. It was highlighted that many parishioners had not increased their standing orders since the implementation of Gift Aid.

Gerard confirmed the finance committee was looking into collating an accurate parish register.

The Diocese has also commended Sacred Heart's financial accounts, thanks to the exemplary work of Robert Wilson, Treasurer

**5. Partnership**

It was confirmed that the Seaton Delaval Partnership that Sacred Heart Parish previously belonged to has been disbanded. The previous Bishop decided that Sacred Heart Parish should now be part of Jesmond St Mary Partnership. It was agreed that geographically this a good move.

Minutes can be found on the Parish website.

**6. Spiritual and Liturgical Activities**

Angela Hawthorne outlined current spiritual and liturgical activities in the parish:

- The First Holy Communion Programme flourishes with a dedicated catechist's team
- The focus is to increase the children's participation in the services and to concentrate on frequent child-friendly masses throughout the year.
- The RCIA course had been very well attended. Subsequently, eight people were received into the church.
- A newly formed Bible discussion group is going well. There are ten participants
- Children's Liturgy would be starting soon. DBS clearances have been finalised.

- Confirmations had been held in July. New catechists are needed
- The Emmaus Group continues to increase in numbers, meeting once a month.
- GIFT - Flo Nilsson confirmed that these meetings are held via Zoom; Flo was asked to publicise the meetings via the bulletin for safeguarding purposes.

### **7. Justice and Peace / Outreach**

- Joan outlined the parish's support of the local food bank and a charity: Families First Additional Needs (Brunswick) who support vulnerable individuals and families.
- Joan was asked if she could co-ordinate a talk at the Masses from the Food Bank Staff
- Barbara discussed the work of the Justice and Peace group in the two parishes
- A book stall will be held at the end of July on Gosforth High Street, in aid of the two local food banks.
- Pat Hedley gave a resumé of the work of the SVP, supporting families in need locally, visiting the sick and housebound, financial help to families in need at Christmas
- The scope of the annual toy appeal was outlined.
- Ged Downey updated the meeting about the ongoing work of Mary's Place, a drop-in centre for the homeless held at St Mary's Cathedral.

### **8. Future Events**

- 22nd September - World Food event in the parish hall, Gareth and Siann co-ordinating
- 27<sup>th</sup> September - Macmillan Coffee Morning Joan and Pat co-ordinating
- Aid to Church in Need - Rose and Barbara to co-ordinate a fundraiser in November
- Ceilidh – November: Date to be agreed John and Barbara co-ordinating

### **9. Any other Business**

- Gosforth Broadway Crossing  
Amanda raised the problem of the Broadway Crossing used by many parishioners' children/ grandchildren attending local schools. There will be no funding for the Crossing Patrol by December 2024. This will leave this busy road unmanned. Amanda has written to local MPs, without any success. This is going to be an ongoing issue for the community.
- Welcomers  
Barbara agreed to co-ordinate a rota for welcomers to the church.
- Gardens  
The gardening Group was thanked for their exemplary work. The gardens are looking amazing  
Anyone interested in helping the gardeners, please contact Muriel McKenna.
- Bulletin  
The lack of space in the bulletin was discussed. It was agreed a monthly insert outlining parish activities would be a way forward. Jo agreed to co-ordinate.
- Parish Website  
It was confirmed that the website is now up and running, thanks to John and his team.

### **9. Closing Prayer**

Bill Miller closed the meeting with a prayer.

### **10. Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024