

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

11 February 2025

Present: G. Shepherd A. Hawthorne R. Wilson H. Dixon A. Boardman P. Hedley J. Donnelly Fr. Ian P. Nardini
K. McDonald M. Ratliff F. Ratliff Fr. Michael R. Anderson G. Pritchard A. Pritchard G. Downey P. Downey
B. Miller W. Miller A. Searle V. Bloomfield

Apologies: C. Nardini S. Stoddart B. Dowling J. Dowling N. Pereira S. Pereira M. McKenna P. Marley

Chair: J. Shepherd

Minutes: H. Box

1. Opening Prayer
2. Introductory Remarks
 - Welcome - to K. McDonald representing St. Charles Parish Council
 - Minutes of previous meeting - confirmed as accurate
 - Thanks
Red Wednesday raised £711.50 (£250.00 Gift Aid) - thanks to working group who organised this. Church was lit up with red light - thanks to P. Nardini.
Thanks were recorded to those who organised the following events/works which have taken place since the last meeting: Bereavement Service, Carol Service, Mulled wine after Sunday morning Mass, Bulbs planted by First Communion candidates, Bird boxes and bat boxes erected in the gardens, Ceilidh, POSH pantomime (a record breaking year for ticket sales), IT issues addressed and the Toy appeal. It was noted that the Toy Appeal has been running for more than 40 years and is needed more than ever. The parish's generosity exceeds all expectations.
3. Safeguarding Update
54 volunteers with DBS clearances - more to come.
Volunteer Census identified 75 volunteers. There are at least another 40. People are carrying out multiple tasks with about 110 hours of voluntary activity occurring each week.
All groups take safeguarding very seriously - new volunteers need to be logged on to the system - not necessarily DBS checked.
4. Finance Report (RW & GS)
Less than £23,000 in current account. Prior to pandemic this ran at approximately £40,000.
Monthly Standing Orders: £2,500. Monthly income: £4,000.
Rent for presbytery: £500+ £230 for utilities - does not contribute to day to day running of the parish.
200 Club might be a way of raising money.
5. Partnership
Day of prayer and reflection was held in November. Aim: to equip people spiritually - to face the future.
6. Schools
Parish/school links are important and need to be acknowledged.
Young people are involved in Liturgical and social life of the parish.
St. Oswald's : Faith in Action Group have worked with parishioners on the Remembrance Day service. The school has also visited the parish to sing carols in the hall following Sunday morning Mass and they have performed their annual Christmas production in the church.
Parishioners have visited Year 4 and Year 1 to talk about people/roles in the parish and have attended/led assemblies. The parish is grateful for the support of the school in publicising Children's Liturgy
St. Mary's : A group of students is on the parish rota for writing the Prayer of the Faithful. The Diocesan Justice and Peace newsletter highlighted the support received from the school at Christmas

6. Spiritual and Liturgical Activities

- Established groups continue to meet
- Children's Liturgy - will be held on the 2nd Sunday of the month
- Victims and Survivors Service: Tuesday May 20. An invitation will be extended to St. Columba's
- YMT are currently visiting parishes to attend weekend masses. An invitation will be extended.
- Angela Hawthorne gave a short presentation about the Year of Jubilee. Ideas included Divine Renovation, Lent, Missionary Prayer, celebration, utilise Charis Team, Northern Saints, J&P/Cafod projects, Foodbank, Accompaniment on faith journeys. Following a short discussion it was decided that we would ask for volunteers to take this forward. Fr. Ian pointed out that there are resources on the Diocesan website.

Discussion also covered the following points

- Welcoming new parishioners
- Advertising what we want to do as a parish - and what actually do already
- Publicity - weekly diary? Social media?
- Notice board at the bus stop
- Renovating the outdoor cross
- How we publicise the LoudFence ribbons
- Communication was identified as an issue. Fr. Michael will place a diary in the sacristy so that events, collections, special intentions for Prayer of the Faithful etc are known in advance. This will be trialled until the end of Lent to see if it improves communication.
- Mass for the sick and older parishioners was discussed. Dates were not confirmed but it was felt that losing the chance to gather prior to Christmas and Easter was a concern - both in spiritual terms and as a social event.

7. Justice and Peace/Outreach

Ceilidh: Friday 14 March

Big Brew : Sunday 23 February - after Mass - to support Fair Trade (B&J Dowling)

Lenten Soup Lunch: Sunday 6 April - after Mass (B&J Dowling)

Continue to support Diocesan Refugee Project and H'rigg Food Bank. Brunswick closed.

Second hand book selling to raise money for J&P projects (S. Stoddart)

8. Future events

Easter Sunday. Pritchard Family will co-ordinate this.

Parish Feast Day - June 27. M. Ratliff suggested that we might want to try alternative approach.

Voicemail not available. However, he is willing to co-ordinate a celebration if nobody else steps forward.

Christmas concert - Voicemail possibly not available. To be investigated.

9. AOB

Anthony Searle raised the issue of memorial plaques which were no longer attached to plants. Gardeners will discuss the possibility of establishing a memorial garden in the grounds.

10. Date of next meeting

Thursday 8 May.

11. Closing Prayer