

Parish of the Sacred Heart

Parish Council Meeting: May 8th 2025

Present:

Father Michael Weymes - Parish Priest

Jo Shepherd - Chair

Susan Stoddart- Minutes

Rose Anderson, Lucy Brown, Joan Donnelly, Hilda Dixon, Angela Hawthorne, Pat Hedley, Katie McDonald Paul Marley, Muriel McKenna, Paolo Nardini, Father Ian Patterson Amanda Pritchard, Gareth Pritchard, Fionnuala Ratliff, Anthony Searle, Gerard Shepherd, Christine Weddell, Robert Wilson

Apologies were received from Gerard and Pat Downey, Michael Ratliff, Cristina Nardini and Florence Green

1. Opening Prayer

Father Michael opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Minutes of Meeting February 11th 2025

These were agreed upon as a correct record.

Thanks were expressed to

- Robert Wilson for his continued work with parish finances
- all those involved in maintaining the church grounds which look stunning in the spring weather.
- those who coordinated several successful community family events: the Ceilidh, Lenten lunches, Big Brew fundraiser and the Easter Sunday Family Event (record number of families attended this year)

3. Safeguarding Update

Jo confirmed that following the diocese's survey there are 172 voluntary roles within the Parish. Not everyone completed the survey

There are now 54 volunteers with DBS clearance in the parish.

4. Finance Report

a. Income and Expenditure

- Robert reported that the parish finances are not in a healthy situation. Although there are 79 standing orders, monthly expenditure is exceeding income.
- More revenue is needed as there are considerable maintenance repairs required in the church, grounds and the hall that require urgent attention. (Figures are uncertain as yet but it will possibly be in the region of £40.000 depending on what surveys reveal)
- Thanks were expressed to Gerard Turnbull for facilitating additional quotes for the remedial building work required.
- It was highlighted that mass attendance has increased but revenue has not.
- Discussion ensued as to how to remedy this.
- Finance will continue to be an issue as the cost of living increases

b. Health and Safety

Father Ian outlined several issues regarding health and safety within the parish. He offered his support but stressed that additional volunteers were required to adhere to health and safety legislation. record keeping, is a prerequisite.

Lucy Brown agreed to coordinate use of a defibrillator for the parish.

Father Michael agreed to appeal for health and safety volunteers after his holiday

5. Partnership

Gerard and Jo Shepherd will represent the parish at a partnership meeting on June 4th and will report back to the parish.

Post Meeting Note - See Partnership section of the website for minutes of this meeting.

6. School

- Paul Marley headteacher of St Oswald's school gave a resume of the extensive school/parish activities held recently.
- See the list attached (Appendix 1)
- Paul was thanked for the school's continued partnership with the parish.

7 Spiritual and Liturgical Activities

- The First Holy Communion Programme continues, and the young children will make their First Holy Communions on June 14th.
- A Confirmation programme is underway within the Partnership. Confirmations are due to be held in June.
- The Children's Liturgy continues, albeit irregularly.
- A service for Victims and Survivors of Abuse will be held at Sacred Heart on May 20th
- The Emmaus Group continues to flourish, meeting once a month.

7. Future Events

Feast of the Sacred Heart social - Friday, June 27th

This is now an annual event, further details to follow

8. Any other Business

a. Communication

- It was agreed to provide bulletins with large print, to be left at the back of the church
- It was highlighted that notices in the bulletin need to take into account the wider audience and greater clarity is required, in some of the notices.

b. Hall/Stage

It was reported that as the stage is in need of refurbishment, the POSH team have agreed to finance this.

c. Memorial Garden

- It was confirmed that the garden team were designing a memorial garden in a secluded/quiet area of the grounds.
- Memorial plaques will be in situ by November.

d. Car Park

Due to a near accident in the car park, it was requested that a sign be erected, reminding parishioners to be aware of pedestrians in the grounds.

9. Closing Prayer

Father Michael closed the meeting with a prayer.

10. Date of Next Meeting

September – date to be confirmed.

Appendix 1

St Oswald's Primary School

Parish / School links

- Whole school mass celebrated by Father Michael
- Jo Shepherd visited Year 1 and 4 to discuss people in the parish with special roles
- Faith in Action led an Ash Wednesday service with Gerard and Jo
- Year 4 attend a Stations of the Cross service with other Newcastle Catholic schools at St Mary's Cathedral
- Parents invited to a Stay and Pray session led by the Faith in Action Team before being invited to take part in a number of Prayer stations activities with their children before school
- Whole school involvement in the Big Lent Walk raising money for CAFOD, £200 raised, 400 miles walked collectively.
- Year 4/ 5 performed their version of the Passion in church for parents and parish
- The reception class performed their Easter play for families and the school
- Faith in Action helped launch a new pupil-led class worship programme called Let Us Pray together whereby a group in each class plans, prepares and delivers a short worship for their class members.
- Kate Morris led her Spiritual lunchtime class with children in Key Stage 2
- Gerard and Jo have led Jubilee Year Celebrations of the Word throughout the school year.