

ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY
Pastoral Parish Council
Monday 13th January 2025
Minutes

Attendees: Bernard Hunter, Fr Michael Copps, Patricia Jolly, Lorna Spears, Robin Shearmur, Matthew Ives, Martin Sharkey, Peter Robson, Damian Atkinson & Geraldine Mansbridge

Fr Michael opened the meeting with a gospel reading and prayer.

Apologies Cynthia Oji & Donna Patros.

Welcome Damian was welcomed to his first meeting.

Minutes The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

Matters arising There were no matters arising that were not covered by the agenda.

Henrietta Suite Project

It was noted that Professional services have been engaged (Barkers), and that an initial meeting will take place this week. Sound Proofing benefits analyse is due to take place on 15th January. Project Manager is now Martin Mansbridge

Eucharistic Service – Plan

Arrangements were in place for a trial of a Eucharistic Service on 20th January. This was an invitation only meeting for Readers and Ministers of Communion. Instruction sheets have been prepared, and Geoff Craft has agreed to be the leader on this occasion. If this is successful it is likely look to potentially hold a similar service each month or on a more structured basis which will enable those involved to become confident.

It was recognised that this was only one approach in the event that there are fewer Priests in the future. Other areas been investigating further include prompting interest in becoming a Deacon and involvement of lay people in marriage preparation.

Diocese Pilgrimage to Walsingham 24th May

Matthew clarified that he needed to check the final date with the Diocese for the pilgrimage. He has received a quote of £1k to hire a coach. Members thought that this should be supported and parishioners invited but not required to make a payment towards the hire of the coach.

Jubilee Year / year of prayer plans

Peter presented a short report of plans to mark the Jubilee year. He would be utilising material from CAFOD and would be supported by David Underwood. On the plans for accompanied prayer Peter was looking at access to spiritual directors, including from the Friars. There would be a small cost which the PPC approved. Discussions on the

need to measure the demand for this and it was thought it would benefit from some marketing materials.

Young people

Martin reported that the young Vinnie's has commenced with a great deal of engagement and commitment from the young people. He also referred to the 2024 confirmation candidates' views obtained about what they would like to see happening in the Church for them. It was agreed to circulate this information to the PPC. He also thought that there would be advantage in introducing young people to the work of TELCO and their work linked to social justice.

Bernard shared information that he had received from St Anthony's about the use of the funding for addressing well being matters in the school. On the basis of the benefits achieved it was agreed to fund them to the same extent in 2025. A report was awaited from Trinity and Geraldine was asked to contact them and obtain more information before any funding can be agreed.

Older people

Patricia reported that the Monday morning refreshments would recommence in the spring. She helpfully explained that there was a lot of options available for older people and this included organisations like U3A. She felt that some of the PPC attention should be on those who live alone as it is proven if they have social interaction this can improve their physical and mental well-being.

Parish Database/Website

It was noted that following the registration activity in 2024 that 476 Families have now registered (862 people). Registration continues to take place and is expected to rise. The updates to the website had been well received and Geraldine was asked to provide statistics on numbers accessing for the next meeting.

Volunteers

Bernard raised how important it is that we have sufficient volunteers to keep STOC active. The volunteers we have provide an invaluable contribution to the church community life but there was a need for us to have more. There was a real sense that volunteering was a way of living a Christian life to the full. We might ask our clergy to focus specific sermons on the theme of what it is to be a catholic, conduct after-mass appeals, and follow up with a form of volunteers' fayre, where those interested could come and meet those already involved in church community matters. It was seen as an opportunity to help parishioners understand the gifts they have and how they can be utilised. These options would be reviewed and a way forward agreed at a future meeting.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Monday 10th February, subject to there being sufficient business.

Peter closed the meeting with a prayer.