

St Mary's Forest Hall

Open meeting of the Parish and PCC AGM

4.00pm 08.10.2017

PCC Members present: Kate Elliott Chairperson, Rev S E Hall Parish Priest, Simon Rayson, Una Humble, Veronica Hargreaves.

Apologies from PC Members & Parishioners unable to attend meeting: David Henderson, Margaret Hutchinson, Margaret Henderson, Malcolm Thompson, Maura & Paul Dodd's, Isobel Emmett

Partnership: Forward Together in Hope is now complete and the newly formed Partnership is in operation: Parish partnership Representative, Bill Brown, told us he had attended several meetings on behalf of the parish namely the Partnership Development Committee (PDC) and the Partnership Finance Committee (PFC)

At the PDC it was agreed all partners would work together for the next 2 years to steer the various groups, initiatives and activities forward for the future. It was mentioned that given the size of the task it was probable that something would have to be put in place to support all of this work after the two years had elapsed

The PFC is a permanent committee which will continue into the future. At the PFC, it was agreed that a bank account be opened in the name of the Partnership, into which each parish will pay a percentage in line with the Diocesan Levy, this means that our parish contribution is 13% which is £260. An example of what it could cover is the upcoming costs for the Confirmations of our young people taking place in the near future at St Theresa's church. The new bank account will be topped up as and when required. The previous individual parish spend limit was £5000, to replace or repair property, renew items etc. This figure has been raised to £10,000 but any future works/repairs must now be discussed by the PFC who will prioritise parish's requests and then forward them to the Diocesan Offices for approval

The Dean of Partnership is Father Michael Campion, Deputy Dean is Father Sean Hall. The Chair of the PDC and the Chair of the PFC will both be lay representatives

An Away Day for the PDC and PFC Representatives from the Partnership Parishes is to be held in St Mary's High School on Saturday 11th November 2017 which Bill Brown will attend on behalf of the parish. It is anticipated that the Chair will be elected at this meeting

Continued Overleaf

Committee Reports Worship & Mission 2016/2017

Action Taken During the Last Year

- A new set of Crib Figures was purchased
- A rota for setting up the Altar for Sunday Mass was compiled following Eileen Mullen leaving the parish
- Margaret Henderson has now completed a Lay Leadership course.
- Anthony Lee, Trish & Peter Tindall, Anne Railton, Win Currie have now completed their Eucharistic Minister Training Course and are Commissioned Eucharistic Ministers
- More Mass cards are now available for parishioners use following the closure of SS Peter & Pauls Church
- It is hoped to find someone in the parish competent to use the Laptop Computer and overhead Projector in order to project Hymns and Prayers onto the screen, though we must establish copyright laws first
- It is hoped sub- committee for Mission & Worship to be formed representatives from all groups in the parish including Music Groups, newly formed Justice & Peace Group, Children's Liturgy Group, Eucharistic Ministers, Readers and other groups formed in the parish

Finance & Fabric

The Fabric & Finance Committee meet in the weeks prior to a full Parish Council meeting to discuss repairs and possible improvements to both the exterior and interior of the church. The most notable works or purchases carried out this year are:

- Resurfacing of the car park and parking of bays
- Changes to the front Lawn with the removal of flowerbeds and reseeded of lawn
- Replacement of lower double glazed units in church windows which had failed and were allowing condensation to form inside the double glazing units and allowing heat to escape
- Re Painting of the Sacristy and Children's Liturgy Room
- Re carpeting of the Sacristy, Children's Liturgy Room and the Sanctuary and surrounding area
- Installation of handrails either side of the Altar
- Repairs to the hall kitchen boiler and a hall heater
- Replacement of a hand washbasin in the Presbytery

- Maintenance of the garden and grounds including yearly cutting back of trees and shrubbery
- The parish replaced Father Hall's Laptop.
- A coin sorter/counter was also purchased to enable quicker and easier counting of monies by Sunday counters

As well as the above there are the general running costs of the parish such as Insurance, Utilities (Heating, lighting, water rates etc), servicing of Fire & Smoke Alarms, Extinguishers. The hire of photocopier, cleaning costs, annual Diocesan Levy, purchase of Vigil and Altar candle, Telephone and other general administration costs.

Social Committee

Social Activities 2016/2017

- Christmas Family Event held at the White Swan Centre December 2016
- Group of Parishioners attended a Forward Together In Hope meeting at the Federation Brewery in Dunston using St Mary's Primary School Mini Bus driven by David Henderson

The Mini Bus is available for trips out for parish groups at weekends. David Henderson is a willing volunteer driver

- A Fish & Chip Supper with various games was held March 2017
- Coffee/Teas after Sunday & Tuesday Mass are very popular, and a Fund Raising Coffee Morning & Raffle are held each Friday Morning where funds for various charities are raised

2017 Christmas Family Event is once again to be held at the White Swan Centre on Saturday December 9th. Help is requested on the day to assist with setting up of tables, food preparation as well as selling tickets and raffle tickets at church in advance of the night. Anyone interested in assisting please contact Natalie or Fides

Volunteers are needed to for a social sub- committee to suggest ideas, organise and run a variety of social events for the parish

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Weekend Mass Times

At a recent Partnership Meeting Father Simon Lerche told how extremely difficult it is nowadays for priests to cover Sunday Masses when a Parish Priest is unavailable (holidays, sickness etc).

Sadly several Priests have died over recent months and some retired Priests who we have previously depended on are now too ill or frail to provide cover.

It is decided that all parishes in the Partnerships must therefore now look and prepare for only one Mass at weekends in order that Parish Priests can provide cover when necessary. There will have to be much discussion about this as all parishes must accommodate the needs of the community including neighbouring parishes. There is much to be taken into consideration such as bus times for people using public transport, the most appropriate day and time for Mass and neighbouring Parishes Mass times as we must work together in the future. This is not in the very near future but we must prepare because of the lack of priests available. The capacity in St Mary's Church is approximately 270 persons. All decision will be made in consultation with Bishop Cunningham who will retire in 2018 therefore a new future Bishop.

Next Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 15th November 2017

If you have any thoughts, comments or concerns about anything taking place in the Parish please either speak to a member of the Parish Council or a note can be left in the boxes at each entrance to the church, these notes are collected at the beginning of the Parish Council Meeting for discussion. We do need to know your views in order to establish the best way forward for St Mary's Parish.