

ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC CHURCH – CROXLEY GREEN

MINUTES

Parish in Council Meeting Monday 24th April 2017 – 7.30pm

PRESENT

Fr John Wiley, June Jones (Chair), Louise McKenna (Agenda), Paul Bartlett, John Charnley, Fabian Hiscock, Michelle Hussey, Madeline Leech, David Marston, David Reilly, Graham Smith, Ursula Bartlett (Minutes).

1 WELCOME

June Jones welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 OPENING PRAYER

Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

3 APOLOGIES

No apologies received.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – Weds 18th January 2017

These were unanimously accepted as a true record.

5 MATTERS ARISING

9 Any Other Business (Pastoral Care)

David Marston enquired whether any action had been taken to ensure our sick and housebound parishioners are now receiving sufficient attention. We established that no further action has yet been taken. There was some discussion regarding the possible involvement of the SVP, and the fact that we have no formal list of those in need. It was decided that as a starting point we could identify the source of information in respect of those on the Sick & Housebound list. It was recognised that Fr John is ultimately responsible for identifying those in need, but we could also put a request in the Newsletter; asking for parishioners to identify anyone who may need our help.

9 Any Other Business (Church Cleaning)

Ursula Bartlett updated us on the position regarding new volunteers for Church Cleaning. She has collected the names of several volunteers and is in the process of ascertaining their availability, with a view to producing a rota.

9 Any Other Business (Flower Arrangers)

Louise McKenna was pleased to inform us that new volunteers have come forward to help with flower arranging.

There was some discussion about the need to encourage more parishioners to get involved in parish ministries. It was acknowledged that we need more volunteers; in particular readers. We agreed that we should bear in mind a recruitment campaign in the not too distant future.

On the subject of new volunteers, our attention was drawn to this year's Easter Garden and adjacent display board, designed by Liz Hughes and her daughter, Isabella. These have been much admired. Thanks were expressed for their creativity and enthusiasm.

We were also reminded of the recent Irish Coffee Morning, co-ordinated by the Children's Liturgy parents. We acknowledged their willingness to participate in the life of the parish.

8. Parish Events (Women's World Day of Prayer – Friday 3rd March 2017)

Thanks were expressed to Michelle Hussey and her team for co-ordinating this year's very successful Service, hosted by St Bede's. Thanks were also expressed to Louise McKenna for providing the Lenten Lunch that preceded this event.

7. Canonical Visit of Bishop Paul McAleenan

We were reminded that Bishop Paul's visit to the parish coincided with this year's Ecumenical Service to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, hosted by St Bede's. This was a very successful event and was well attended.

6 FINANCIAL REPORT

David Reilly (Chair of the Finance Committee) gave his report. He advised us that he is in the process of preparing a report to be presented to the parish, as discussed at the recent Finance Committee Meeting, and asked for suggestions as to how this should be presented. Louise handed round a copy of an example from another parish. This included a message from the Parish Priest and a statement from the Parish Finance Committee, setting out full details of the parish finances. It was agreed that something similar would be suitable for St Bede's. It was suggested we could also include some statistics such as average Mass attendance, etc. David will prepare a report based on our discussion.

David advised us that our current bank balance is just over £25000. However, we have a deficit of just over £3000 due to expenditure for property repairs/renewal. A claim for Growing in Faith funds of just over £6000, received from the Diocese late last year, were allocated for some of the work carried out. Further items of work are still outstanding. David emphasised the need to prioritise and be diligent with future spending. He has investigated the budgeting tool within OPAS (Online Parish Accounting System), which can help us to organise our spending. David also spoke about 'Restricted Funds', and the setting up of categories for specific projects.

The matter of Growing in Faith and Special Collections was raised. It was felt that demands for numerous other collections may be adversely affecting the level of donations during the weekend Masses. Fr John advised us that whilst some parish priests do discriminate with regard to which special collections are taken, it is generally expected that parishes respond to all requests for these.

David drew our attention to the recent Planned Giving / Gift Aid Awareness Appeal, instigated by Lisa Shirt. Although this was regarded as a low-key appeal, we have gained some new Planned Givers and Gift Aiders, thanks to Lisa's sterling efforts.

David then referred to our Gift Aid claim for 2014-15, which was not successful due to insufficient evidence. The Planned Giving envelopes for part or all of this period have recently been found, so it may be possible to make a further claim once these have been verified.

The matter of Catechetical expenses was raised. There has been a query regarding the cost of our First Holy Communion courses; currently set at £45. It was pointed out that other parishes charge considerably less than this. Ursula reminded us that in previous years, prior to Fr Philip's retirement, the course included an off-site Retreat, which would have justified the cost. David advised us that the Catechetical income and expenditure figures calculated to 31st December 2016 are £1125.00 and £541.92, respectively. It was suggested that we look at the expenses for both First Holy Communion and Confirmation, in order to calculate a more realistic charge for the instruction courses.

7 FATHER JOHN'S REPORT

Fr John advised us that parish finance reports have been produced in his previous parishes, and agreed that we should produce a Parish Finance Report for St Bede's.

It was noted that we have produced Parish Finance Reports in the past.

Fr John reported that we now have a very robust Finance Committee and a very energetic First Holy Communion group. The recent Parish Breakfast organised by the parents of the candidates was very well organised, and Liz Hughes is doing an excellent job with the preparation classes.

We have 12 Confirmation candidates this year, and there will be a meeting for the parents of the candidates on Tuesday 25th April 2017.

8 MAINTENANCE MATTERS – Updates and New Items

Yellow Hatched Area in Car Park

Graham Smith suggested that a notice needs to be put up outside the church, highlighting that no vehicles must be parked on the yellow hatched area. Drivers frequently ignore the hatched area rule. This area needs to be kept clear to allow access for emergency vehicles, and also serves as a turning space. Ursula agreed to action this.

Heating

Paul Bartlett updated us on the current position in respect of the heaters in the church and sacristy. There are still a few issues that need to be attended to.

List of Jobs Completed

Ursula updated us on the work that has recently been carried out. She advised us that there is still an issue with the large Prunus tree at the rear of the Hall, and she is in dialogue with Daniel Monk at Three Rivers District Council.

Cracks in the Kitchen Wall

Ursula advised us that a recent inspection revealed that there has been a slight improvement in the situation. We have been requested by the Diocesan Surveyor to wait until inspections have been carried out for an entire year before we can carry out remedial work.

9 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

All relevant topics discussed during item 8.

10 PROMOTING PARISH PARTICIPATION - Update**Church Cleaning**

We recently held a successful Spring Cleaning day, which included a lunch provided by Louise McKenna. Several volunteers participated, and we also have some new volunteers for the rota.

Ursula is in the process of contacting the volunteers with a view to building a new rota.

It was noted that we no longer have a polishing machine that is suitable for the parquet flooring in church. A new more powerful one is needed. Paul Bartlett reminded us that there are Health & Safety regulations regarding the use of industrial type of machines, which would involve formal training, etc.

11 PARISH LIFE – Planned Events etc.**St Bede's 60th Anniversary - 2018**

Fr John reminded us that we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of St Bede's Church in 2008. We decided that we would begin to consider ways in which we would like to celebrate our 60th Anniversary. It would be fitting to organise a Thanksgiving Mass, but we could also focus on a specific project, and maybe include a campaign to recruit more parish volunteers.

Croxley Revels – Saturday 24th June 2017

Chris Moan is willing to run her plant stall, as in previous years. Sadly, we did not enter a float last year. Ursula expressed her feeling that we should continue to participate in this community event if possible. She informed us that she is appealing in the Newsletter for anyone who wishes to take the lead for a Revels stall or float. If no one comes forward, Paul Bartlett will co-ordinate a pitch, and erection of the large gazebo to accommodate the plant stall and an area where we could serve simple refreshments. No one raised any objections to this.

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**Grass Cutting**

We were advised that Steve Benham has taken on the task of grass cutting, and thanks were expressed for his valuable contribution to the parish.

FairTrade

Fabian Hiscock raised the matter of becoming a FairTrade parish. We briefly spoke about the requirements, and decided it was a possibility. We would need to pledge to use FairTrade products, such as tea, coffee, sugar, biscuits, etc. at parish events, and organise one event per year where FairTrade products are promoted. This could be a fundraising event, or maybe a talk. Ursula agreed to approach Eleri Davies, who is a local FairTrade promoter, to ask if she might be willing to give a talk for us at some stage.

Catering Volunteers Required

June Jones requested that we recruit more volunteers to help with catering at our various social events. We agreed that this would be desirable.

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 17th July 2017 at 7.30pm.

14 CLOSING PRAYER

Fr John closed the meeting with a prayer at approximately 9.40pm.

Ursula Bartlett (April 2017)