

Reports for Parish Pastoral Council

05 March 2018

Area of Activity	
Our Lady's Bereavement Team (Antonietta Tinney)	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>The "in house" training session on Wednesday 17th January 2018, based on an article written by Madge Ford "Bereavement-Growing in Pastoring" was not carried out due to lack of attendees. No-one has suggested another possible date for this training yet.</p>	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
<p>It is important to have regular meetings. Our aim is to have a strong team for supporting parishioners in need of our "ministry".</p>	
Objectives set	Who
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-To make our team more known within the parish.-Continue to send sympathy cards to newly bereaved families.-To send cards on the first anniversary.	All

Area of Activity Report on Ecumenism for Parish Council

Activity since last PPC meeting

- The CTH meeting on 5th Feb at the New Testament Church of God was Chaired by John Maguire from Tilehouse Street Baptist Church
- Carols in the Market Place was cancelled because of the snow
- Somewhere to go at Christmas was held by Donald and Leigh Smith – they provided a meal and company on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day – CTH need someone else to provide this service next Christmas
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the Pulpit exchanges happened this Jan. The CTH Service for Christian Unity was held at Our Lady's this year and was a great success. It was suggested that next year there might be a prayer for Unity said in one of the CTH churches each day of the week.
- The Miller's Cafe project has begun at Walsworth Rd Baptist Church. It is for those who have been through the Mill recently for health or other reasons. Tea and coffee plus biscuits and the opportunity to chat with others in similar situations is hoped to be helpful. More advertising in the churches is required to encourage the use of what seems to be a good idea.
- A Report from the Executive of CTH –
A memorandum of Understanding is to be produced with the NHDC soon on the Actions that the churches can take in emergency situations.
AGM of the Sanctuary/Helping Herts Homeless is to happen soon – it was noted that the numbers of rough sleepers in Hitchin is going down.
General Data Protection Regulation is being updated in May – All the churches need to be careful how we deal with personal data.
Help is needed to create a Dementia Friendly Organisation in North Herts.
The CTH Website – Kevin Hanson from Walsworth Rd wishes to step down from this role so someone is required to take over.

Keiron gave an update on Phase

- Time Trek, a one day event, at Tilehouse St Baptist Church took place very successfully in the half term holiday. Children and families came from various schools and churches and my nephew said it went very well.
- Training for Phase leaders is to take place in March
- Primary Schools – a program called Get Set for Year 5/6 children preparing them for secondary school is being carried out
- Phase is preparing the development of secondary teachers
- 23rd March a fund raising concert is being held at Priory School by Hitchin Rock Choir
- The Annual Review is on the Phase Web Site
- A Prayer Guide has been produced and a monthly prayer group has started at 27 Walsworth Rd
- The Comet is having a vote for Community Heroes – we can all vote
- Alison Smith is going to a conference in Berlin on Digitalisation of people and at work
- Andrew Henton Pewsey is leading a visit to the Holy Land in 2019

Forthcoming Events

- Ash Wed lunch was held at Our Lady's Church
- Lent groups began on 19 Feb
- Women's World Day of Prayer on 2nd March at New Testament Church of God – the theme is 'All God's Creation is Very Good'
- Good Friday Walk of Witness and United Service is in hand
- Christian Aid Week 13 to 19 May – a person to organise the Bearton Rd area is needed
- Party in the Square on Sun 20 May(Pentecost) – a planning meeting was held, it will start 11.30 am with a Service, the Party will start at 12.15 pm, there will be a free BBQ, drinks, inflatables as usual and a prayer tent. Churches are providing music groups and they are asked to provide stalls. Initial discussions have taken place with Trish and the Son Seekers to have an activity stall for youngsters manned by their leaders and members of the group. Any other youngsters and their parents can then join in. There will be a cake stall so we need our many good cooks in the parish to provide their offerings direct to the stall on the day. If we have a qualified First Aider who could volunteer to be on duty for 1 hour during the day that would be most helpful. The churches will be asked for a financial contribution to the event through their normal yearly subscription.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

John Maguire spoke about the results of his recent questionnaire entitled 'Bridging the Age Gap'. He is concerned about reaching out to teenagers and to young adults. We will see where his initiative advances.

The Next CTH Meeting is Tue 22nd May

Objectives set

Who

Area of Activity Health and Safety

Activity since last PPC meeting
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The H&S inspection in January went extremely well. It was noted that all the observations and recommendations mentioned in last year's report had been implemented.

Some additional suggestions were made by the inspector, some of which are as a result of recent legislation, which are being addressed. These are of a non-critical nature.

A quote from the report says, *"This risk assessment has shown that the standards are now high, and only a few areas require attention."*

And, *"and a great job in being one of the lowest risk Parishes in the Diocese."*

I would like to recognise the tremendous amount of effort that has gone in to achieve the above.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed
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Objectives set	Who
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Support Upcoming Annual Inspections	JG
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Further Emergency Evacuation practices for the Church and Hall will take place during 2018.	JC
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Area of Activity	Inter-Faith Relations
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Activity since last PPC meeting
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The last NHIFF took place last Wednesday evening (21/02/2018), but unfortunately I was away on a training course, so I was absent. Maybe Fr. Tom may have some information to share with us.

On an ecumenical level though, the first plaque from our church to the Quaker's Peace garden was well received and has been installed, during a ceremony on Sunday 18th Feb. Fr. Tom read a prayer from Pope Francis that was just so right and relevant to us all !

On the 7 February, I attended an Interfaith Symposium in London: *From Local to Global*, on faiths response to Climate Change, at the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, where I met up with some representatives from Operation Noah, CAFOD, and Green Christians/Eco Church groups. It was good to find out that Eco Church has motivated the start of Eco-Synagogue and Eco-Mosques.

Inter-Faith St. Alban is organising a talks evening on Wednesday 25th April at 7:30 pm on the topic "FAITH – Friend or Foe of the Environment?" with contributions from the Quakers, Buddhists and Catholics (Fr. Tom) - look out for the poster closer to the time.

The next **Herts Inter Faith Forum** will be on Tuesday 6th at Hatfield Fire Station, where there will be a Presentation by Affinity Waters.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed
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As above.

Objectives set

Who

DME

Area of Activity Justice & Peace

Activity since last PPC meeting

Michael and I will be taking part in the **Westminster Justice & Peace commission** organised **Intergenerational European Pilgrimage** from the 2nd to 11th April 2018 by coach. Calling at: Calais, Brussels, Strasbourg, Taizé, Assisi, Rome, and Geneva. I believe an assistant at JHN school is also going on this trip. Organised by Fr Joe Ryan, Barbara Kentish, Julia Corcoran
May we go/be sent with the parish's blessing?

By the way, it will include a walking stage as part of Pope Francis appeal to : "Share the journey"

Between April and June, we are being challenged to organize a walk in solidarity with people forced to flee? (<https://cafod.org.uk/Campaign/Share-the-Journey>) It doesn't need to be a long walk. The miles you walk will be added to our the grand total (<https://e-activist.com/page/16889/petition/1>) , and used to show world leaders that we expect them to step up in support of refugees when they agree UN Compacts (agreements) on migration in September.

AGM & OPEN NETWORKING DAY possibly on 12 May 2018 will mark the 40th Anniversary.

ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE will be 20th—22nd July 2018

The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire – with the theme:

'In the Shelter of Each Other the People Live' - can we try an different approach this year?

Could the parish select a family with children of various ages that could benefit from this conference experience and part sponsor them to take part as a family, with a view to bring the benefits of an experience to the parish? Fr Tom is due to attend part of the conference.

Lastly, I would like to share the TED talk given by Pope Francis, it should be shared widely:
"Why the only Future worth building includes everyone" (ideas worth sharing)

https://www.ted.com/talks/pope_francis_why_the_only_future_worth_building_includes_everyone

A celebration of the sixty years of campaigning by CND took place at Portcullis House, Westminster on 22 February. Those sharing the story of CND included Ernest Rodker, a veteran campaigner who attended the first meeting at Westminster Central Hall in February 1958, Bruce Kent, who has been both Chair and General Secretary of CND and is now a Vice - President, Jeremy Corbyn MP, also a Vice-President and Pat Gaffney, General Secretary of Pax Christi. For more of the report see: <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/34404>

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Most welcome!

Objectives set

Who

DME

Area of Activity LiveSimply - Ann Milner	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>The livesimply facebook account has been set up and is sparking lively exchanges.</p> <p>A monthly livesimply tip in the parish newsletter has been inaugurated. It is hoped these will provide parishioners with a constant reminder of our livesimply status as well as help them live more simply.</p> <p>A series of Lent Meditations on the Stations of the Cross, each about an hour long, has been devised with the involvement of various members of the livesimply team and others from the parish and beyond. So far, response from those attending has been very positive. The Meditations are being shown in the church every Monday from 14:00 to 20:00. We are grateful to Mike Eltringham for his assistance with setting up the initial display and sorting out security for the equipment. Also we are grateful to Trish for setting up the display in the second and subsequent weeks.</p> <p>The Pax Christi annual Ash Wednesday Service and Non-violent Protest was attended on behalf of the parish. It was freezing cold but we prayed for peace and repentance outside the MOD. Due to it (the MOD) being on high alert, we were accompanied by some armed police in addition to the usual police contingent. The MOD was marked with blessed charcoal which is a criminal offence (damage to government property) but no arrests were made this year.</p> <p>A visit from a CAFOD speaker (Tania) was arranged and she spoke enthusiastically about CAFOD's work in Latin America at all the Masses in the first weekend of Lent. She also made a statement about the recent controversy uncovered in the work of OXFAM which has had many ramifications in the Charity sector. We are extremely grateful to Fr Tom for allowing Tania to speak at the homilies. It was noted that CAFOD has again been granted Match Funding by the government. CAFOD have been supported in this way more times than any other charity – a great credit and testimony to their work.</p> <p>A meeting took place with a subset of livesimply teams members to discuss and design a display board to be placed in the parish grounds providing information about the good things the parish is doing as part of its livesimply commitment. It will have pictures and information about our recycling, our care for the environment and our reaching out to those on the margins. Estimates were obtained for different size boards and a size decided selected. A scale 'mock-up' was created by the meeting and a specific design will be created in due course which will be shown to the manufacturer for a firm quotation. The design will be shown to Fr Tom for approval prior to obtaining the quotation.</p> <p>A Laudato Si information and Meditation weekend was attended in Welwyn Garden City. It was organised by a group based in St Albans and people from several other parishes in the Westminster diocese participated. It was a very uplifting and prayerful time.</p> <p>The gardening team continue their care for our parish environment and random passers-by have commented to them on how well the parish garden looks. This is very edifying.</p> <p>The One World Group Lenten Meditation and Supper will take place on 6th March. It is hoped that members of the Pastoral Council can attend. The Meditation will be delivered by Fr Euloge.</p> <p>Several <i>Ethics and Action – What can we do?</i> webinars have been attended though unfortunately although they are being recorded it does not seem possible to download them. They are being stored on facebook so means to access them will be circulated.</p>	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
<p>Reaching Out to local 'Eco' Groups: TBC</p> <p>Parish Garden: more wild flower areas to be planted & noticeboard to be created</p>	
Objectives set	Who
Attend Sustainability seminars	AMM
Circulate details of Sustainability seminars recordings	AMM

Design artwork for display board	AMM
Contribute livesimply tips	LS Team
Carry out a review of livesimply team activities and objectives	LS Team

Area of Activity Maintenance

Activity since last PPC meeting

Summary

A shorter list this time , but have fixed a couple of nasty ones ...

Credit - as always - to all volunteers -
esp. MagicMike , PatientPhilippe
and ConvalescentJohn ...



Activity since report of Jan 2018

Imminent/In-hand

- 0/ repair drips from EC guttering (MPBuild)
- 0/ draught strip under CH front door (consulted MPBuild 31/12/2017)
- 0/ ruggedize external loudspeakers for PalmSunday
- 0/ ongoing fan-assist-radiator problem in church
- 0/ LED flood light over the front steps to the church (js/OliverRussell)
- ### ----- snags addressed -----#
- 2302_1/ projector trolley upgrade for new kit (ME)
- 2002_1/ castor off table-trolley in hall (JS & ME)
- 2002_2/ unblock foul drain from hall (JS & ME)
- 1602_1/ ChrisHorsfall Memorial sign scout hut emergency exit (JVC)
- 1602_2/ unblock big yellow hoover (js&PJ)
- 1502_2/ chemical unblock urinals...last addressed September (JS)
- 0502_1/ re-inforce scout hut door after break-in (js & JVC)
- 0402_1/ Clean behind hall secondary glazing (js & MikeE)
- 0402_2/ Replace busted light fitting in link (js & MikeE)
- 2701_1/ LongTerm repair to hall radiator fixing (js and PJ)
- 2201_1/ QuickReference document for meter readers (js)
- 2101_1/ Emergency rescue loose and leaking hall radiator (js and MikeE)
- 1601_1/ GlueDown triphazard loose woodblocks in hall floor (js)
- 1601_2/ Fix and finish EC water heater overflow (js)
- 0901_1/ Diagnose and repair CentralHtg fault in ParishHo and Office (MikeE)
- 0601_1/ minor repairs to scout hut floor (js)
- 0601_2/ seal scout hut floor with PVA (js, PhilippeJ & Chrissi Evans)

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Outstanding Maintenance Snags

- 0/ Fernox into UCR radiator

Objectives set

Who

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Area of Activity Outreach – Trish Bonnett 5 March 2018

Activity since last PPC meeting

Outreach

- Hosted the CTH unity service in our church. Supported by the choir it was a very special occasion and well attended by many of the churches.
- Hosted the CTH Ash Wednesday lunch. Approx 70 people attended and after expenses £239 was raised for Christian Aid and the Tradecraft stall took £113. It was a happy and joyful occasion and did not really feel like a day of fast as the soup was so good!
- Supporting a parishioner at various hospital appointments.
- Fr Andrew has been visiting parishioners who are not well and giving them the sacraments. I have been driving him there and back. Fr Michael continues to do a programme of visiting parishioners which he logs on the parish database.
- Supported parishioner and wife to get to Mass when he was not able to drive.
- Delivered Bethany club sessions on Old People's home for 4 year olds and also showed them the Syro-Phoenician woman.
- Visited Margaret Connolly and Peter Robbins in hospital.
- Ann Adams currently able to get to Mass. Took Fr Euloge to Lino and Ann Connetta's for the sacraments. Fr E is taking him communion regularly.
- Sending newsletter and other items to 4 parishioners who are housebound or in care.
- Support for the Glenholmes continued until Gill died. Supported them at the reception of the body and the funeral.
- Met with Mike Kershaw from Holy Saviour to discuss joint ecumenical healing services. He will be the lead on this and talk to the other churches with me in support.

Proclaim 15 projects

- Comeback prayer group did have 31 members but one has now died and the other is poorly so can no longer help so need to recruit two more people

Other tasks

Health and Safety

Inspection took place on January 8th and was most successful with the parish deemed as one of the safest in the Diocese. Many thanks to John Chamberlain for all he did to prepare the parish for the inspection.

Liturgy

- Viscount organs have sent their quote and John Chamberlain and I will be putting together the proposal to submit to the Diocese this Thursday. David Wilson has been very helpful with suggestions for how best to do this.
- Bridie trained another young person as a young reader who will start with the next rota.
- Crib was taken down on the feast of the presentation of the Lord. Grateful thanks to all those who participated.
- Had a meeting to look at the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. Only 5 attended but Mary Deuchar was most helpful with a clear plan of what could be done. This to be shared with the parish and possibly the school also.
- Series of services being delivered during Lent. Also Ann Milner has created a series of Lent meditations which are being shown on Mondays every hour from 2-6pm. Thanks to Mike Eltringham for making the equipment secure in the church.

Other support

Reconciliation programme

Helped Susanna on the morning of the first reconciliation by performing the Syro-Phoenician woman for them. Have also done this for Teresa Hyde's first communion group.

- **Side Chapel project** is moving on nicely and we are putting together the proposal for the Diocese to approve. Chris Fanning has been getting quotations for the stain glass window removal to the side chapel. The parish will fund this part of the project.
- **Lourdes Pilgrimage** had a meeting in January and a number of the pilgrims attended. We are now okay for numbers so Fr Tom can go for free.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives completed from last report	Who
Objectives set	Who
Letter to non attenders to be sent in September (not done yet)	TB/ME

Area of Activity Safeguarding – Trish Bonnett Jan 2018**Activity since last PPC meeting**

The number of outstanding DBS checks has been reduced considerably thanks to the support of everyone returning their paperwork and the untiring work of Jackie Krobo to get them through. There are still some outstanding but I am getting to these as soon as possible. At the point that I have caught up on the back log I will show Maria exactly what is needed to be done on the admin front.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Ensure the parish is much more aware of our commitment to Safeguarding

Objectives completed from last report**Who****Objectives set****Who**

Continue to complete the current round of DBS checks.

TB

Initiate checks on those who have joined the children's liturgy team.

TB / MG

Area of Activity

Sacramental Preparation – Susanna Hawksley

Activity since last PPC meeting

Baptism Course

The baptism preparation course due to be held over Sunday 25th February and Sunday 4th March has eight couples signed up thus far – with a possible ninth in the pipeline. I will take this opportunity to remind to priests baptising children to make sure Trish has the paperwork in advance, to produce the certificate. Thank you!

Marriage Preparation

The course which took place on 17th February was very well attended – 20 couples took part and it went very well. My thanks go to Jonathan and Lucy (and Florence) Bonnett for facilitating and Trish for the heavy lifting. We are organising another for around November.

First Holy Communion

Preparation for the sacrament of Holy Communion has begun, with a parents' discussion evening. It is always interesting to hear what meaning Holy Communion has for the parents.

This year's group has grown steadily over the months in which the course has been running, with slow take-up and families moving into the parish and joining. The numbers now stand at 37 families; it was with this in mind that I sounded parents out about having the celebration of the sacrament on two separate Sundays. The heat, the comfort and the length of the Mass are factors to be considered. I have asked parents to sign up for either Sunday 10th June or Sunday 17th June. If we get enough families for another Mass, we will go ahead. If we don't, then it is going to be tight! Watch this space.

Confirmation

The decision to run the Youth Alpha Series has proved to be a success. We get really good attendance and I receive regular emails from parents telling me that the candidates are enjoying the course. This is very uplifting! My catechists are wonderful and the parents are very supportive. For one of the sessions we are having Liz Wills to run a Caritas 'Love In Action' session and for one we will be having Sr Theodora Hawksley CJ to run a session on 'Making Good Decisions' (i.e. discernment). The date of the Confirmation itself is Sunday 8th July at 5pm Mass.

RCIA

We are approaching the baptism, at the Easter Vigil, of Olga Maurello; please keep her in your prayers. Also at the Vigil we will be confirming Daniela D'Amico. Iris Hughes is asking to be received but that will happen at a later date – probably Pentecost. I have a new young adult asking for Confirmation preparation, attending for the first time this week (21st February).

The decision to run a year-round, lectionary based catechumenate is proving to be a good

one; it means that there is less pressure on people taking part and it helps to inculcate a sense of the year's liturgical shape, not to mention the fact that Scripture is always a good place to start. It also helps with encouraging people to join when they are ready and not at an arbitrary 'start' date. I get some non-Catholic parents from the First Holy Communion course – and occasionally the Baptism course – who are drawn to enquire about RCIA.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Objectives set	Who

Area of Activity Website March 2018 – Andrew Thielke

Activity since last PPC meeting
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<p>Andrew Thielke is managing most updates to the website now.</p> <p>Justice and Peace & Live Simply pages reorganised since last meeting. They share a page for general information and the petitions page is now separate.</p> <p>Trish and Andrew created a document with instructions for reformatting petition and call-to-action emails so that the content is suitable for including on the parish website.</p>

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed
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<p>The Recycling information and reporting is distributed on different pages (and one duplicate has been removed) and could be easier to find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Recycling in the parish” page only has a report from 2016• “Justice & Peace and Live Simply” has lots of information about the recycling schemes that are in place in the parish

Objectives completed from last report	Who
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Update pages following discussions with J&P and Live Simply	AT
Andrew will take over this report from now on.	AT

Objectives set	Who
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Review the organisation of the recycling information with the Live Simply group so that it is easier to find on the website	AT
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Area of Activity YOUTH	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>Son Seekers name and logo were successfully launched on Children's mass on 7th of January 18'.</p> <p>The first Son Seekers Sunday event was originally planned for the 27th of January, however due to insufficient numbers of helpers it was rescheduled for the 22nd of April 2018 (4th Sunday of Easter).</p> <p>Now we have: Son Seeker Facebook Group Helen Bailey has created an FB Group for Son Seekers in the hope that it will engage with parents more and give us another platform to increase interest: https://www.facebook.com/groups/315185465639870/</p> <p>The last Youth Ministry Funday Sunday took place on the 18th of February (1st Sunday in Lent) and it as another great success with 57 children attended the event.</p> <p>We had a great pleasure to host Rebekah Curran from The Diocese of Westminster Youth Ministry team. Rebekah helped us throughout the event and gave us an invaluable feedback afterwards.</p> <p>Youth Ministry coming up trainings:</p> <p>1. First Aid training which will take place on Saturday the 17th March 18' at Our Lady school at 10am. 10 people from our parish are expected to participate and there are still two spaces available.</p> <p>2. Suicide Prevention training on the 28th July 18' at 1pm in our church hall, so far 10 people from our parish have confirmed their attendance. The training is organised by Hitchin Youth Forum and there are 30 places available in total.</p>	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Objectives set	Who
	TP