

Pastoral Parish Council Reports May 2018

Area of Activity	
Our Lady's Bereavement Team Antonietta Tinney	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>The annual service of Prayers and Reflection for the bereaved families of our Parish, will be held on 6th July at 7.30pm.</p> <p>The team will meet in June to prepare a programme.</p> <p>An invitation letter will be sent to families bereaved in the last year.</p>	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
<p>Every so often we receive thank- you notes from parishioners who have attended our services and appreciated them. This encourages us to keep the team going.</p> <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 Mike Edwards	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting on Human Trafficking was held on 1st May at Our Lady's and was organised by Caritas Westminster • A Herts Domestic Abuse Consultation will be held on 10th May at Ware Priory • Data Consent forms have been sent by CTH to those who represent their Churches • Christian Aid Week is from 13th to 19th May. • The Pentecost Party in the Square organised by CTH will be on Sunday 20th May at 11.30 until 4pm. <p>There will be a service at the beginning and then stalls, food and fun etc during the afternoon to show what the churches are doing. Everything will be free. The Son Seekers are providing a craft stall for youngsters to make something of a Christian nature to take home. All our brilliant cake makers are asked if they wouldn't mind making some small cakes which can be taken down on the day. There will be a cake stall where people will be given cakes. There will also be a free BBQ. Some of our First Aiders will be on duty during the afternoon. It should be a good event so please come if you can and bring children and grand children!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the 23rd March Trish, Susanna and I went on a 1 day Suicide Prevention Course in Potters Bar. It was very good, in fact much better than we all thought it might be. It was a shock to hear that there are well over 6,000 suicides each year more than twice the number of road traffic fatalities. Three times as many men are involved as women and the greatest age group is in mid-life. Certain jobs are more prone e.g. farmers and vets. It is easy to think that there is nothing anyone can do about it but the leader said you cannot cause a person to commit suicide by putting the idea into their heads by deliberately talking to them about it. In fact it will often help them to release their pent-up feelings about it and their problems in life. 	
Forthcoming Events	
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Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
The Next CTH Meeting is Wednesday 23rd May	

Objectives set	Who

Area of Activity – Finance Report David Wilson

Activity since last PPC meeting

Annual Financial Return (AFR)

The AFR for 2017 has cleared the Finance Office at the Diocese and is now with the Auditors. To date, there have been just a small number of queries, which we have been able to answer satisfactorily, and the End of Year figures, as reported, remain unchanged.

Parish Accounts

The 2018 Parish Accounts for the year through to the end of March show a small operating surplus of £931 against a forecast annual operating deficit of £3,754 and a forecast overall annual deficit of £42,254

Offertory Income

Offertory Income remains surprisingly high with the overall income for 2017 (£119,788) being 97% of the 2014 post Campaign figure (£123,495). As would be expected, Standing Order income is particularly consistent (99%) and, whilst there has been a noticeable fall-off in Envelope income (88%), this has been compensated for by an increase in Loose Plate income (109%). A campaign targeted at new Parishioners will take place later this year.

Parish (External) Audit

The Parish has NOT been included in the Diocesan External Audit Schedule for 2018.

Gift Aid Tax Rebate Claim

Work has started on putting together the Gift Aid Tax Rebate Claim for the Financial Year 2017/2018.

Planned Giving Envelopes

With thanks to Trish for delivering those that were not collected, the issue of boxes of Planned Giving Envelopes for this Financial Year has been completed.

Parish Projects

The Finance Committee gave its support to the now successful bid for financial approval from the Diocese of the Organ Replacement project and continues to help the Project Team, which is putting together the bid for the Side Chapel project.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

The Finance Committee are looking at what, if anything, needs to be done to provide appropriate protection to personal data contained in the Parish financial records in order to comply with the GDPR updates to Data Protection legislation, the provisions of which come into effect in the UK on 25 May 2018.

David Wilson
On Behalf of Finance Committee

Area of Activity Health and Safety Richard Bradford

Activity since last PPC meeting

Continued working through resolving minor observations from the last Precision report.

Maddie Biggins, who has been doing the weekly and monthly checks on the fire equipment/ trip switches/ fridge temps etc, has finished her stint for the Duke of Edinburgh. We plan to request that Fr Euloge resume these duties.

Objectives set	Who
Further Emergency Evacuation practices for the Church and Hall will take place	JC

during 2018.	
Request Fr Euloge resume weekly / monthly checks.	RB

Area of Activity Inter-Faith Relations Deolinda Eltringham	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>Inter-Faith St. Alban is organised 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) – one of the better attended talks.</p> <p>The last NHIFF took place last Wednesday evening (9/05/2018), the meeting was poorly attended, we heard from two speakers on the work of the "Crown Prosecution Service" and in particular their focus on dealing with "Hate Crimes". It is hoped to have a local Hate Crime Conference at some point in the future to offer training to local community representatives of the workings of the CPS and dealing with Hate Crime issues in communities.</p> <p>The Interfaith contribution to the Quaker's Peace Garden has arrived, the multi-coloured picnic table made of recycled plastics, and once assembled, a ceremony will be planned and open to local people to attend for the official gifting and placing of the commemorative plaque. It would be good to have many parish representatives present. Date will be fixed at a later meeting.</p> <p>The NHIFF is promoting an evening of music and an historical multi faith theatre play by the Khayaal Theater Company, on Saturday 7th July from 6pm to 7:30pm at the Wilshire Dacre School, Hitchin. Tickets are £5 each, and all proceeds go for the local Foodbank support. Fr. Tom has some 25 tickets for sale. Posters will be added to the notices.</p> <p>The next Herts Inter Faith Forum will be on Tuesday 5th at Hatfield Fire Station, Sharing their experiences of working in the community will be: Christine Wyard, Project Director, ASCEND (All Saints Church Centre) & Jeremy Kelley, the Director of South Hill Centre.</p> <p>Westminster Interfaith has organised its 33rd Annual Multi Faith pilgrimage to be on Saturday 23rd June 2018, this year it is focused around the East End of London, Tower Hamlets, in part linked to the 70th anniversary of the arrival of the "Empire Windrush" generation. A notice will go up on the notice board, and interested people can register.</p> <p>Of interest:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Iran Book Prize</i></p> <p>Professor Klaus von Stosch, a German theologian at the University of Paderborn, won the Islamic Republic's "World Award for Book of the Year" from Iranian President Hassan Rouhani for his work on Islam. "The Challenge of Islam: Christian Approaches" (<i>"Herausforderung Islam: Christliche Annäherungen"</i>) focuses on how Islam can be valued from a Christian point of view. He is the first Christian theologian to win the prize since its inception in 1993.</p> <p>Von Stosch said, "I am particularly happy that this award shows that Muslims feel accurately understood through my book and how it presents Islam. It encourages me to continue my work building bridges between Christians and Muslims." He also commented that the prize encouraged people who support an emancipated, humanitarian and modern understanding of Islam.</p> <p>See more here: http://www.dw.com/en/german-theologian-klaus-von-stosch-receives-irans-most-important-book-prize/a-42509280</p>	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Objectives set	Who
	DME

Area of Activity Justice & Peace Deolinda Eltringham**Activity since last PPC meeting**

Michael and I took part in the **Westminster Justice & Peace commission** organised **European Pilgrimage** from the 2nd to 11th April 2018 by coach. Calling at: Calais, Brussels, Strasbourg, Taizé, Assisi, Rome, and Geneva. The trip went very well, and all that took part felt we gained, learnt much from all our experiences. Currently a report booklet is being put together, to help us share them. While we visited Taizé I found out that they had hosted a weekend group of Christians and Muslims last August, and are planning another "Weekend of friendship between young Christians and Muslims" for 5 – 8th July 2018. http://www.taize.fr/en_article21977.html

Also: **Reflection week for 18-35 year-olds** - organised in Taizé, **19 - 26 August 2018**, reserved for 18-35 year-olds. All in this age-range - students, volunteers, job-seekers, those who are working - are invited. This could be beneficial to parishioners of the right age group. http://www.taize.fr/en_article19883.html

The NJ&PN AGM & open networking day was on Sat. 12 May 2018, we marked the 40th Anniversary. For me who have only been involved in the last 8 years or so, it was interesting to hear about the history of J&P in the UK, and where it stands at present.

Pax Christi AGM is due on Sat. 2nd June in Nottingham, with speakers on Drone Warfare today.

Thursday 14 June, Birmingham: "A Future for All... Implementing the Christian imperative to care for our World" (Eco Church conference) – anyone from the LiveSimply group interested to attend? I can't as it is a week day. <http://centralenglandquakers.org.uk/events/a-future-for-all/>

Westminster J&P, Caritas & CAFOD have organised for Friday the 15th June, during Refugee Week, a service at Westminster Cathedral at 6:30pm around the *Lampedusa Cross* on the theme of *Share the Journey* – poster available.

ANNUAL JUSTICE & PEACE CONFERENCE (20th—22nd July 2018) at the Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick, Derbyshire – with the theme: **'In the Shelter of Each Other the People Live'** – last PPC I asked: can we try a different approach this year? Have any parish families been approached? I have handed out 10 leaflets with application forms. I am only aware that Klazina Hoffman is going with us. Cheaper booking until 18th May, but still be available afterwards, electronic forms available. This year, Fr Tom is due to attend part of the conference.

On the 7th July 2017, the long-sought, multilaterally negotiated "*Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)*" was overwhelmingly adopted at the UN. So far 122 states/countries voted in favour with just one against. 50 signed on the first day, and the others are in the process of ratifying the treaty, which opened for signatures on 20/09/2017 and remains open for all states to sign and ratify when ready. The UK has not signed, and has been very quiet about the treaty. ICAN who won the Nobel Peace prize in 2017 for all their efforts over that year campaigning for the abolition of these weapons of mass destruction, has started a campaign of lobbying our MPs, especially as the costs are increasing rapidly and the army is claiming a funding big shortfall.

Pope Francis has over his pontificate pointed out that funds wasted on weapons are taken from the mouths of the hungry and the poor, is to visit the World Council of Churches - The visit of Pope Francis on 21 June will be a centrepiece of the ecumenical commemoration of the WCC's 70th anniversary. The theme: *Ecumenical Pilgrimage - Walking, Praying and Working Together*. It is believed that Pope Francis will use the occasion to encourage all Christian faiths to work together and support and encourage the support for the "*Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*".

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Most welcome!

Objectives set**Who**

DME

Area of Activity Liturgy Report - FR. Tom

Activity since last PPC meeting

Mary Deuchar was welcomed as a member of the Liturgy Committee noting her invaluable contribution to the liturgical life of the parish.

Lent & Easter Reflection

Service of reconciliation - it is proposed to have a day-time / mid-afternoon as well as an evening act of reconciliation to widen the opportunity for this sacrament. Fr Tom will offer to go to Our Ladys School to offer this service.

Palm Sunday –

1. Congregation gather in the parish garden for blessing of Palms 5 minutes before Mass starts.
2. Encourage congregation to gatherer around celebrant to make best use of speakers
3. Narrator of the Gospel should be a different reader than the previous readings.
4. Readers prepare for and check the Passion readings – to ensure that they proclaim the Word with confidence.

Maundy Thursday - This liturgy went very well. Priest on the Sanctuary to have their feet washed

Good Friday – this was a very powerful day.

1. Morning Prayer was well attended.
2. Many parishioners took part in the Walk of Witness
3. Live streaming of the Passion at Trafalgar Square received many positive comments
4. 3.00pm service went well – however the veneration procession is still too slow
5. Stations of the Cross – excellent parish engagement provided a powerful and moving experience for all.

Easter Vigil – a truly celebratory liturgy.

1. Proposal that Easter Services leaflet give approximate timings for each of the liturgies.
2. Offers of a lift home after the services be made.

Easter Sunday – both 8.30 and 10.30 Masses were very full.

Ministries

Eucharistic Minister

1. Many EM's at Easter services did not respond to email requests. A personal invitation to be made in future.

Readers: There will be a Reader training session in the autumn.

Music - music over the Lent and Easter period was excellent.

Servers

1. Servers should not walk in front of the lectern during the proclamation of the Word.
2. At intercessions – reader and server should approach altar together and bow before book placed on altar.

Other Matters

1. **Our Lady School** will lead 10.30 Mass for **8th July**.

2. **EM's morning refectio**n – 8th December starting with 10.00 Mass – shared lunch at 1.00pm.
3. **Children's Liturgy** – needs more Assistants.
4. **Confiteor Dei** – young people do not know key prayers e.g. Confiteor, Creed.
5. **Eucharist** preparatory course to be arranged leading up to Corpus Christi.
6. **Eucharistic Congress Liverpool** – 4 members of the parish will be attending.

Pentecost – 2018 One person will be received into the Church at the 10.30 Mass.

Area of Activity LiveSimply - Ann Milner

Activity since last PPC meeting

***livesimply* Award Certificate of Thanks:** this has been given to the parish to mark five years since we achieved livesimply status and to celebrate our ongoing commitment. Evidence of our ongoing actions since being given the award had to be submitted to qualify for this Certificate. Well done parish!

Ethics and Action – What can we do? This series of webinars has finished & AMM attended most of them. They were recorded and the recordings are being uploaded to the internet over the course of the Summer. The link to access them (so far 3 webinars are available) has been circulated. The next series of webinars starts on September 5th.

Livesimply Facebook page continues to provide useful information and discussion opportunities

Earth Day was celebrated on 22nd April by the livesimply team organising a litter pick around Ransom's Rec. Unlike last year when we retrieved a bicycle frame from the river, not very much litter was found. In addition a beautiful, playful **Earth Day Service** was conducted by Fr Tom.

Peace Talk: One of the livesimply team delivered a 10 minute talk about Peace on behalf of Pax Christi recently at 'Social Justice and the Common Good', an event organised jointly by the two Southwark dioceses, Anglican and Roman Catholic.

CAFOD Share the Journey Campaign: A walking pilgrimage is being organised around the London Outer Orbital Path (the LOOP) in support of this CAFOD campaign. The campaign aims to highlight the plight of refugees. The pilgrimage is a series of 17 day walks through parks, along rivers and canals in London and is surprisingly rural. All able-bodied members of the Pastoral Council are encouraged to participate.

CAFOD Area Co-Ordinator Role: A member of the livesimply team has been invited to take on this new CAFOD voluntary role which entails setting up a communication network to facilitate volunteers across several parishes being able to meet, share information and experience and support one another.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Reaching Out to local 'Eco' Groups: TBC

Parish Garden: more wild flower areas to be planted & noticeboard to be created

Objectives set	Who
Design artwork for display board	AMM
Organise livesimply Coffee Morning on 27 th May & 10 th June	LS Team
Organise LOOP Share the Journey Pilgrimage 15 th May to 23 rd June	AMM
Contribute livesimply tips	LS Team
Carry out a review of livesimply team activities and objectives	LS Team

Area of Activity Maintenance John Scott**Activity since last PPC meeting****Summary**

Never a dull moment

Credit - as always - to all volunteers -
esp. Mike , Philippe , JVC

Activity since report of March 2018**Imminent/In-hand**

0/ Fr.Tom Bedroom door coat hanger
0/ Parish Ho. Kitchen Ceiling woes...
0/ Hinge on Link door
0/ LED flood light over the front steps to the church (js/OliverRussell)

**### ----- snags addressed -----#**

0305_1/ replace PIR light over ScoutHut door (jvc)
0305_2/ fixup grey bin hinge with champagne cork (jvc)
0305_3/ Cheryl's PC cabling - now H&S compliant (jvc)
2904_1/ clear all gutters - minor repairs (pj, me, jvc , js)
2804_3/ keyswitch for hall-stage-lights (me)
2804_2/ striplight in kitchen (me & pj)
2804_1/ cupboard in servers sacristy (jvc)
0904_1/ two more busted Fluorescent tube in hall (me&js)
2703_1/ another lo-power link lights/bulbs (js&PJ)
2403_1/ protect vulnerable, commercially installed wi-fi (JVC)
2303_1/ replace biohazard filters in church radiators (js&me)
2003_1/ D-light in vestibule outside hall loos (js&jvc)
1203_1/ replace Fluorescent tube light in hall (js&ME)
1003_2/ Fr.M Gutter leaking (JS&PJ)
1003_1/ confirm PIR Lamp outside LCR working correctly (JS&PJ)
0903_1/ repair busted fan-assist-radiator in church (ME, JS)
0503_2/ ruggedize external loudspeakers for PalmSunday (ME, JS)
0503_1/ medium term fix for scout hut pipe burst (js & jvc)
0403_1/ more music stands - all busted stands claimed fixed (js)
0303_1/ emergency repair for scout hut pipe burst (js & PJ)
2802_1/ two music stands - overenthusiastically adjusted (js)
2702_1/ FrM. bathroom extractor (MPBuild)

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed**Outstanding Maintenance Snags**

0/ Fernox into UCR radiator

Objectives set**Who****Area of Activity Outreach – Trish Bonnett 14th May 2018****Activity since last PPC meeting****Outreach**

- Supported Frances Cleaver plan Roy's funeral.
- Supporting a number of parishioners, parents and teachers from the school.
- Visits to Margaret Connolly in Ware and support to her family.

- Support to Robbins family for the funeral and wake and coffee morning for St Elizabeth's.
- Took Fr Andrew and Susanna to visit John Murfet.
- Taking communion to Monica Gordon in Milford Lodge
- Meeting with Church of England Archbishops Council – very interesting encounter with CTH executive members.
- Supporting Brenda Walsh with an NHS issue.

Proclaim 15 projects

- Comeback prayer group now up to full membership and need to supply packs to a few more parishioners.

Other tasks

- **Caritas Slaves on our Doorstep** supported Liz with this event.

Liturgy

- With the help of Mary Deuchar and a variety of parishioners created and delivered the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday
- Proposal for organ compiled with the help of John Chamberlain, revised and eventually was sent by Fr Tom to Paolo and approval was received and order was placed.
- Supported Reconciliation service
- Prepared and supported liturgy for Holy Week, thanks to Susanna for her support on Maundy Thursday.
- Created prayer book for May to celebrate Our Lady.

Other support

- **Side Chapel project** proposal is almost complete. Slight delay whilst sorting suppliers and costs for the stained glass windows but almost there now.
- **Spot the Suicide Course** attended with Mike Edwards and Susanna
- **GDPR** looked at documents we need to complete and have booked onto training on 18th May with Cheryl and John Chamberlain. The task looks manageable but more detailed briefing will be given after the training.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives completed from last report

Who

Objectives set

Who

Area of Activity

Sacramental Preparation - Susanna Hawksley

Activity since last PPC meeting

Baptism

I am beginning to get enquiries for baptism preparation again. Many parents speak to a priest about it after Mass and because the priests are busy and they have been caught on the hop, the message doesn't always get to me. I have decided, therefore, to put up a permanent 'interest list' in the church porch. When parents ask any priest or colleague about baptism preparation, they should direct the parent to the list to sign up; that way I have a more accurate picture of what demand is.

First Holy Communion

We are almost at the end of our preparation, having one more session to complete. Teresa Hyde has been assiduous in ensuring that children from non Catholic schools and those with special needs have had high quality catechesis; I am so grateful. The Mass takes place on June 10th at 2pm. We have very high numbers this year, so logistics will be a worry but Trish has assured me that she will police things safely; I am also very grateful to her!

Confirmation

We are nearing the end of the Confirmation course, too, with one session left to complete. The candidates have been following the Youth Alpha programme with add-ins. We are grateful to Elizabeth Wills for coming in with a partner from Caritas to run a mini 'Love In Action' for one session and to Theodora Hawksley CJ, who helped us out with a session on discernment, last week.

I have learned a good deal this year, especially from the candidates themselves. It has become increasingly borne in on me that young people need formation in discernment. They don't get this at school and so the privilege falls to us, their parish, to educate them in this way. I will be using some of my less 'hands on' time this summer to think carefully about how this might be done.

Marriage Preparation

Our next date is booked for Saturday 17th November. Jonathan and Lucy Bonnett will facilitate, as usual. We always get positive feedback from these days and I'm very happy to leave this catechesis in their capable hands.

RCIA

Olga Maurello was baptised and Daniella D'Amico confirmed, at the Easter vigil this year. Olga is now in the period of 'Mystagogia' – the handing on of the mysteries. I also have Iris Hughes asking to be received into the Church and Niamh Sweeney asking for the sacrament of Confirmation. We hope to do this at Pentecost.

Zoe Lavery, who helps with RCIA catechesis has just started a course on RCIA at Maryvale, which is marvellous news for our parish.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Baptism interest board
Discernment about discernment

Area of Activity Safeguarding – Trish Bonnett May 2018	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
Most of the outstanding DBS checks have been complete and will get to the others asap. Marie will be training to support the paperwork and her DBS has been completed to reflect this.	
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 Website May 2018 – Andrew Thaelke	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
Fairtrade week and Traidcraft stall news item in March. Andrew updated the recycling information pages with revised material from Deolinda. Trish made some updates to the Youth Ministry pages whilst Andrew was away on holiday.	
Objectives completed from last report	Who
Revised the recycling information and pages	AT

Area of Activity YOUTH - Teresa Pernak	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
<p>1. First Aid Training for Youth Ministry team took place on the 17th of March at Our Lady School.</p> <p>2. 'Son Seekers' facebook page has been updated. Thanks to Helen Bailey and Andrew Thaelke for taking care of it.</p> <p>3. Son Seekers had another very successful event held on the 22nd of April (4th Sunday for Easter) with 39 children attended. The atmosphere was joyful and relaxed. Children were engaged in the liturgy 'Jesus the Good Shepherd' and truly enjoyed the activities and games prepared by our Youth Ministry team.</p> <p>Upcoming events:</p> <p>1. Pentecost fair on 20th of May – another Funday Sunday – preparations to the event are in progress.</p>	