

Area of Activity	
Our Lady's Bereavement Team (Antonietta Tinney)	
Activity since last PPC meeting	
The Team has not met since January 2019. The next meeting will be on 29 th May to plan the annual service of Prayers and Reflection for the bereaved families of our Parish, which will be held on 28 th June at 7.30pm. An invitation letter will be sent to families bereaved in the last year.	
Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
It is important to have regular meetings. Our aim is to have a strong team for supporting parishioners in need of our "ministry".	
Objectives set	Who
-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

Chairs Report to the Parish Council.

8th May 2019

Progress on the New Build Community Hall

(The working title for this project is Hitchin Community Hall, for grant reason)

The name can be changed as we near the end of the build.

Progress is being made with this project.

With the help of the Diocese Grant Team we have applied for a £10,000.00 lottery grant in order to complete a building design feasibility with the Architect appointed for us by the Diocese, Colin Smart of Kyle Smart Associates.

To this end appointments are being made to see the design of other buildings completed by this Architect.

So far we have visited Fr John Cunningham at Waltham Cross. His eight year old community hall was very thoughtfully designed but much bigger than our proposed Building. But had good ideas and promoted questions that we may meet as we go forward.

More visits are proposed.

The team has been active in visiting some present stake holders on site who use our property for their activities, for their views and ideas for the new build.

Bethany Club
Tap dancing
Bridge Club
Warm up, feed up club.
Scouts and Guide leaders.

We will be visiting the Food Bank team soon.

All visits are being documented some with photos for the future grant application packs.

We are at present completing one for North Herts District Council for a grant of £50,000.

There will be a meeting of the building Team to be held on the 14th May at 7.30pm in the LCR.

Area of Activity Report on Ecumenism for Parish Council

- The Good Friday Walk of Witness was very well attended and the Music provided by the Zeo Church was excellent. They got everyone involved and singing with great gusto. The Hot Cross buns handed out by our church members went down very well too.
- The presentation of John Bunyan's life and his seminal work 'A Pilgrim's Progress' at the Walsworth Road Baptist Church was very enjoyable and informative. It was great to celebrate the life and work of such a charismatic preacher who preached in towns and villages in our area including at Tilehouse Street Baptist Church around 350 years ago.

Activity since last PPC meeting

- I believe The Best Before Cafe started in Hitchin. It is called the Hitchin Food Rescue Hub. Volunteers were asked to go to a meeting at the Riot Lounge 6 Sun Street on 7th March. Charmaine Ball from Our Lady's is involved. There are over 40 volunteers so far have shown interest.
- The Lent House Groups took place starting on 10th March.

Forthcoming Events

- 12th to 18th May Christian Aid Week
- Sun 8th or 15th Dec 4.00 pm Carols in the Market Place
- It has been suggested that the CTH hold a joint thanksgiving celebration for the years the churches have all been active in the town during 2019. It will probably be at St Mary's.
- Ideas are asked to help broaden the age range of the members of CTH.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives set	Who

Area of Activity – Finance Report

Activity since last PPC meeting

Parish Accounts for 2018

The Parish Accounts for 2018 have been consolidated with the other Diocese accounts and passed to the External Auditors for scrutiny. The Accounts for a number of Parishes have been called forward for review but, so far, the Hitchin Accounts have not been included.

Parish Accounts for 2019

The Parish Accounts for the 4 months through to the end of April 2019 show a significant operating deficit (£13,271) some of which is due to payment of accrued travel and housekeeping costs from 2018 and some of which is due to essential maintenance and repair work to the Bell Tower.

Parish Budget 2019

A further review of the Parish Budget for 2019 is in hand to take account of increased in-year operating costs and costs which have rolled over from 2018 offset against any increase in income from the Offertory Appeal. As it stands, we are still looking at a significant (£60K) cumulative deficit over the 5-year outlook period and it will be necessary to actively manage this deficit.

Parish Offertory Appeal

The planned Parish Offertory Appeal was carried out over the weekends of 9/10 March and 16/17 March 2019. Generally speaking, the Appeal was well-received and a number of parishioners signed-up to make their offerings by Envelope or Standing Order, but it is too soon to calculate if there has been any noticeable increase in Offertory income.

Planned Giving Envelopes

Sets of Planned Giving Envelopes for this Financial Year (2019/2020) were issued at the end of March with no known data breaches !!!

Parish Projects

The Finance Committee has continued to support and provide advice on the Parish Projects that are in planning or progress.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives set

Update Long Term Maintenance Plan
Update and implement Parish Asset Register

Who

FC ++
FC ++

Area of Activity GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations – Trish Bonnett May 2019

Activity since last PPC meeting

- Update training attended with John Chamberlain and Cheryl Saunders.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

- Audit of database can take place over a period of time. It is a question of ensuring people update their details. The plan will be to check via email and then in those attending church and then those who have not checked to be written to.
- Website needs to be checked for any personal addresses and permission sought for them to be on the website, this includes any email addresses that are in the newsletter which goes onto the website.

Objectives completed from last report

Who

Objectives set

Do audit on parish database.

Who

TB

Area of Activity Gender Diversity - As I am May 2019

Activity since last PPC meeting

Nothing new to report at this time.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed	
Pastoral objectives set in motion since last report	Who
Pastoral objectives set	Who

Health and Safety - PPC Meeting 13th May 2019 - John Chamberlain

No incidents to report.

Recommendations from the January inspection continue to be implemented –

- Nothing requiring urgent or immediate attention.

A concerned parishioner requested that the PPC consider the following suggestion;

- "That the cross used during the Walk of Witness be replaced with one of much less weight. Her professional opinion is that the weight is too great for the number and ages of those men who were carrying it. Especially since they have to hold it steady against gusts of wind when in the Square and then carry it back afterwards.

She added that the Catholics should perhaps be seen to have the biggest and heaviest but this one is too much!"

Area of Activity Inter-Faith Relations

Activity since last PPC meeting

The last NHIFF meeting was on the 20th March, I did not attend it as I was away, the meeting was poorly attended, and Fr. Tom may be able to fill us in if necessary.

The coming NHIFF is to take place on Wednesday (09/01/2019), so no information is available.

The Multi Community Fund Raiser Event was on Sat 6 April, the co-sponsor was NHDC and was fairly well attended, and very much enjoyed by those who did so. I have no information on how much was raised for the two charities nominated (Food Bank and county bereaved school children)

The **Stort Interfaith Forum** has extended an open invitation to an evening talk by author Janet Fleming Rose, she will speak about her recently published book *"A Seed in Your Heart - A Baha'i perspective on race unity"* on Thursday 16 May at the Windhill Churches' Centre, Bishop's Stortford.

The last **Herts Inter Faith Forum** was on the 5th March 2019. Dr Diana Forrest from Broxbourne gave a talk on the work of the Churches in Broxbourne setting up a resource with eight beds and a facility for

providing a hot meal and breakfast for the homeless. There were 300 volunteers to help with the setup and operation, with the Council screening homeless applicants. The facility has been used by a maximum of six so far (indicating how good Broxbourne is).

Similar schemes were reported from Watford, Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield.

A problem was highlighted, **the desire to have a Multi Faith Leaders list for the County:** The problem of providing the names of Faith Leaders for Hertfordshire was discussed and a number of names suggested so far:

Vinay Janna – Hindu, Hare Krishna (Already on List)

Bishop Richard Atkinson (Bishop of Bedford in the Diocese of St Albans)

Ashwin Mehta – Jain in Bushey (Tushar Shah from Oshwal Centre, Potters Bar is on the list)

Mambu Singh – Sikh in Hitchin

Sri Mohan – Hindu in Watford

The next HIFF meeting is Tuesday, 4 June at the Community Meeting Room, Hatfield Fire Station.

The WHIFG has put together a set of promising public meeting, the next one is:

Tuesday 21st May - **Faith and Politics** at Hatfield Fire station

The Westminster Interfaith **34th Annual Pilgrimage for Peace** will take place on **Saturday 8th June** (Vigil of Pentecost / Shavuot) and will be in and around Wimbledon in the Borough of Merton.

Taken from Jon Dal Din of Westminster Interfaith, ... "To demonstrate the healing power of love, we saw an audio-visual of **Koolulam**, who gathered a group of 1,000 young people, representing the Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities, to sing Bob Marley's 'One love' in English, Arabic and Hebrew at midnight on the last day of Ramadan (14th June 2018) at Jerusalem's Tower of David. The uplifting and healing energy was tangible, with this hopeful song for humanity, sung in three harmonies in the heart of this ancient city of faith and conflict." https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TZzK29_V8jQ (enjoy!) other videos are also available

On Sunday, 31 March in St. Peter's Cathedral, Rabat, Morocco, Pope Francis addressed the question of what it means to be Christian in a Muslim country. (There are about 30,000 Christians (including 23,000 Catholics in this majority Muslim nation of 35 million people). Today 03/05/2019 a report is out that shows Christians to be the most persecuted people of faith in the world.

From Religions for Peace: **The Our Earth, Our Responsibility** pledge page (re: Jan report)

<https://rfp.org/connect/global-interfaith-youth-network/ourearth-ourresponsibility/>

Objectives set	Who
	DME

Area of Activity **Justice & Peace**

Activity since last PPC meeting

I attended the inaugural meeting of the Social Justice and Peace Forum Of the Diocese of Westminster with Bishops Hudson and McAleenan to discuss how the Westminster diocese can best contribute to: **Energising Young People for Justice & Peace** and to take place in parish hall of Our Lady of Victories on Saturday 16 March. There will be another meeting this summer term, but the minutes and texts from the talks given have not yet been received. The next World Youth Day/s will be in Lisbon, Portugal, the diocese is hoping for a larger representation. Those that took part last year are to be encouraged to talk about their experience to confirmation classes in the coming years. I would very much like to support the idea of including such a visit to be part of the confirmation/RCIA program in our parish.

Wed 15 May: International Conscientious Objector Day – Pax Christi will take part in the Annual event that will be held in Tavistock Square, WC1.

Sat 18 May: Pax Christi Annual General Meeting, London

Thurs 20 June: Symbolic Action planned on the White Cliffs of Dover! **People Not Walls** will hold events on the beach at Calais and on the Dover coast to demonstrate solidarity between charities working on both sides of the Channel for humanitarian treatment of migrants. Further announcements

will be issued.

Sat 22 June: “You, Me & Those Who Came Before” Inter-Faith Panel & Reflection Time: 10:30am - 1pm followed by shared lunch St. John Vianney Parish Hall N15 3QH. Realities of displacement continue to escalate in many parts of our world. As of 2017, 65.6 million individuals have been forcibly displaced worldwide. In conjunction with Refugee Week 2019, the purpose of this panel is to raise awareness of, and support for, thousands of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers trying to find a safe place to live in. This event brings to the table voices of various faith communities united in building bridges of inclusion and welcome, speaking from lived experiences and a commitment to care for our common home.

29 June 2019: The Operation Noah annual Supporters' Day will be held in Central London, with the heading of ‘**Climate Emergency: A Christian Response of Faith, Hope and Urgency**’. This is very relevant in the light of children striking from schools and Extinction Rebellion demonstrations and the recent UK Parliament statement acknowledging it.

The new Westminster Justice and Peace Fulltime Coordinator is Martha Behan, she will start on May 13th, she has been working with Caritas and the Communications office in the diocese.

The coming AGM, on Saturday 11 May 2019 will take place in London.

Tuesday 14th May - in Mrs Howard Memorial Hall, Letchworth, the Transition Town Letchworth organisation has meeting on: **How Will Climate Change Impact Letchworth?** I would suggest that the impact would be similar in Hitchin and the wider local area.

Our climate is in crisis. The pace of change is too slow. It is time to say enough - on Wed 26 June thousands of people will gather outside Westminster to tell our MPs that climate change and environmental degradation must stop. This day on massive action is being planned by CAFOD, Christian Aid, Operation Noah, and many other organisations. *Can the clergy and staff of our parish actively encourage all parishioners that can take the day off to go to London and take part in this day of action, PLEASE? I have signed-up to take part. CAFOD says at the moment, we need more people to sign up from Hitchin and Harpenden constituency.*

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Most welcome!

Objectives set

Who

DME

Liturgy report - Fr. Tom May 2019

Confirmation date – Sat 29th June 2019 – 6.00pm Mass.

Sign of Peace – there are possibilities for the sign of peace at different places during Mass – the Parish will be consulted by way of a survey.

Easter Triduum

Holy Thursday: Prayerful, spiritually uplifting – no hiccoughs

Good Friday – Stations of the Cross – was another in depth spiritual experience many found it both moving and prayerful.

Easter Vigil – This too went smoothly - singing was excellent - a worthy celebration of Joy and Praise to God.

Ministries

Eucharistic Minister 12-16 to undergo training (3 week programme).

EM's reflection will be on Saturday 22nd June following 10 am Mass

Servers – Need for more servers. Recruitment following First Communion with training in July / August. 24 servers in total. Consider recruiting servers from congregation at 5pm Mass.

Sacristy - Bernard Glenholm will be carrying out an inventory of the sacristy.

Other Matters –

Bidding Prayers – have returned to the common format of ‘Lord Hear us; Lord graciously hear

us; Lord, hear our Prayer.'

Diary Dates - 2019

First Communion – 16th June 2pm

Family welcomes w/e 22/23 June; 29/30 June. Greg not available 29/30 Jun

Parish Music plan – is finalised and placed on the parish website. OLS will attend for Education Sunday.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 11th September – 7.15 pm.

Area of Activity LiveSimply - Ann Milner

Activity since last PPC meeting

- ★ **One World Group(OWG): Coffee Mornings** held each month on 3rd Sunday. Charities supported were Garden House Hospice. In May we will be supporting Helping Herts Homeless (formerly North Herts Sanctuary). Our **Lenten Meditation** was held in March, led prayerfully by Fr Andrew. Donations for the evening were sent to Maria Skobstova House which supports migrants in Calais
- ★ **Peace Protest:** An ecumenical, peaceful gathering took place outside Westminster Abbey on 3rd May, attended by a representative from livesimply team. The aim was to protest the celebration service of thanksgiving for nuclear weapons being held inside.
- ★ **CAFOD Volunteer's Day:** This took place on 11th May in Romera House, London.and was attended by a representative of the livesimply team.. There were very interesting accounts of CAFOD's work in Uganda including advocacy work as well as projects to help bring fresh water to villages.
- ★ **Michaelmas Fair:** Planning has started for this year's fair which will be 28th September. There is a planning meeting taking place on Monday 20th May.
- ★ **Get-together of Livesimply parishes:** Arranged by Westminster J&P group, it took place on 2nd May and was attended by Fr Tom and a member of the livesimply team. About seven parishes took part, most of which were livesimply parishes. Each livesimply parish gave a short talk about how the scheme worked in their parish. It was a good opportunity for networking across parishes and for other parishes interested in the scheme to learn from others.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives set/Planned Activities

Campaigns: Identify campaigns to promote within the parish

Who

LS Team

Parish Grounds: Plant extra colour in parish grounds

Grdn Team

Labrynth to be designed and planned

Grdn Team

Livesimply Tips: More tips to end of 2019 to be sent to Cheryl.

LS Team

Next Meetings: Next **OWLS** meeting will be Monday 8th July at 18:30

LS Team

Michaelmas Fair Planning Meeting 20th May at 19:00.

Parish

Area of Activity Maintenance

Activity since last PPC meeting

Credit - to all volunteers - especially JVC who did the bulk of this report's fixes .

Couple of commercial jobs this time :

Alan Swain & subcons : overdue repaint of belltower
woodwork - including minor repairs and spectacular
scaffolding.

SGGemmell Ltd. : resolve dishwasher woes.



Church door closer mechanism < see below > may require commercial work

2704_3/ door closer adjustment Fr.Andrew (jvc)

2704_2/ ceiling lamps for Fr.Andrew (jvc)

2704_1/ microphone socket in hall (jvc)

2004_1/ vacuum cleaner fix something else (jvc)

1904_1/ vacuum cleaner fix (jvc)

0904_2/ dishwasher did not work as expected USER ERROR (S.G.Gemmell)
 0804_1/ fix cable to sound channel 11 (me) completed
 2703_1/ Red sound console switch in lighting cupboard replaced. (JVC)
 2703_2/ Fr.Andrew's scooter - replace speed control potentiometer(JVC)
 2903_1/ Bell Tower woodwork repair and repaing (Alan Swain & Roger Subcon)
 2503_1/ Grab rail in Fr. Andrew's shower(JVC)
 2503_2/ Unblock sink waste in Servers' Sacristy (JVC)
 2503_3/ Mod projector trolley - Reduced damage risk of items (JVC)
 1202_3/ laptop/interference report problem fixed (faulty video file) (JVC)
 1202_2/ dishwasher did not work as expected (Bethany) NO FAULT FOUND (JS)
 1202_1/ Four failed D-lights in toilets - replaced (JVC)
 1102_1/ build retaining wall under car-park to parish house ramp (js)
 0801_1/ un-chirrup hall smoke and heat alarms (jvc)
 0701_1/ weeping radiator valve in hall (js)

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Imminent/In-hand

0/ un-creak closer mechanisms on door between church and link (jvc & js)

Objectives set

Who

0/ obtain proposal for hall/church boiler control replacement (js)

Area of Activity Outreach – Trish Bonnett March 2019

Activity since last PPC meeting

Outreach

- Supported the funerals of Evert Fernandes, Monica Myles-Gordon, Beryl Osborne and Luke Hobson.
- Supported various parishioners with health issues and related needs. Regularly shop for one parishioner.
- Prepared for the packaging and giving out of hot cross buns at the walk of witness on Good Friday.
- Provided Bethany Club entertainment with Susanna and an evening of music for the UCM.
- Introduced new Eucharistic Ministers to parishioners to visit following Teresa Hyde's training sessions.
- Visited John Murfet with Susanna and Fr Andrew.
- I was in the Passion in Trafalgar Square and Guildford High Street. Attended by 20,000 people and seen on the internet by ¾ million people. Am now going to be in the Life of Christ in June.
- Attended Reconciliation course training with Fr Tom and Susanna and we begin to pilot the course in the parish in June.

Liturgy

- Sent out daily reflections from CAFOD during Lent. It seemed to be well received with many people commenting on the helpfulness of this initiative. Will consider doing again at Advent and subsequent Lents.
- Arranged for Stations of the Cross to be delivered after Mass on Fridays in Lent.
- Continued to prepare Benediction services
- Supported the Reconciliation services.
- Supported Mary Deuchar with development and rehearsals for the Stations of the Cross on Good Friday. It went very well and was a prayerful and peaceful service at which about 80 people attended.
- Prepared the service sheets for Priests and congregation for the Triduum
- Delivered a service of prayer in response to the terror attack in Sri Lanka. Many attended.
- Supported Sonseeker Fun Sunday
- Supported the Passover Meal.
- Hosted children's liturgy team lunch. Arranged training from Diocese for children's liturgy team including a session on teaching children to pray.

Other support

- Took Fr Andrew to hospital appointments. Picked up Fr Euloge from airport..
- Preparing job description and specification for Susanna's replacement.

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

The last course went well, with five families attending.

First Holy Communion

We are on the home stretch now, with this year's cohort. We have an opportunity for them to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation this Saturday morning and their last session of preparation will be on the 18th May. I was very pleased to see that a good few families from the programme came to the Passover Meal in Holy Week and a good few were at the Mass of the Last Supper. I do give those dates as part of the programme but leave it to parental discretion about attendance.

Confirmation

You may be aware that one of our candidates on the programme, Luke Hobson, was killed in a tragic accident, at a sports practice, just before Easter. We held a prayer service for him before the next planned Confirmation session began and several of the candidates came to his funeral. I have liaised closely with the parents of candidates most affected by Luke's accident and death, so that we are taking our best care of them in difficult circumstances.

The programme is nearly finished: we have one session left to complete. I have had some good feedback from parents about the course.

Marriage Preparation

We have just held a course for 18 couples. All went very well and we will be booking another date for October/November, depending when Jonathan and Lucy Bonnett are available. My thanks to them for a great job!

RCIA

Andrew Sheridan was confirmed at the Easter vigil. We have Liz Head to be received at Pentecost and Eric Caterer-Cave to be received then, as well, if his paperwork comes through in time. I have had other enquiries but nothing concrete has arisen from them yet. I will be advertising again, soon after Pentecost. Althea Steenberg is preparing to be received; I envisage this happening some time in the autumn.

New me

Father Tom, Trish and I met on 29th April, to discuss the job description and timing of advertising my job. We are looking to advertise as soon as details of hours and salary have been ratified by the Finance Committee and other interested parties. I have submitted my resignation.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives set	Who

Area of Activity Safeguarding – Trish Bonnett May 2019

Activity since last PPC meeting

- Maria Greene still continues to chase up information required to complete DBS checks.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives completed from last report	Who
Objectives set	Who

Area of Activity YOUTH - Teresa Pernak

Activity since last PPC meeting

Son Seekers activity from the last PPC meeting:

1. Sunday 10th March – Funday Sunday - 1st Sunday in Lent - It was a very successful event with 32 children attending and a wonderful atmosphere
2. Sunday 31st March – Funday Sunday - Mother's Day - The numbers were rather low with 16 children attending. This could have been caused by clocks changing and possibly due to the nature of the Mother's Day itself where families could have their own arrangements for this day.

Upcoming Youth Ministry events:

1. Time Trek One Day Holiday Club - Tuesday 28th May, 1-4pm at Tilehouse Street Baptist Church.

A fun afternoon of music, games, craft and Bible story for anyone in reception up to year 6. Registration is open until Sunday 19th May. The information about this event has been updated on our parish website.

2. Sunday 16th June – Funday Sunday - Father's Day & Trinity Sunday
The 16th of June is also a date of First Holy Communion sacrament, so there is an expectation that numbers will be lower than usual, but it was decided to still go ahead with the Funday.

There will not be Son Seekers events until 6th October 19' (Funday Sunday - Grandparents Day). Hopefully summertime break in youth activities will give the team a time to revitalise plans and ideas, so they will be ready for the new academic year.

30th May Older Group Youth event – has been cancelled

It was decided that due to the lack of helpers for this event and the short period of time to advertise and organised this event properly, Son Seekers would postpone it until Summer or more likely the new academic year.

Other matters arising:

There has been a suggestion made in regards to consider employing a Youth Worker who could help in further development and the way forward with Son Seekers. It is becoming clear that currently involved volunteers are extremely busy and lacking time to really commit to this work. Youth Ministry team understand that the Parish would not be able to fund this, but they are hoping there are other sources available for funding projects related to youth ministry, which could be a great motivating factor in encouraging potential candidates to apply for this position. It would be a part time position with a very clear job description, salary, time commitment etc. and put in the request to the Diocese.

Suggestions for change/improvement/issues to be addressed

Objectives set

Who

TP