

St Bartholomew's Parish Pastoral Council minutes 9 January 2024

Present: Fr Francis Antwi-Darkwah, Christine Lambert (Chair), John Lambert, Martha Moroney Lewis, Nick Dodd, Maureen Kelly, Lizzie Lizzio, Mark James, Mathew Carvalho, Jackie Tominey, Teresa Clarke, Emma Smith

Apologies: Eamon Rafferty, Peter Godwin

1. Matters arising from last meeting on 6 November

Youth initiatives – Martha had met with members of SS Alban & Stephen to ask about their involvement with youth. They do not have a Youth Club, or do activities only for the youth. They do sacramental programmes of First Communion and Confirmation. Families are expected to attend monthly “Families in Faith” sessions.

Porch – The positions of the hymn books and food pantry have been swapped, and this new arrangement is working well.

Tapestries of the Stations of the Cross – Consultation with our parishioners concerning whether to return the Stations of the Cross tapestries, which were made by parishioners and members of the Abbey, to the church, will start after Easter. The proposal is that if the view is that they are returned, the existing ones will be placed in the hall for use by catechists.

Bereavement Visitors - This is still being researched and will include discussions with Deacon Anthony in early February. The SVP are expecting one SVP member to join the training. The aim is to share a proposal with the parish in March/April 2024, and ask for volunteers from among our parishioners to join this new ministry for St Bart's.

2. Priority Groups reports

Social Justice – Report received, no additional comments

Youth - Report received, no additional comments

Building Community - Report received, no additional comments.

Spirituality - Report received, and also includes proposed activities 2024.

Ecumenism - Report received, no additional comments

Asylum seekers - Report received, no additional comments

Heating fundraising - The total is now approaching £10,000 (of a total £15,000 target over 3 years) which is a great result so far. This sum comprises personal donations, activities and events as well as sales of cards and Memorial candles. The Festive Fair & Social Event was very well supported by the parish and the local community and was enjoyed by those attending and stall holders.

There are two events coming up: The cake bake is on 28 January, and the Latin American evening has now moved to 27 April. There will be a break from heating fundraising, as the launch of the Planned Giving scheme will take place in the Spring.

3. **Maintenance** – John reported minor problems with the new heating which the contractor will sort. A safety screen is needed in the organ loft as the heater gets very hot. We will try to compost our green waste over the next year. Emergency lighting is also needed in the church, but it is not urgent. John will improve the padlock mechanism at the bottom of the organ loft stairs. He will look to see if any additional security is required for the external door to the hall. John reminded all users to check that the floor bolt on the inside of one of these doors is in place also. **Action: John**

Finance – Due to the fact that St Bart's review of its regular financial contributions is overdue, the Diocese requires a Planned Giving initiative to be undertaken in 2024. Fr Francis will lead this working with the Diocese and Finance Committee. Planned Giving will be launched in May in three stages. The Diocese will explain the process.

The aim is to ask parishioners to consider if they can increase their regular financial contributions and to encourage new donors.

4. **Priority Groups and Calendar of activities in 2024**

The PPC currently comprises 5 Priority groups plus 3 sub- groups (Asylum Seekers, St Bart's Pantry and Heating Fundraising) these all involve a wider group of parishioners. It was agreed that this was a suitable structure to continue to use in support of our Parish Mission, Evangelisation.

Social Justice and Peace group consisted of Anne Marie and Chris Bannister, Priscilla O'Reilly, Maurice Lyon and Mark James. They used to meet monthly, but have not met for some time. Mark would like to include Teresa and Peter in the group, and hopes to meet in the next few weeks. **Action: Mark to arrange**

5. **Communications**

Nick to finish the 2024 overview of proposed events linked to the liturgical calendar, by end of January 2024 so it can be approved and shared with our parishioners. The Heating Fundraising tracker in the newsletter is very successful. All groups are asked to use the noticeboards at the back of church to keep the parish informed of our activities. **Action: Nick, all**

6. **Any Other Business**

- a) **Altar Servers** – Fr Francis has spoken to the First Communion catechists and all have agreed that candidates can serve on the altar before they have received their First Holy Communion. They will be trained by Fr Francis and will gain confidence and experience before they can receive communion.
- b) **Future implications for St Bartholomew's Church** – future looking topics for St Bart's, including improving our understanding of parish Finances.
- c) **Terms of Office for PPC members** - Quote from the PPC handbook "the Chair and secretary should serve for 3 years, with the possibility of re-election or re-appointment. Other members should serve for 1-2 years, with the option of re-appointment. Members may only serve for two consecutive terms. Only one-third of Council seats are to be open for selection/election or re-election at one time." No one stood down last October, but we don't want all members to resign at once. All members are asked to think about whether they want to step down. We hope that 3-4 will step down in October, and by 2025 the remaining members will step down. All members are asked to approach parishioners that they think will be suitable for the PPC. The PPC needs to be more diverse both in ethnicity and age. Fr Francis thanked the PPC for their work. He said it is a good supportive team and he doesn't want us to step down, although he acknowledged the need to revitalise the PPC with new people and fresh ideas. **Action: All**

7 Date of next meeting: Wed 6 March 7.30 via Zoom

An additional PPC meeting will take place on Tue 12 March 8pm in the hall to discuss forward looking topics including understanding our parish finances.