

St Joseph and St Patrick's, Wemyss Bay

Parish Pastoral Council AGM

Thursday 10 November 2022

Attendees: Helen McMunn (Chair) Marcus Barry, Louise McCauley, Michael Tormey, Gillian Hall, Father Berry, Brian Blacklaw, Anne Clark, Debbie Galbraith, Isobel Quinn, Christine Malcolmson, John Wilson, Gerry McCauley, Martin McCauley.

Apologies: Hazel Mitchell, Rob Reid.

**1. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER**

Helen opened our AGM and Father Berry lead everyone in a prayer of encouragement for the year ahead.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTE**

An amendment was made to the previous minute regarding the Alpha Course. The Alpha Course was completed in full but only six out of the ten weeks of the Catholicism course took place. With these changes the minutes from our last AGM were approved by John Wilson and seconded by Isobel Quinn.

**3. REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2021-2022**

At the time of the last A.G.M. we had just begun to be able to come to Mass without having to be invited or book. Nevertheless, there was a need for caution and considered reflection before relaxing the various restrictions which had been put in place. On behalf of the Parish Council, Helen thanked the work done by Gerry in providing accurate and up-to-date information on Covid infection levels, which allowed us to make decisions with a degree of confidence. Mass attendance figures remain below pre-Covid levels and continue to be a concern.

- **Charity**

We are happy to note that, mindful of distancing measures still ongoing, we were able to set up the Jesse Tree and a designated collection box. Parishioners responded very generously, and a substantial donation of gifts was delivered to the Sisters of Mercy.

- **Foodbank**

Parishioners continuously contribute to the Food Bank on a weekly basis. In addition, we had two very successful "focused" collections in November and June. Following parishioner enquiry banking details for money transfers to the Food Bank are now available in the weekly bulletin.

- **Passover Meal**

Taking place in April, we came together with parishioners from Inverkip and Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Parish Churches to celebrate together at Skelmorlie & Wemyss Bay Parish Hall. A very successful event and it will be our turn to host in 2023.

- **Social Events**

We focused on outdoor events as we planned cautiously with Covid infection levels in mind. The Easter Egg Hunt was great success and the Extended Tea-room held in August with a mixture of indoor and outdoor seating provided a further opportunity for parishioners to make contact with others.

Our Quiz Night in October was very successful, and we look forward to the Fashion Show and Christmas Fayre planned for mid-November.

- **Care and Kindness Group**

This successful initiative has been established during this year with Christine, Gillian and Pauline Redmond offering support to parishioners.

- **Safeguarding**

- The Paisley Diocese was the last Diocese in Scotland to be inspected by SCIE. Paisley Diocese is the only Diocese in Scotland where every Parish submitted their Audit. The inspection focused on the scrutiny of paperwork, policy, procedures, focus groups.  
On behalf of the PPC, Helen thanked Hazel for her diligence in this regard.

- **Defibrillator Training:**

Two sessions in First Aid/Defibrillator have taken place with 34 participants.

- **PPC Away Day**

Took place in August, our first since 2019. Good discussions and action points arose.

- **Synod 2023**

Our focus for the first six months was in gathering views and agreeing on our Parish response to the 10 themes. Helen thanked everyone for their commitment to the task and their contributions. In addition to making our Parish submission, the discussions produced a number of ideas for future development.

- **Initiatives Addressed and ongoing:**

- Review of Contingency Plan
- Introduction of Prayer Circles
- Development of the Sacristan role
- Liturgical Word/Phrase of the Week
- Noticeboard and Suggestion Box
- Establishment of a Resource Centre

4. **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

Helen and Louise continue as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. Gillian has retired as Secretary, having been in this role for eight years. On behalf of the Parish Council, Helen thanked Gillian for her commitment and diligence.

We are pleased to report that Debbie and Christine will work together in the role of Minute Secretary, and this will be reviewed at our next A.G.M.

Andrew McShane has resigned from the PPC for the time being due to other commitments.

Martin McCauley and Kate Borthwick were welcomed as new members of the PPC.

## **5. PREPARATIONS FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS**

Father Berry presented a new set of Advent figures, and it was agreed that they would be displayed as part of the usual Nativity scene.

Christmas and New Year's Day Masses will be follows:

Christmas Vigil – Carols at 7pm with Mass at 730pm

Christmas Day – 10am (livestream) and 1130am

New Year's Day – Saturday Vigil 5pm

Sunday 10am (Livestream) and 1130am

Going forward Father Berry would consider offering a children's Christmas Mass and this will be discussed in the future.

The review of the Sunday night 5pm Mass attendance figures shows that numbers sit between 30 and 50 per week. There will be a census this Sunday to record Mass attendance figures. It was reported that the average attendance at weekend Masses is approximately 170 as opposed to 270 pre pandemic. Gerry reported that online viewing for the Masses is between 90-120 which could account for the deficit? It was suggested Father Berry could make an appeal whilst the Mass is being livestreamed to anyone that is able to come to Mass could so rather than view online.

## **6. CALENDAR AND PROPOSED ACTIVITIES**

Helen provided a calendar of proposed events and dates for PPC meetings. Definite dates so far:

- Next PPC Meeting Wednesday 7 December 2022
- Foodbank Collection in the Church Hall will be Saturday 3 December from 11am - 1pm and Brian will put a note in the bulletin.

## **7. UPDATE ON FINANCES**

Father Berry reported that with regard to finances, the Parish is operationally in credit. He advised that if the Parish needed money for works to be carried out this could still be taken from our Diocesan Investment Fund. The repair work to be carried out on the sandstone at the front of the church at a cost of £9,400 has been approved by the Diocese and work will hopefully start soon.

Father Berry will mention the Building Fund at Mass to say a special thanks to all the contributors.

The Finance Committee are to meet on Thursday 24 November in the Church House at 7pm. This is the first meeting for some time. A brief report will be given at our next meeting.

## 8. AOCB

### - Contingency Plan

Debbie advised that the last version of the plan was completed in October 2017. She has updated the various group memberships as per her understanding but will distribute this information for validation and feedback. Phone numbers can be added to the information if agreed and consent would need to be received due to GDPR. Any personal details will be held on a separate appendix as opposed to being included in the main body of the report.

### - Prayer Circles

Hazel is not at the meeting, but it was reported she is looking to start this initiative in a simple way to begin with. We can initially gauge interest via the Parish Bulletin and then formulate how we take this forward. Father Berry will put a sheet for names at the back of the church also.

### - Jesse Tree

Isobel will organise the Jesse Tree again this year and it will be in place for the first Sunday in Advent which is 27 November. Father Berry requested that the tree and donation box to be placed at the side window, as per last year, rather than the Altar. Christine was advised that if the gifts are wrapped then the wrapping paper may be removed to gauge sizes if necessary. This could be pointed out in the bulletin although it was accepted that some people will still want to wrap gifts.

### - Warm Hand of Friendship

Father Berry received an email from Stephanie at Inverclyde council to advise that funding is available for up to £3k if we would be interested in offering a warm space within the Church for the local community. After some discussion it was agreed that Father Berry would try to find out if this was happening already locally, i.e. in Wemyss Bay Community Centre or similar. Christine will also email Inverclyde Council to ask the same.

### - Key Amnesty

It was acknowledged that over the years there have been too many keys for the church and the church hall distributed to various volunteers. This is problematic for safety and insurance purposes and after some discussion it was agreed the best solution would be to change the locks. Father Berry and Brian will source a locksmith and via the bulletin current keyholders will be asked to come forward and return keys. Once this has been carried out a new, tighter policy on the number of keyholders will be implemented.

### - New Mass Books

A date has not been decided but it is known that the readings will be changed and taken from a new translation in the near future. We will reconsider whether to invest in mass books when the new readings are in place.

### - Mass Introductions

Helen advised she has put together a folder containing the new mass introductions due to begin this coming Advent.

- Christmas Fayre

Isobel will organise the teas for the Christmas Fayre on 20 November 2022. Louise queried if the stall should be open after Saturday 5pm and Sunday 5pm masses in the run up to Christmas. It was felt that this was a good idea and Father Berry will announce this plan from the pulpit in advance to ensure everyone is aware.

- Eucharistic Services

In the event that a last minute Eucharistic Service is required to replace mass, Marcus volunteered to provide the service in these circumstances or source another Eucharistic minister to stand in.

- Photographs of PPC Members

John will bring a camera to the next meeting on 7 December to update the photographs of the members.

Helen closed the meeting and date of next meeting will be 7 December 2022.