

Parish Pastoral Council Committee Meeting

held on

Monday 02 February 2015

Attendees

President: Father Niall Harrington; Fr Niall
Chair: John Geary; JG
Kathy Johnston; KJ
Jacqui Davis; JD
Alison Huish; AH
Sue Benjamin; SB
Patricia MacLachlan; PM
Robin Mac Guinness; RM

Father Niall opened the meeting with a prayer

1. Apologies received from:

Secretary: Rachael Williams; RW
Treasurer: Steve Gallagher; SG
Jenny Sismey; JS

2. Minutes of last meeting / matters arising from the minutes not otherwise on the agenda – None.

The minutes of the last meeting on the 12 January 2015 were noted as being satisfactory.

3. Calendar and dates

Future meeting dates and venues are as follows all commencing at 8pm:

March – Monday 09 at South Woodham Ferrers (SWF)

April – Monday 13 at Danbury (D)

May – Monday 11 at SWF

June – Monday 08 at D

July – Monday 06 at D (Social evening)

August – No meeting

September – Monday 14 at SWF

October – Monday 12 at D

November – Monday 09 at SWF (AGM)

4. Vacancies to fill

None at present.

5. "Live Simply" campaign

PM has issued the "Live Simply" self-assessment form as collated by the Justice and Peace Group for comment and input.

Matt Harris is helping the core group to set up a page on the parish website to post photographs and summaries for a wider audience of action plans and future events.

The "Live Simply" thought for February has appeared in the newsletter. This is for used postage stamps to be brought to the churches and placed in the envelope provided. They will then be sent to the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

6. Justice and Peace CAFOD

A parish jumble sale, which is our main event, is being organised to raise funds for charities at home and abroad. It will be in Danbury Village Hall on Saturday 28 February at 1.30pm. All offers of help from 9.00am onwards will be appreciated particularly for assistance in arranging stall and furniture.

7. Fabric report: Danbury and South Woodham Ferrers

JG to contact Adrian for an update on Danbury.

JG advised that he would attend the forthcoming JCC meeting being on the 04 March – (post meeting deferred to 25 March).

8. Ecumenical report Little Baddow and SWF and JCC

Elizabeth Bourne submitted her report as follows following their meeting on the 26 January 2015:

- Looking back – the October Traidcraft road show by Justice & Peace had gone well together with Christmas cards as well as food and gifts sold.
- In November the third Remembrance Service at St Johns on the 8th was well supported with a lunch and a sale which was well supported; on the 9th there was a service and worship organised by the Catholics on the theme of peace, justice and reconciliation with reference to the Pope's message on climate change being well supported; on the 10th there was a Parish visiting group meeting; on the 29th a lunch and sale again well supported
- In December on the 14th saw a Christingle well supported; on the 21st a carol service; on the 24th Reflections for Christmas; midnight mass at English Martyrs very well supported; on the 25th services went well in all venues.
- Looking forward – J & P rummage sale on the 28 February; There would be Lent courses on the theme of the Beatitudes (5 sessions) with everyone welcome; for Holy Week and Easter an Easter card is planned for everyone in the village in good time with details of services in all churches to include Palm Sunday to Easter Day (information needed as soon as possible)
- other forthcoming events on 6 March at 10am Women's World Day of Prayer; 9 May noon to 130pm soup and bread – simple lunch for Christian Aid, funds and Traidcraft stall; on 23 May 11am to 5pm open gardens; June 2015 Little Baddow Christian Covenant originally signed June 2005, renewed in June 2010 is due for reflection and renewal (dates to be confirmed); on 4 July at 11am Bradwell Village walk to St Peter's Chapel; on 5 July at 1030am at Cuckoo Barn Little Baddow; on 11/12/13 September St Mary's XXXXX festival

Next meeting Monday 20 April at 730pm at URC vestry, Little Baddow.

9. Treasurer's report

Further copies of the detailed annual accounts were handed out.

SG submitted his report as follows.

In terms of our parish finances, as of 01 February 2015 our bank balance was £14,100.00 overdrawn. This is where it has sat (plus or minus £1,000.00) since August when the refurbished presbytery kitchen was paid for.

Since the last meeting our main expenditures have been Father Niall's Christmas offering (£3,454) and repairs to the heating system at English Martyrs (£710).

The big extraordinary items have been two payments for Father's prison chaplaincy (£581) and the long awaited refund on our joint gas and electric bill with EDF for English Martyrs. We not only got a refund of £2,094 but our monthly direct debit amount was reduced from £474 to £280.

10. Anglican PCC

Key Topic - Review of Christmas 2014 - Revd Carol said that all the services and events had gone well. The toys and a donation of £20 from the Toy Service had been

taken to the Women's Refuge and a letter of thanks received from them. St Joseph's School had been asked to sing by the 'Light up a Life' organisers but for some reason they had not asked TSM and this to be noted for 2015. It was noted that it had been difficult to hear the children sing at the Town Carol Service that had taken place at the bandstand. This was due to microphones not being positioned appropriately and also people talking as they passed through the town square. The readings etc were a little long and this led to people talking during the service. This had been discussed at the Christian Church Council where it had been agreed that they would like to do it again at the bandstand next December. We had received no complaints about the earlier time of the Christmas morning service, 10am instead of 10.30am this therefore it be the same time next Christmas. In all, Revd Carol had been very pleased with everything.

Treasurer's Report –

The treasurer Angela Tuff and Revd Carol had met to discuss the budget for 2015. They initially looked at paying 84% of the quota that is 1% more than last year. This would leave us with a shortfall of just over £4000. They proposed looking at ways of making up this shortfall, rather than dropping the percentage of the quota target.

Angela recommended that a Finance Committee meeting be held to discuss these items and decide the best way forward. The committee would be Angela, Revd Carol, Bob Hemmings, Roger McMaster and Roger Partridge.

JCC Worship & Outreach – A new agreement between all the churches with regard to continue the giving to the Bus is due but before this happens, more information has been requested as to how much the Bus is used by teenagers in the town etc.

Vicar's Remarks: Revd Carol said that most things had been covered during the meeting. It had been a good Christmas and she was pleased that many had been involved in one way or another in helping at the events and services. She thanked everyone, in particular Revd Jane who had had her first Christmas with us.

She had been recently asked if she would be Chaplain to the SWF Police Station and was presently considering her response.

Curate Remarks: Revd Jane said that she had thoroughly enjoyed her first Christmas in the parish. It had been lovely being involved and working with everyone in the different events and services. Her training is of course still continuing and as well as being involved in TSM she will be going into Woodville School and is doing a couple of services in Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre etc

Revd Carol thanked Kathy Johnson for organising the purchase of the artificial Christmas tree and decorations and that many people had remarked on how good it was.

Any Other Business - Sheila Jenkins brought to the attention of the PCC the explicit cards and other materials that are on sale in the shop 'Card Wise'. She had made her disgust known to the shop assistant and it was suggested that other PCC members go into the shop and lodge their complaints.

11. Methodist PCC

No report

12. Diocesan report

As reported above Claire Hopkins is now our Diocesan representative.

13. Liturgy group

A liturgy-planning meeting was held this morning.

Sylvia Lanz remains as our representative and will attend these meetings occasionally.

14. St Joseph's School

Alison presented her report on her trip to India as follows:

Mrs Alison Huish-Senior Leader and Religious Education Subject Leader

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, South Woodham Ferrers.

' International School Award-Connecting Classrooms'

The Connecting Classroom Programme is a British Council initiative which aims to enhance international teaching and learning and to develop global citizens of the future. Funding is provided to promote teaching exchanges between partnership schools.

St Joseph's school has gained Silver Standard and during the Spring Term 2014 links were made with St Thomas' Girls' School, Kolkata, West Bengal, India.

St Joseph's is a one class intake Catholic Primary School which was established in 1985 in the then new town of South Woodham Feners; teaching children from ages of three years to eleven years of age. It has 200 children on role.

St Thomas' Girls School was established in 1789 by the Bishop of Calcutta (now Kolkata) to meet the educational needs of the British Christian children who were living in what was then the capital of India. St Thomas' Girls' School continues to flourish and now has a Junior School population of 1,400 pupils and a Senior School population of 1,300 pupils. The school is fee paying and provides an English based education for pupils from three to sixteen years of age. It has a boarding facility for seventy pupils; only seventy five percent of these pupils are able to pay their fees in full.

During the Summer Term 2014, Mrs Neeta Gonsalves, Lady Principal of the Junior School and Mrs Philomena Mondol, lead teacher of the Nursery and Kindergarten joined us for a week's programme of cultural exchange and teaching and learning. Children throughout St Joseph's School learnt about Indian culture, made and tasted Indian food and participated in classical Indian dancing. The staff of St Joseph's and our guests shared teaching and learning styles and exchanged cultural teaching expectations. The partnership between our two schools was cemented!

Mrs Sarah Ginzler-Maher, the head teacher of St Joseph's School, invited my husband and me to represent the teaching body and the governing body on the reciprocal visit to St Thomas' School during the Autumn Term 2014.

Our visit lasted from Thursday 30th October to Sunday 9th November 2014 and was quite extraordinary and inspiring.

We were made so very welcome by all the staff and students. A programme of activities had been arranged for us so that we were able to observe and teach in a range of classes from the nursery to the seniors in Year 6.

We attended early morning assemblies where the children stood in their class lines with their teachers. The pupils delivered a daily reflection and prayers; hymns and the National Anthem were sung.

The classes were notably larger than those in St Joseph's School with 27 pupils in each nursery or pre-school class and then between 54 and 70 pupils in the remaining classes.

The pupils were taught to speak, read and write in English which was their second or third language; Hindi being the national language and Bengali being the regional language. The younger pupils learnt English through action songs and rhymes; rote learning and repetition were key to embedding these early language skills.

Teaching in the classes from Year 2 onwards was based on English, Mathematics and Science based syllabi: Each child had a text book which they followed; corresponding exercises and activities were completed in their individual exercise books. Pupils were keen to complete their written work and were invited to answer questions during the lesson. They always stood to give a verbal response and greeted their teacher as 'ma'am'.

The teachers, during their lesson delivery, had to contend with overhead fans whirring, these were essential to allow some sort of air movement in the warm conditions. During our stay the day time temperatures were usually 33°C and the night time was 25°C.

Large chalkboards were the main teaching tool, with teachers preparing visual aids to enhance the lesson content. This was evident during a Year 5 maths lesson about

percentages where the teacher had prepared a 'story' about three pupils in a fictitious class.

Pupils brought all their own items with them each day, these included pencil cases, 'tiffin' or snack, paints, and oil pastels. Fresh water is essential and the pupils were very well informed about water filtration and the necessity of clean water.

I led teaching on themes such as 'Helping Hands' where we use our hands to help our friends and our families. We developed this link to include our partnership school friends. The children also learnt about St Joseph and our school mission statement and completed picture representations on this. Mr Huish soon became renowned for his geographical knowledge of the South Woodham Ferrers marsh land area and delivered informative lessons on this subject; this he was very proud of as he is a software engineer by trade!

In addition we were invited to inaugurate at the annual Junior School Arts and Crafts exhibition; we were guests of honour at a Cultural Presentation by the pupils of the junior and senior school where the children dressed in traditional regional costumes and danced and sang for us. We were introduced to the British Council representative of the region and regional government educational officer for the city authority. I was dressed in a beautiful sari and we were invited to open the school fete with the Bishop of Kolkata, this event was supported by ten thousand visitors during a two day programme of events.

We were also very honoured to be invited to the homes of Mrs Mondol and Mrs Mukherjee, the Lady Principal; the amazing dishes had all been prepared by hand and demonstrated the traditional regional cuisine. The Bengalis class themselves as real 'foodies'

Other highlights of our visit include visiting the Matheison Music Trust. This is an orphanage which provides tuition in cello and violin; we were honoured to be welcomed by the pupils and to listen to a concert given by all sixty seven pupils. The musicianship and quality of four part harmony voice work was incredible and totally inspiring. The children from the orphanage are then able to secure employment in military bands, in teaching and in the growing entertainment industry.

We also visited the home of Mother Teresa and were humbled to be given the opportunity to pray at her tomb. Her work was and still is inspirational. We were given special dispensation to enter one of her orphanages and to meet the wonderful children that are welcomed in. The Sisters and Novices follow in the footsteps of 'Mother'.

Before we undertook our travels one of the teachers at St Thomas' said that we will be entering in to the wonderful and crazy city of Calcutta"!

We did enter that crazy city and we embraced it. We have made true friends, observed dedicated and passionate teachers and seen Gospel values in action. The children that we have met have been an inspiration and we wish each and every one of them success in their futures.

Our international school partnership will grow and develop as the pupils' share teaching and learning opportunities through the wonders of technology!

To find out more about the schools and projects please follow these links:

<https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org>

<http://www.st-thomasgirls.in>

<http://www.mathiesonmusictrust.org>

15. Social Committee

KJ reported as follows:

The Social Committee met on the 22nd January and we are pleased that Barbara Fenn has agreed to join them. There are now four of us on the Committee.

Kathy reported that Pauline Spratt from the Justice & Peace Group has contacted her with regard to working together, maybe organising joint events. Kathy explained that at the moment all of our events are fundraising for The Parish. Once the debt is reduced maybe we can combine and organise Social Events. Pauline quite

understood and said that the J&P Group would be pleased to help us in selling tickets etc. at the Danbury Masses. The Social Committee has taken them up on this generous offer. As Barbara Fenn is on the J&P Committee as well as Social she will liaise with both groups.

The Justice & Peace Group are organising a Walk for the Live Simply Campaign and the date suggested is 14th March. Kathy was asked to contact Pauline as that is the date of our Parish Dance and we felt that the Danbury end of the Parish, understandably, wouldn't want to come down to SWF twice in one day. Since the Meeting Kathy has been in contact with Pauline and the J&P Group are changing the date of their Walk. This was much appreciated.

Parish Dance – Tickets are now on sale for the Parish Dance, which will be held on the 14th March in St. Joseph's School Hall. Ideas were put forward as to how we can decorate the hall etc. Tickets will be £8 each (no children under 16). People to bring their own buffet/drink. A group has been hired at a cost of £200. Tickets/Posters will be given to the J&P Group to sell at all Danbury Masses. 100 tickets have been printed.

Parish Calendars – We are looking into doing this again this year. A note has gone in the Newsletter for photos.

16. Presbytery report

JG reported as follows:

- a) A new shower pump will be installed in the bathroom and new ball valve assemblies fitted in the bathroom and cloakroom toilet cisterns.
- a) Various other items of ongoing maintenance have been undertaken.

17. 100 Club

Nothing to report.

18. Any other business

Several parishioners have advised that they find the extended projector screen distracting while at prayer in the church. Apparently the device has malfunctioned. JG to ask the JCC what course of action is proposed.

Father Niall closed the meeting with a prayer