

**ST THOMAS OF CANTERBURY CHURCH
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Monday 18th October 2021

Attendees : Kit Tranmer, Fr. Quentin Jackson, Fr. Isidore Faloona, Paul Turpin, Mike O'Sullivan, Fr Michael O'Kane, Lorna Spears, Matthew Ives, Debbie Giddings. Michelle Spears & Geraldine Mansbridge

Chair – Mike O'Sullivan

Apologies for Absence: Rob Fernandes

Minutes: The minutes of the August meeting were approved.

Becket Centre

Excellent progress in redecorating and refurbishing the Upstairs rooms in the Becket Centre has been made. Remaining items to be addressed included furniture requirements for two rooms. There is an outstanding issue with the carpet supplier and this has been dealt with. The overall project is expected to cost in the region of £21K.

Huts

It was confirmed that planning permission has been received for the demolition of the existing huts and the replacement with 2/3 new huts on a concrete base. Quotes have been obtained and are being assessed. Some temporary storage facilities in the Friars garage has been agreed.

Organist

Following approval to seek to engage an organist on a paid basis slow progress has been made. There are areas of commitment in relation to funerals and weddings, which still need to be addressed. Currently an advert has been placed on Organist on-line to see if there is wider interest in joining St Thomas'. The PPC welcomed the return of the Choir to the 11.30am Mass.

Porch & Health and Safety – recent PIB Visit

The damp course work and plastering for the Repository will take place on 28 & 29 October.

Two new sets of external doors are ordered and installation date is due for the end of January 2022.

Following feedback from the PPC it has been decided to move forward with the replacement of the Repository Doors with glass doors, new lighting in the porch and decoration.

The issue concerning the main internal entry door into the Church and the covering in of the blocked door is to remain on hold. This matter had been raised with our Insurers when they recently visited the premises to review Health & Safety matters. The outcome of which was that although they felt in ordinary circumstances there were sufficient exits in the event of a fire. When the Church had more attendees such as at Christmas they were not clear if any more exits would be needed. In addition, it had been agreed that as a full fire risk assessment had not been carried out for over five years that a full risk assessment should be undertaken following all the works that have been undertaken on the site. It was on this basis that any decision about internal access doors to the Church would be put on hold.

Adoration

All agreed that this was a successful occasion and should be a regular feature in St Thomas' calendar.

In light of this, it was agreed to establish a Forward event planner for all key events that take place each year in advance and that a PPC member would be assigned lead organiser.

Christmas Fayre

Due to continuing concerns about Covid no Christmas fayre would be held this year.

Parish Social Activities

All recognised the need to bring the Parish community together for social gatherings, which have been absent due to the pandemic. However, efforts will be made in the future to return to an active parish life.

- **Cheese and Wine for Volunteers**

Plans will be put in place to hold a thank you event for volunteers in late November/early December. £300 would be available to fund the event.

- **Other Updates**

A parishioner was hoping to hold an event around Christmas time, which may be similar to the Zoom quiz last year.

It was noted that £1k had recently been received as a donation to the Church from a bereaved family.

Pastoral

- **Laudato Si**

Laudato Si' invites us all to "work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us."

The livesimply award is an opportunity for Catholic communities - parishes, schools, religious orders and chaplaincies - to respond to that invitation. The award invites groups to celebrate how they already live simply and gives them the focus and inspiration to go further. The award can help you build community by bringing together different groups under a common vision. It can help you save money through conserving energy and water. It can help you develop relationships with other churches and groups outside the church. It can help you to live, not just more simply, but also more fully.

Living simply examples • Ask community members to make their own livesimply pledges. • Host a talk or study group on Laudato Si'. • Make a livesimply banner from recycled materials. • Include a livesimply tip or thought for the week in a newsletter. • Give out CAFOD prayer cards or say the livesimply prayer at Mass. • Hold a nature walk

Living sustainably with creation • Encourage people to walk or cycle to Mass or school. • Compost food waste. • Plant bulbs. • Produce an electronic newsletter instead of printing. • Carry out an energy audit. • Turn off lights and close doors to conserve energy.

Michelle presented proposals that could enable us as a Church community to address the call and obtain the award as a result. These included

- Re-establishing the soup run or connecting with other organisations that we can support
- Maintain the food bank and consider introducing a clothes bank
- Installing cycling racks
- Looking at how we encourage parishioner to become volunteers, a suggestion was made about some form of exhibition that volunteers could visit to see how they can join and what interests them

The presentation will be circulated for the PPC to consider if we should pursue the award. Some members have signed up for the Cafod presentations in November.

- **Synod**

Quentin updated members on Pope Francis invitation to the whole Church to question itself on synodality, which is going to be a two-year journey of reflection and sharing from 2021 to 2023. The Diocese will be looking at this and how we stimulate an interest in the collegiate running of our church on the basis of equality.

The example for our community of the Buckhurst Hill parishioners who demonstrate how they know and care for each other and in the essence of being a catholic which is about prayer, care for the poor and stimulating an interest in the next generation.

Other matters:

- **Offertory Collections**

It was agreed to reinstate the basket collections at the Sunday masses.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 17th January at 8pm.