

**ST GEORGE'S PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
20th November 2016 at 6.00pm.**

Apologies: received from Catherine Harrold, Brian Lish and Annabelle Delgado.

The meeting was attended by 25 parishioners and 12 members of the Parish Council.

Father Brett opened the meeting with a prayer.

Welcome by Chair of Pastoral Council and Report

Frank McEvoy welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Council members were introduced. Frank extended thanks to Father Brett for his mission in the parish and to Adrienne who had completed her term of office during the last year. He briefly outlined areas of his annual report which had been circulated and asked that any parishioner involved in running a group in the parish should review their information on the parish website and let Frank know if any alterations need to be made.

Frank informed the meeting that a proposal had been signed by 20 parishioners to amend section 3(a) of the PPC Constitution to include *and the Parish Steward of the Gospel representative*. This was agreed by all parishioners attending and the amendment was therefore agreed.

He thanked everyone for their commitment to the parish community and then invited any questions.

Frank reported: Mass attendance – 481 average weekly from October figures.

Baptisms – 21. Marriages - 1. Deaths - 11 (plus 2 out of parish conducted by Fr Brett). Confirmations – 19. RCIA -7. First Holy Communion – 30.

Report by Parish Treasurer.

Graham briefly explained his Finance report and balance sheet which had been circulated to the meeting. Points relating to his finance report include:

- Offertory income not covering day-to-day parish expenses and only increased by equivalent of 5p per family per week from previous year. A short discussion followed. Fr Brett said he had reviewed the list of 2nd collections and cut down some of those which are not mandatory.
- At present we rely on profit from social functions and other donations to do 'need to' works. Damp penetration reported in 3 areas, plus rotting wood and crack in bell tower all extras not budgeted for – likely cost £20,000.
- Sale of St Edmunds – Graham pointed out that £338,000 (after fees) is being held in a deposit account to offset the repairs required by the quinquennial report amounting to approximately £323,000. These items will be discussed at the next Finance meeting.
- Other work to convert the Repository in St. George's porch into a unisex/disabled toilet, together with repairs to the hall, are also being discussed.
- Defibrillators are to be installed in both churches
- Graham replied to questions and explained that the Diocesan quota is levied as a percentage of Offertory collections to help run the Diocese at Cathedral House.
- Review Offertory cheque payments to Standing Orders to help minimise our c.£500 annual bank charges.
- A brief discussion took place on our parish youth doing fund-raising and it was agreed that they are a very important link and parishioners should be aware of what they are doing.

Report by Steward of the Gospel

A report by Paul Gwilliam had been circulated to the meeting and he explained that he is our parish representative at Diocesan Strategic Planning Group meetings. He explained that he has met regularly with Fr Brett, Frank and Graham to discuss the questionnaire which the Diocese has prepared for all parishioners to complete. They have broken the document down into key areas on how best to gauge ideas from parishioners on how they see the parish and deanery for the future.

Frank pointed out that this information is available on the parish website but it was noted that some parishioners do not have computer access or are unable to read what is online. It was agreed that this should be made more accessible and it was suggested that small discussion groups be introduced to help. This will be considered by the working group when they next meet.

Frank thanked Paul for his report and suggested that we should all consider ways how best we can support our Parish Priest in his role.

Report by Father Brett

He thanked everyone for the support he has received in the last 1½ years since he arrived in the parish and was so grateful for the number of parishioners involved in various roles in the parish.

Fr Brett said he finds the role of Parish Priests to be quite a daunting prospect for the future with the role of priests changing dramatically because of reduction in number of priests. Frank said that each group in the parish should reach out and try to bring in new parishioners and to encourage everyone to consider their input to help build our fantastic parish community as he considers this is really key to the future.

Fr Brett said that there are a couple of capital items which he would like to consider including repairs/redecoration of the hall, installation of projector system at St. George's and to improve lighting at St. Georges which he considers to be fairly basic at present.

Fr Brett extended his thanks to Sharon for the fantastic job she does as Parish Administrator and all her support in relieving him of much pressure.

Thanks were extended to parishioners for their support in providing a vibrant and very active parish community. Frank extended thanks to Fr Brett who is very much appreciated in the parish.

Open Forum

- Presentation to Joan Butcher on Sunday 4th December to acknowledge over 50 years of commitment and support to the parish.
- Tony Shead – one of only a few parishes in the Diocese who maintain 2 churches should we sell St. Gregory's – this will be part of the questionnaire which will be circulated to parishioners. Fr. Brett / GA advised that Chapels of Ease are an ongoing discussion at Diocese
- Brief discussion on lowering the ceiling in the candle room at St. George's to help relieve the damp issue.
- Dave Townsend – considers lighting in choir loft totally inadequate for musicians.
- Organ at St. George's – getting more difficult to acquire parts to repair as it is 23 years old. Should a future replacement be required, will be added to quinquennial report (approx. £7-£10,000 to replace).
- It was stressed that only electrical equipment that has been PAT tested should be used in churches and that the quinquennial only deals with Bricks and Mortar not items such as the organ but no replacement of such items is part of the annual budgeting.
- Consider installing projector for hymns as hymn books now quite old and many require replacement. A legacy from an estate had been received to help fund a new system if appropriate.
- Tony Castle – considers that wiring from the Corona above the altar needs tidying.
- Brigid Hogan – feels a radio microphone would be useful so that the whole meeting could hear clearly what is being said by individual parishioners.
- Pat Shead – feels we are very lucky to have such a vibrant Youth Justice & Peace group and junior choir and thanks were extended to Fr Brett for his enthusiasm and encouragement to the young people of our parish.
- Jacque Patterson – extended thanks to the Parish Council for the work they are doing on behalf of the parish and particularly to Frank as Chair and Fr Brett.

Frank extended thanks to everyone for attending. The meeting closed following a prayer and blessing by Fr Brett.