Minutes of Combined Groups of Walking Together
11th June 2026 at 7.30pm. in Our Lady's Hall

Liz Mottram LM, Jenny Hayden JH, , Margaret Dimambro MD, Jenny Armstrong JA, Mary Holden MH, Gill Parker, David Tye DT
Apologies: Jonathan Holden, Veronica Drumgoole, Anne Elson, Father Stephen Day, Matin Foley, Anna Godwin.

The meeting opened with the Synod prayer.

Matters Arising from the last Minutes 22nd January 2026

- There were further comments on the Mass for bereaved people during the past year and the disappointing attendance – MD pointed out that families who live at a distance would struggle to attend during the week and also that a Mass might not be the best way to engage them as many are not practising Catholics, and that a simple service would be more appropriate. This was agreed by others.
- The Top 10 Priorities have been passed to the CPC and are being looked at.
  There are several new initiatives which may move the priorities somewhat, such as OL Vision.

Reports from other meetings

Walking Together Steering Group, 7th May 2026

- It was noted that Canon David Hartley had attended the steering group and was encouraging the synodal approach.
- Jonathan Holden had put together a presentation on 'Synodality.' This presentation is available for the parish, particularly the CPC and Finance Committee and possibly to other Deanery groups. There had been links with Fr Matthew Nunes, from the Liverpool Archdiocese who is a director of the 'School for Synodality'.
- The 'Walking Together' team proposes suggestions and animates the parish in synodal ways, but Participatory Bodies, such as CPC, make decisions.
- Paul Hayden updates the Synodality page of the website regularly for Catholic Leamington.

Ideas under the umbrella heading "Outreach" - discussion

Update on Outreach and Visiting Team

- MD gave a report on the developments since the last meeting. She has had 6 forms at SP and followed up with emails where she suggests meeting after Mass. She and Cecilia have seen four of these either after Mass in the Church or the Hall and one, who was interested in the RCIA, was referred to Gareth. Some responded well and one did not respond.
- JH said, as far as she knew, there were no new forms at OL but she keeps careful note of new people at OL and speaks to them. There have been several and she has asked them all to take the Offertory Gifts up to the altar.

Other ideas

- On the subject of welcoming – Mary Rouse has organised lanyards for the welcomers to wear and for the Children's Liturgy leaders too. This should increase their visibility and help people engage with them. There was a discussion on the 'invitation to coffee' which often doesn't work, whereas having a common interest – just a discussion about the plants recently as at the plant sale gets people talking. MH suggests the reader of the messages before Mass asks people to introduce

themselves to each other to break the ice. This would work better if people varied where they sat. It would be good to have younger people on the welcoming team.

- Should there be pre-Mass announcements at the 5pm Mass at SP? Not happening at the moment.

- MH brought up the subject of people with dementia and what the church can do to help? Ideas raised:
  - having more Eucharistic Ministers going out into the community (in pairs ideally), being aware of who is in care homes and who is being cared for by a carer at home;
  - having a training session for volunteers willing to help with visiting people with dementia and their carers. Training could come from a professional person such as an experienced Care Home manager (contact known) as well as carers themselves or ex-carers.

- Ecumenical events - Father Stephen has offered for SP to host the Ecumenical service in January next year for Churches Together Leamington (CTL). Ongoing are walks with CTL, which a few attend. SP will be open for the Peace Festival on 13th /14th June
  - On Saturday for allcomers to look around, have refreshments and sign a card for a prisoner of conscience;
  - On Sunday for Exposition.
- Baptism preparation was raised as to who is doing it. Fr Stephen and Deacon Paul jointly provide preparation. Pre-Covid there was a lay team who gave preparation sessions. The OL Vision Parish Life and Mission team felt that lay support for baptism and marriage preparation, plus follow up support, would be desirable.
- Outreach to young people. This is ongoing with a young children's session at Warwick (SPARK) and older teenagers in Leamington. There is also a Young Adults Group.
- Multi-cultural events - the Pentecost Party was a great success recently. There is a curry supper planned for OL Vision fundraising in September. Shared meals with a cultural theme have been suggested.
- Should we plan for a Lenten study group in 2027? There was general agreement – will need to action at our next meeting.

Disability & Inclusion led by Fr Hudson's/Caritas

- MH gave a report that Policy and Audit has been accepted by Caritas and the Trustees of the Diocese (who were impressed) and will be circulated through the Deanery with a covering letter from the Archbishop.
- Guidelines for disability are being worked on to follow from this and Birmingham is the first Diocese to have these policies etc.

Update on Our Lady's Vision

- LM gave an update on the groups which are: Buildings and Premises, Grants, Fundraising, Parish Life and Mission, Communications.
- All have had at least one meeting and the leaders of the groups have met to collate progress.
- LM gave an indication of progress in the Parish Life and Mission group (if not already raised earlier):
  - Offer to help in updating outreach leaflets,
  - networking with OLST,
  - prospect of taster sessions on serving at Mass (Adrian Pauling and Deacon Paul)
  - monthly Taizé prayer sessions, (MD mentioned that she is part of a is part of a Zoom prayer group),
  - art competition linked to OL roof campaign

- A common theme from several groups is that more networking is needed.

Any Other Business

- It was suggested that Deacon Paul is copied into the minutes so he is aware of the ongoing discussions – agreed.
- The Parish newsletter – is has a lot in – could the OL Communications group look at it? Extra was praised as a great communication but needs wider audience.

Time and Date of next meeting Thursday 19th November 2026 at Our Lady's.

The meeting closed with a Prayer