

Minutes of the Walking Together Team meeting

18th January 2024 in St. Peter's Parish Centre

Present: Margaret Dimambro (Chair), Jonathan & Mary Holden, Paul Hayden, Jenny Toutoungi, Liz Mottram (Clerk), Gill Ayers-Hunt

Apologies: Peter Dimambro, Jackie Rabone, Fr. Stephen Day, Fr. David Hartley, Susan Chan, Roger & Anne Elson, Barbara Dodd

The meeting opened with the Synod prayer and a reading by Pope Francis challenging us to take new paths.

1. Matters arising from the minutes of 5th October meeting

2d. *Is there a replacement for the leader of group 4?*

None has come forward. Jackie Rabone made enquiries to this end.

4. New chairperson is needed for the Walking Together team. No nominations came forward.

Q: *should these joint Walking Together meetings continue?* Responses mentioned the value of a coordinating team. Lack of coordination might lead to duplication and arising tensions.

Matter open to consideration.

Suggestion: *we should be aware of returns from Rome and let that influence the way forward.*

Vision and Mission for Catholic Leamington

Draft statements were circulated (Peter Dimambro Oct 2023)

Comments:

Is the difference between vision (ideal) and mission (how to get there) correctly differentiated in these statements?

Should there be mention of collaboration between parishes as well as work within each parish?

Should there be mention of extra-mural activity?

What is impact and purpose of these statements?

Mention was made of linking with Diocesan Vision

Further action was judged low priority at present – draft remains.

2. Topic group meetings

Report from Group 1 – Building Community (Gill)

Meetings held in November and January.

The group decided it was trying too hard to deliver actions, and it should be focusing on what actions should go forward and how. Volunteers were pivotal to further action.

The group proposed merging with group 2 as there is a lot of overlap in personnel and ideas.

Anne Elson is preparing a folder of parish groups/key people for St Peter's and Our Lady's – work in progress.

Report from group 2 – becoming more inclusive and welcoming (Mary)

The Group went through the list of actions.

Examples of outcomes:

- Jonathan has published an excellent article on “becoming a welcoming community” in the newsletter Extra.
- Families are being invited to take part in the Offertory Procession – impactful.
- Anne Elson is looking into collaboration with other churches.
- Car rota notice – no one has yet requested a lift to church.
- Cards sent round to nursing homes as well as homes of non-practising Catholics before Christmas (Peter).

Q: where do these communications direct enquiries to? To the Parish Office? Responding to enquiries is an issue that has not been grasped yet.

Report from Group 3 – deepening and sharing our faith (Liz)

Email communications have led to very few responses, but there was an informal and fruitful meeting in October at Liz's house with 7 members attending. We realised that quite a few of the quick win actions were already underway, and we watched snippets from The Chosen, provoking lively discussion.

One notable outcome is the inauguration of a Mass readings study group by Jonathan. It will be meeting weekly on Friday mornings, starting on 19/1/24, to study and reflect on the readings for the coming Sunday Mass.

Joint meeting of Topic Group Leaders from Groups 1, 2, 3 was held in November to share notes and provide mutual encouragement. Further email communication from leaders to group members and a further group 1 meeting have taken place since. No plan made to reconvene this joint group.

3. Discussion between Fr Stephen and Peter Dimambro (December)

Volunteering was thought to be a priority for most items in the Stage 2 report and can be extended to the need for greater outreach.

The outcome is a draft volunteering form (version 3 circulated)

Comments:

Should we add other social action groups, such as SPAN, Kindaid, Justice and Peace, Cafod, Fairtrade, Live Simply?

Erratum: Gospel reading and reflection should read Sunday readings and reflection.

Request for personal details should be at the end, not at the top.

Destination for forms should be Parish office, not St Peter's presbytery

Presbytery should not be included in parish infrastructure.

We need volunteers to process these forms

Q: who does any office work apart from Royce? Anne and Margaret go in there.

The whole form needs formatting – Mary and Jonathan offered to do this

Q: How should the form be distributed? Welcoming team could distribute.

Jim Murphy has volunteered to run a bereavement group – he should go ahead (Mary)

It was suggested that a volunteering fair could be held to showcase the work of various groups. Someone commented that it tends to attract only those already involved in a group, interesting though it is.

Parish Council

Fr Stephen is seriously considering and looking at constitutions at the moment. He felt that any PPC (which would include SP and OL together, but clearly not SJ who would have their own) should facilitate action and not simply the production of ideas.

Services of the Word and Holy Communion

Fr Stephen did not see the need for further training of ministers at present as there were usually Masses somewhere in Warwick, Whitnash, Lillington or Leamington. This provoked some discussion. Disappointment was expressed that there had been no Mass at any of the churches on Monday and Wednesday while Fr. Stephen was away.

Nursing homes

If we are told of many more Catholics in nursing homes, extra Eucharistic Ministers may be needed.

Facebook page

Still no one permanent to administer, though a little help is available.

4. Topic group 4 – young people and families

Meeting on 1st February at Warwick concerning youth worker (advertised in newsletter) should be promoted to members of group 4. **Action – Liz to pass on to Mary or Jackie for them to email the group**

5. Topic group 5 – infrastructure

Suggestion that this might grow organically from volunteers coming forward.

6. Topic groups 1 and 2 – merger?

No objections – **agreed**. Leader to be appointed at next joint meeting of 1 and 2.

7. Any other business

Deanery meeting at Whitnash, 20/11/23

Several people had attended – purpose a little unclear.

Gill had attended the previous meeting at Bicester and considered it more purposeful. SWOT analysis had been requested from parishes, but with insufficient notice. Those present were interested to know what was in the SWOT analysis for St Peter's/Our Lady's.

Deanery visitation, 27th/28th January

Invitations have been issued to various groups for representatives to meet with the Episcopal Vicar. The Walking Together team is included, and will be represented by Peter, Paul and Jonathan.

World Synod process

Q: what is being fed back to Rome from the Diocese? A question to address at the visitation. Paul offered a paper – “Preparing for Synod 2024” as background. This paper is available as a separate pdf document.

Next meeting of group 2 combined with group 1: 15th February.

Next meeting of Walking Together Team: 18th April at 7.30pm, in Our Lady's lower hall.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm with The Lord's Prayer.