

Minutes of the Walking Together Team meeting

5th October 2023 in St. Peter's Parish Centre

Present: Jonathan & Mary Holden (SP), Peter & Margaret Dimambro (SP), Roger & Anne Elson (SP), Liz Mottram (OL), Fr. Stephen Day (SP), Fr. David Hartley (SJ), Gill Ayers-Hunt (OL), Paul Hayden (OL), Sarah Vaughan (SP), Jackie Rabone (SJ), Paul Northam (Office for Mission)

Apologies: Mary Rouse, Deirdre Buckley

As no-one else had come forward, Peter acted as chairperson for the meeting, which began with the Synod prayer and a reading from Phil 2: 1-2.

1. Matters arising from the minutes of 20th July meeting:

2b JH had made various amendments to the final report, which was published at the end of July.

PD thanked him for the excellent report.

2d Fr. Stephen outlined the topics needing to be addressed, such as: the nature of Catholic Leamington; volunteering eg. leading the Rosary before weekday Masses; fundraising; engaging with the diocesan vision and the future of the diocese.

Fr. David has a leadership team in formation and wishes to discover and use people's skills.

4b The picnic on 29th July, hosted by Jonathan and Mary, had been an enjoyable occasion although few had been able to attend.

2. Updates on Topic Groups

a) Topic group 1: **Building Community**. Led by Roger

A meeting had been held on 4th October, attended by 10 people. The two most pressing actions are to form a social committee and a parish pastoral council. Fr S pointed out that there needs to be a good balance of members for a parish council. Fr D is using a constitution obtained from the Lancaster diocese, as there is nothing available from Birmingham.

AE is working on updating the St. Peter's parish directory.

The next meeting is 8th November.

b) Topic group 2: **Becoming more inclusive and welcoming**. PD has temporarily stepped in as leader, as Gill is unable to continue in the role.

The first meeting will be on 9th October and is an open invitation to all parishioners.

c) Topic group 3: **Deepening and sharing our Faith**. Led by Liz

LM had no replies to her first invitation in August, but now has six interested people for a meeting on 19th October, which will be advertised in the newsletter. This won't be a formal session, but more prayerful with sharing and discussion. A few clips of 'The Chosen' will be shown.

Two 'quick wins' are the return of the prayer intentions book at St. Peter's and a Christian Life Community (CLC) information event to be held on 26th October.

d) Topic group 4: **Young people and families**, originally led by Mary Rouse

MR has had to step down as leader and JR is unable to take on the role. JR agreed to approach MR for contact details of those who attended and will contact them in the hope of someone taking over.

Preparation of children at non-Catholic schools for the Sacraments is parish-based, but those at Catholic schools are prepared at school. JR suggested it would be more effective to merge the preparation and keep it parish-based. Fr S agreed, but pointed out that it would need the permission and co-operation of the schools. Fr D said there is a need for more catechists.

PH added that we need adult formation to have sufficient catechists. A course such as 'Sowing the Seeds' could be introduced.

e) **Topic group 5: Infrastructure**

A few people had expressed interest initially. The group would cover communications, finance, maintenance of buildings, IT issues. JH suggested this is not an easy area for the synodal approach. Expertise is needed to make proposals, then the route to take can be discerned prayerfully.

There needs to be openness as to who is on existing committees. Resources and information should be shared between the 3 churches, using the website and notice boards.

AE suggested a notice board with a flyer for each parish group, with contact details and an explanation about the group.

PD stressed the importance of topic group leaders informing each other of proposed meeting dates to avoid clashes and to ensure that there is no duplication in tasks being actioned.

4. The future of the Walking Together team

- a) All agreed that we should still meet but less often with email communication in between. JA-H stressed the importance of encouraging people to be involved and keep alive the enthusiasm shown at the original meetings.
- b) JH thought that, in the longer term, the synodal Church may include Christians of other denominations, and we could explore this in Leamington.
- c) If the new parish pastoral council is synodal the WT team would no longer be needed.
- d) It was agreed that each topic group leader should email a progress report to the WT team before the end of November, or whenever a meeting has been held.

5. Any Other Business

- a) Rose is requesting the names of famous people to approach for sponsorship or donations for fundraising. AE suggested Don Maclean.
- b) PD gave out a parish Vision and Mission statement for all to consider for the next meeting.
- c) JH asked about the visit by Canon Paul Fitzpatrick regarding the synodal process. Fr S would prefer the WT team to invite him, though he is very busy. Fr D suggested it might be possible to fit in a meeting when Canon Paul is visiting St. Joseph's in March.
- d) Paul Northam from the Office for Mission explained his role and how he can support parishes. *(see attached document)*

The next meeting will be in January 2024, date and place to be decided.

The meeting closed with a prayer and blessing.