

## Minutes of the Walking Together Team meeting

6th June 2024 7.30pm in Flint Room

**Present:** Jonathan & Mary Holden (SP), Margaret Dimambro (SP), Anne Elson (SP), Liz Mottram (OL), Gill Ayers-Hunt (OL), Paul Hayden (OL).

**Apologies:** Susan Chan (SP), Fr. Stephen Day, Fr. David Hartley.

Anne Elson chaired the meeting, which began with the Synod prayer.

1. **Minutes of the last meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> April** were taken as read and agreed.

### **Matters arising from 18<sup>th</sup> April meeting.**

Item 1

***Q: how is the parish information folder progressing?***

***A: Anne reported that it is well underway, sufficient to be put on display (suggesting the table in St Peter's Church porch). Mary currently has the folder and will make duplicates of all content before it is put out for display.***

***Q: has permission been given for the contact details included?***

***A: yes; the list is a work in progress.***

Gill reported that two copies of the information folder for OL are already on display.

Item 1

### **Pastoral Council**

There have been two meetings of a group, now comprising 5 parishioners, (Gill, Anne, Martin Foley, Ira Winter and Paul Milton) to discuss with Fr Stephen the way forward for a parish pastoral council. The process was described as an open discussion with all views being heard.

Item 2

### **Volunteer forms**

The outcomes from these forms were reported at length and a summary of the responses for St Peter's, provided by Peter and Margaret, is supplied as an appendix to these minutes.

The contacting of volunteers for Our Lady's has been actioned separately, and reassurances were given that actions are underway.

Margaret reminded the meeting that 24 had been returned at St. Peter's and 8 at Our Lady's.

Much of the contacting of respondents has been done; some have not been contactable.

Actions arising from this discussion:

- Anne will persist in contacting helpers for church office duties; plans have not yet come to pass.
- Anne feels that more specific information is needed on the nature of the help that volunteers could provide in the office.
- Liz will pick up and contact those interested in following "The Chosen" as a group. Liz reported that she and Ira had a discussion about this, and Ira is keen to launch this group in early August, continuing into the autumn. She favours Saturday morning but would consider an evening (not Monday) and proposes holding meetings in St Peter's parish centre (rooms considered). She raised a concern about the cost of hiring the space, which would only be covered if sufficient people attended. The Team felt that this should not be a barrier to going forward.
- Various links between volunteers and key people already in the role they have volunteered for were discussed.

***Q: should we publish a list\* of outcomes from the volunteer exercise?***

***A: possibly, with emphasis on those key people already in the role, so that others would know whom to approach. Green paper\* suggested, to match volunteer forms.***

- Paul will provide contact details for the person leading Children’s Liturgy at St Joseph’s
- A potentially useful contact for accessing resources for Children’s Liturgy was identified.

Item 3

### Parish visitation report

Concerns over some content of the report had been picked up from the previous minutes by Fr Stephen, who had responded reassuringly to Liz. However, there was no sign of any further discussion of the report, which the Team were hoping for. The Team felt that the Parishes might welcome an opportunity for this: was it awaiting the outcome of the full Deanery report (concluding meeting 27/6/24)? The matter was reprised in item 4 below §.

## **2. Chair of Walking Together Team and Team activity going forward**

The suggestion of having a rolling duty for chairing the Team was taken up and agreed.

The future status of the Walking Together Team (as opposed to the Combined Topic Groups) was questioned. After some discussion, it was agreed that the Team would continue to meet to plan and coordinate the synodal project as a whole and would receive minutes from the joint Groups meetings for information without going through them in detail. Distinct from this, the meetings of Topic Groups would direct and monitor detailed implementation of projects.

***Gill stated her intention to step down from the Team*** while continuing her involvement through the Groups meetings. She was thanked for her service in all respects.

## **3. Reports from other meetings**

The Groups meeting minutes from May 2<sup>nd</sup> were considered.

***Q: is Group 3 to remain separate from Groups 1 and 2 with regard to meetings?***

***A: Liz felt that Group 3 could be included in the joint Groups meetings. She will alert the members of Group 3 to the next joint meeting, and she will be chairing that meeting.***

Date of 4<sup>th</sup> July may be a problem as it is polling day. ***Liz proposed a new date of 11<sup>th</sup> July and will take action to notify all concerned.***

As suggested in Item 2, the Team did not dwell on the detail of the Groups meeting.

## **4. AOB**

### **a. Jonathan’s article**

Jonathan tabled a draft article, which had been shared with some members of the Team already and amended in response to their comments. He asked all present for their views on its suitability for publication in the Newsletter EXTRA magazine.

The article recognized the competing demands for finance of maintaining and servicing the parish buildings, and of growing and sustaining the parish community, for example by investing in communications, IT and other technology, and possibly in additional paid staff. The article strongly recommended using synodal methods such as ‘Conversation in the Spirit’ to engage the parish community and to obtain the guidance of the Holy Spirit in making the necessary decisions.

The large matter of “Infrastructure” had not yet been addressed by a specific group. Some attempt to describe what “Infrastructure” encompasses was made:

- communication,
- use of technology,
- use of space,

- maintenance/development of buildings and premises,
- central administration,
- finance.

A need was expressed to link the Finance Committee and any future Buildings Committees into the broader and synodal consideration of parish interests, involving Parish Pastoral Council when formed. It was felt that otherwise financial decisions would always be reactive, responding to crisis management of urgent building and maintenance works.

It had been apparent from a previous meeting that Fr Stephen had felt that the Finance Committee is “in development.”

The Team responded to Jonathan’s article sympathetically. They suggested it was not for the Extra, but that it should be discussed directly with Fr Stephen. It might be that some discussion of the matters contained in it might be developed at a parish meeting on the Visitation report (see Matters Arising §, above).

b. Joint Outreach Team

Margaret drew the Team’s attention to Peter’s recent communication about combining the various roles he has taken on into a joint Outreach Team, now that more volunteers have been identified for supporting him. The areas of evangelisation include making contact with:

- new parishioners
- parents of the newly baptised
- parishioners who are not attending church.

5. The next meeting of the Walking Together Team will be Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm [at St Peter’s?](#) ***Jonathan agreed to chair this meeting.***

The next meeting of the Groups will be Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> July (tbc) at Our Lady’s.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm with a prayer.

**Appendix:** summary of responses to volunteering form (no names) – St Peter’s

<b>Building Community</b>	Number of responses
Organising and helping at social events	2
Refreshments after Mass	2
Bereavement group	3
<b>Welcoming and inclusiveness</b>	
Welcoming in church / elsewhere	3
Contacting non-churchgoers	2
Joining SVP or SPAN	1
Registration and follow up of new parishioners	2
Ecumenical involvement	1
Helping at weddings and funerals	3
<b>Deepening our Faith</b>	
Altar serving	2
Joining a choir	1
Following The Chosen	4
Reading at Mass	3
Prayer groups	4
Organising other faith initiatives	1
Sacramental prep or support	Baptism 3 FHC 3 Confirmation 2 Marriage 1
<b>Families and Young people</b>	
Children’s liturgy	3
Young adults	3
Liaison with schools	1
Mother and toddler group	3
Youth ministry	3
<b>Parish infrastructure</b>	
Office work (various)	5
Technology (audio visual and other IT)	3
IT communication – website, social media	2
Print communication – newsletter, Extra	1
Use of spaces (church, halls, land)	1
General maintenance	1
Gardening	1
Cleaning	2
Other areas mentioned	Reader training Writing narrative Parish finance plans Coffee after each Mass Helping with Eucharistic ministry Supporting working party for VA schools