

## **St Mary's Joint Parish Council and Finance Committee Meeting**

**2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025, 7pm**

### **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** Peter T (chair), Sean H, Pauline L, Larry C, Malcolm T, Veronica H, Simon R, Sue F, Ann S, Joanne T (minutes)

**Apologies:** Jane M

**Opening Prayer:** Led by Fr Sean

#### **Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 & matters arising:**

- Intro Slide at beginning at Mass – we have been using daily artwork as highlighted by Christian Art website. This seems to be working well as an aid to draw parishioner attention and reduce the chat.
- Digital Hymnal - Rep from Digital Hymnal visited St Mary's to give a demonstration of the equipment. Sound and quality were very good. The technology will work with our existing sound system. Hymns follow same numbering as in our Hymn books and words and tune are the English versions which we use. Tone and tempo can be adapted to create and save personalised parish settings. This will take a little trial and error so we will have to ask for patience until we get this right. System can support funerals if external music is requested. No additional extras are needed so we can use the standard package which is priced at £2,349.00 (including VAT) It will be essential to recruit more volunteers to a musical ministry role so we have a number of people trained on the system and confident to use as needed. We will also need a new table / shelf that can accommodate current laptop and hymnal equipment. It was suggested a lower desk would be better to allow operator to be forward facing. It was also suggested something lockable would keep equipment safe and permanently in one place.

**ACTION:** Lary C offered to look at some potential designs / options.
- Speakers – sound system is clicking again. If new speakers are required it would be sensible to address before decorating the church.

**ACTION:** Clockwork are in on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April
- Live Streaming – request that camera focuses on readings on screen rather than the reader during Sunday Mass

ACTION: Joanne T to email Robert

- Car Park – Cllr Darke has been contacted re the possibility of having a Keep Clear sign painted on Great Lime Road at car park entrance. He has responded and is taking up with Highways Department at North Tyneside Council. There was a discussion re widening entrance to avoid issues on a Sunday when people are trying to arrive and leave at the same time. Concern was raised this would reduce number of parking spaces available.

ACTION: Fr Sean to suggest to Alison that Sunday Baptisms are at 12:30pm rather than 12noon.

FHC Catechists to look at best time to hold prep classes next year

- Bike Racks – Parishioner asked about possibility of having bike racks in car park to encourage parishioners to cycle to church. North Tyneside Council provided a contact who has quoted £508.30 to supply and install racks for up to 10 bikes. This was received positively. It was agreed the racks should go outside men's toilets which will also discourage people parking on the grass.

ACTION: Joanne T to progress.

- Car Park Signage – concern from some members that sign is too small. We are required to have the disclaimer, let people get used to it before ordering anything new straight away.
- Holy Week Masses – adding a Penitential Service on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm at St Mary's.

### **Finance and Buildings Update:**

End of Financial Year Balance - £35,085.94 (Current Account)

Total receipts - £72,451

- Includes offertories, donations, legacies etc

Total payments - £57,569

- Includes all utilities, repairs, housekeeping, levy, administration costs

The account is out of balance as we have had a legacy paid in but not yet paid out for the agreed improvements to the church.

We will see the reverse in Financial Year 2025/26 but we can account for this.

Special Collections - £5,864.48 donated by St Mary parishioners.

Full Year End Report must be submitted to diocese before end of May 2025.

ACTION – Joanne T to complete.

**\*\* Addendum \*\***

In response to questions raised after meeting – the issue with the drains has been addressed. Roots from the apple tree outside front of the house were causing the blockage. ID Construction are using resin barrier around trench to avoid this happening again.

- Decorating – work will take place during the second and third week of May. We will receive one invoice for the church and one for the hall. A suggestion to paint behind the altar a deep red to compliment icons, paschal candle and cushions was very well received.
- Kitchen – we are waiting for quotes for update of kitchen in the house. A new oven is needed and extractor fan to dangerously low when using hob. Members stressed the importance of ensuring the house was adequately equipped and maintained and that it provided comfort.

### **Items from Fr Sean not on the agenda:**

Recent Bishop's Letter suggests a growing emphasis on the role of Partnerships to ensure continuous engagement with laity. It is therefore incredibly important that we have a parish council rep at these meetings so we have a voice in any major discussions and / or decisions made. Fr Sean is attending the next meeting (Fri 4th April) but asked that the parish has a representative to attend subsequent meetings. He will suggest future meetings start at a later time so those working are able to attend.

**ACTION:** Chair has volunteered to attend future meetings on behalf of St Mary's.

### **Holy Island: Parish Pilgrimage on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> August**

We have paid a 10% deposit to secure coach booking. Full cost is £795 and coach sits 51 people. It was agreed to have a sign up sheet in each church after the Easter holiday. 25 names from each parish with a reserve list. We will be looking for charge £15 per adult and £12 per child to go towards cost of coach.

**Safeguarding:** No update / concerns raised.

### **Any Other Business:**

From a parishioner

- i) **When can we start shaking hands again during Sign of Peace?**  
People who wish to shake hands can do so. Others may prefer to continue to bow their heads or acknowledge with slight wave.
- ii) **Why are there no names on the sick list anymore?**  
For GDPR reasons we cannot list full names publicly on a newsletter without the express permission of the person in question. Given this may not be appropriate to secure, names are not included.
- iii) **Can parishioners paying tax on their pension still sign up to Gift Aid?**  
Yes. As long as you are a UK based tax payer you can sign up to Gift Aid to allow charities to claim on any donations made.

From a parishioner

Frustration raised over the shortcut path that has appeared through the hedgerow from car park onto footpath alongside Great Lime Road. Can we erect chicken wire to stop people using it?

The members felt this solution would be highly dangerous and inappropriate. The path has been formed by children and parents from the school finding a way to avoid the children having to walk into or in front of the cars coming in and out of the car park.

ACTION: Fr Sean to speak to the gardener about clearing a single pathway from carpark over to footpath and making it identifiable with some gravel or wood chipping. This will keep one route and protect further damage along the length of the hedgerow.

**Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> June at 7pm

**Closing Prayer:** Led by Fr Sean