OUR LADY OF LOURDES

HARPENDEN

MEETING OF THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

MONDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2024

7.30pm

'Upper Room'

MINUTES

PRESENT: Canon, Eddie, Mark, Jon, Dom, Jane, Katie, Dennis, Lucy, Fernanda.

1. Opening Prayer – said by Canon.
2. Welcome & Apologies – Liz (returning from Ely), Caroline, Sarah (resigned.)
3. Minutes of last meeting – Lourdes Hall: group being formed to examine the future of LH. Undercroft steps being repaired/replaced (by September 28th.) Children's Liturgy set to restart end of September. Thanks to Katie and all those involved in the Summer Concert.
4. Matters Arising – Dom gave a presentation on these issues (also circulated to the PPC.) Points from discussion:
   - *Inclusivity* -
   - Needs assessment has to be done really carefully so any intervention is well-judged. Information important.
   - People need to be truly welcomed.
   - Concerns about social pressure to identify with a group.
   - Church teaching is perceived to be unwelcoming. How can this be dealt with?
   - How much do we want to make a point of difference?
   - Teenagers are on the whole very accepting.
   - Need expert guidance (from Farm Street etc.)
   - Importance of encouraging diversity – can lead to better outcomes.
   - Take small steps forward – notices in newsletter, website, references in homily etc. Try to draw out reaction from people. 'Subtle but powerful messages.'
   - More education needed on the topic.
   - Communication is vital. What do LGBT etc. people want?
   - Broadening the culture of welcome.
   - Hitchin parish website worth exploring.
   - *Safeguarding – Healing event/opportunities* –
   - Anger in some quarters in the parish that this issue was not properly dealt with at the time.
   - Support from others (e.g. Farm Street) again important.
   - Day of Prayer not just related to specific events in our parish.
   - Communication again important.

ACTIONS:

- Dom and Fernanda will assist Canon to develop actions on Inclusivity.
- Day of Prayer for the Victims and Survivors of Abuse will take place during the Easter Season.
- Jon will put the website address in the minutes. https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin/

5. Parish Mission
   - *Alpha* –
   - For the parish.
   - Need a team of people.

- Easy to present. 10 sessions.
- Canon keen to see it happening.
- Not just for new Christians.
- Fernanda willing to help. Will discuss with Canon.
- Will publicise and ask for volunteers.

6. PPC Links with Parish Groups –
   - Several members of the PPC have made contact with their groups. Mixed reception but generally positive.
   - Parish support needed for FLAME.
   - New catechists will be needed.
   - Help needed with youth group.
7. Any other business –
   - Very positive feedback on Confirmation.
   - First Holy Communion – preparation clash with Sunday sports – perennial issue. Parents have to make a choice.
8. Date of Next Meeting –
   - Monday November 4th 2024 at 7.30 p.m.