

Parish of Effingham and Fetcham
3rd Parish Annual General Meeting held on 14th April 2016
at St Alphege Hall Effingham

Present:

Fr John Inglis

Deacon Ian Wells

Michael Bray – Chairman PPT

Chris Tailby – Parish Treasurer

Marion Cutler

And 35 parishioners

Joanne Matthews – PPT Social and Events

Keith Walker – PPT Church Support and Teams

Sue Williams – Gift Aid

Eugene Mcaffery

Fr John opened the meeting with a prayer.

Introduction.

Michael Bray welcomed all who were attending and thanked them for coming. He highlighted some of the successes of the year, including more people joining the Parish, the Parish contribution to the Diocesan Jubilee, the Sons and Daughters Seminars, the growth of the Parish Grandparents Group, Connect, Tuesday Teas, the building of the Annex at Fetcham and St Alphege Hall Effingham, and the opening of our doors to the Friday Meetings Group. He highlighted the contribution of and offered thanks to the Parish Planning Team and the Parish Finance Team for the amount of often unsung and daily work that they do and without whom none of this would have happened.

Sacristy and Services.

Father John spoke about the success of the Children's liturgy, especially at the 11am Mass at Fetcham, the continuing hard work of those parishioners who contribute to the 1st Communion and Confirmation programmes and the need to encourage more parishioners, youngsters and adults to become Servers. He also stated that the Parish still needs a Sacristan to coordinate the servers and maintain the sacristies at both churches. He expressed his grateful thanks to all those involved for their support.

He highlighted the success of the Sons and Daughters Programme, the fact that most people stayed the course and the benefits many parishioners received from the course. There would be follow up workshops run by John Vaughn-Neil looking at the development of small house groups, a suggestion picked up from feedback forms,

Finally, he reminded the meeting of the importance being addressed by the Diocese on Safeguarding both for children and vulnerable adults. All parishioners involved regularly with these groups require DBS clearance and Nigel Trott and Eileen Levan were reviewing the clearances in the Parish to ensure compliance.

Finances.

Copies of the Parish Accounts for 2015 were available at the meeting. Chris Tailby, the Parish Treasurer, reported that the finances were in a healthy position with a surplus of £35,776, net of the building works. Collection income was down by £5217 due to number of factors, including people leaving parish, deaths and retirements. However, that was counterbalanced by rise in Donations, for weddings, funerals and other gifts. Gift Aid had increased, but rent and facilities use income were down due to a reduction in the Fetcham Presbytery letting period and also less income from the Halls due to the building programmes.

On expenditure, he reported that there had been a drop in Establishment costs and a drop in "Grounds" costs from last year. There were less costs on the extension to the Cemetery at Effingham. Recently the Parish has signed up one grounds maintenance contractor for all the properties with monthly agreed costs so he would expect to see a drop in costs going forward. Operating costs, net of the new build costs were down £4579 on last year, but there was building retention money still held back for completion of the works of some £30K. The Parish once again proved very generous in its Agency collections, such as the second collections for CAFOD and other similar charity collections of £11341 which are outside the Parish finances.

The overall net position is that the Parish has £35,776 surplus compared with £40,366 last year. The difference of £4590 was more or less covered by a legacy received in 2014 so in essence the Parish finances for 2015 are similar to those for 2014. The cash position at the bank as at 31 December 2015 was £201,593 compared with £978,879 last year but we have incurred most of the building costs in 2015. Having £200K in the bank is a good position to be in even although there is some remedial work to be done to the fabric of the buildings and we have some outstanding retention money to pay.

He concluded by thanking all the Counters, but the Parish needs more for what is an hour's work probably once a month.

Michael Bray thanked Chris Tailby for the daily hard work and dedication that he has shown over the past year to keep the Parish finances on track and healthy, not a task that can be done without a lot of work. The success of his work was highlighted by the recent successful Diocesan Audit of the Parish Accounts.

Adult Formation

Michael Bray highlighted the 2015 events which included the Parish Retreat at St Teresa's in May, the Parish Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the Diocesan Jubilee in July, the Advent groups and the ecumenical Art in Christianity Sessions before Christmas 2015.

He outlined the suggestions stemming from the Sons and Daughters feedback sheets that included small house groups, prayer groups and the suggestion to start up a Bereavement Counselling group. These would be taken up through workshops outlined by Father John and seeking volunteers to undergo Bereavement Counselling training. A further suggestion to consider monthly seminars on key subjects of Faith and doctrine to enhance Parishioners understanding would be developed.

Marion Cutler outlined the Parish UK Pilgrimage to West Grinstead on 8 October which all agreed was a good idea. The day, for adults and youngsters would include some talks, time for reflection and Mass.

Youth.

First Holy Communion and Confirmation classes continue in a very successful format and maintain the attention of the Parish Youth. However, there is little going on in the Parish targeted at the younger members post Confirmation other than some going to Lourdes.

It is felt that a lot more work needs doing in this area and a person is sought who will bring a lot of enthusiasm to this whole area. Once a person is appointed it might be considered to ask Jack Regan, the Diocesan Youth Co-ordinator, to make a presentation at all Masses.

Church Support Church Support and Team's Coordination:

Keith Walker made an appeal for more volunteers for Extraordinary Ministers particularly for the OLOS 6pm Saturday evening Mass. He reminded the meeting that the Diocese was holding two days of Reflection for Eucharistic Ministers on 16 April at Woking and 1 October at Burgess Hill.

Charitable Activities:

Chris Speirs reminded the meeting of the four main charities that are supported by the Parish; Cafod, Pitstop, APF/Missio and Fair Trade, as well as Michael and Mary Agius' Tanzanian charity. It is under consideration to see whether the Society of St Vincent de Paul might be introduced to the Parish and a speaker would be invited to introduce the subject and see if there was an appetite for a group in the Parish.

He drew attention to the ongoing support for many causes and the generosity of Parishioners in addition to the number of new causes being supported including the Friday Meeting Room sessions linked to the homeless.

Social.

Joanne Matthews drew attention to the very successful events that had been organised last year including the Hog Roast, the Quiz Night, Blessing of the Annex and St Alphege Hall on 1 October and the pre-Christmas Parish supper. She outlined the events planned for 2016 that were listed on the Parish diary of Events circulated at the meeting. Michael Bray thanked Joanne for all the hard work she put into organising Parish events and what a success they had been.

Liz Cross suggested that it might be a good idea for the Parish to have a New Parishioners Lunch to make new people and families feel welcome and as an opportunity for Parishioners to get to know them. This was agreed and a firm date would be circulated with details in the newsletter.

It had been suggested that the Parish organise a visit to the Wintershall "Life of Christ" taking place 21-26 June 2016. It was agreed this would be a good idea and further information would be sought.

Communication:

Keith Walker reported that the Parish website was proving a success with some 150 "hits" each day. Included in the website is the weekly newsletter which is uploaded every Friday. The address is: www.effinghamandfetcham.org.uk. In addition, Michael Bray runs the Parish email circulation list which has proved to be a useful additional means of passing information.

AOB.

The subject of the need for Eucharistic Ministers to wash their hands on the Sanctuary prior to distributing the Holy Eucharist. Father John confirmed that this practice would continue as it was a basic element of hygiene to ensure that they not only clean their hands but were also seen by the congregation to have done so.

The question was raised about having at least one of the Easter Triduum Services at Our Lady of Sorrows maybe on a rotational basis. Father John stated that we were one Parish with two churches, but that the sanctuary of the Church of the Holy Spirit was much better suited to celebrations of this magnitude. Additionally, the Triduum was intended as one service in three parts and should therefore take place in one church. For the rest of the year it should be noted that more services take place at Our Lady of Sorrows Church than at Fetcham and the churches were only two miles apart so there should not be a problem getting to either for most parishioners.

Ian Wells outlined the Grandparents Association, drawing attention to the work it does in passing on the faith, the support for the older generation in aspects of family life, the number who attend and the opportunities available for getting to know other parishioners. He emphasised that it was not just for grandparents and was open to many more.

The meeting finished with a prayer.