**ST ANDREW’S PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING, 14 JANUARY 2021**

**In attendance:** Fr Behruz Rafat (Chairman) Deacon Jolyon Vickers

 Nuala Smith Roger Styles

 Pat Sargent

**Apologies:** James Sharp Sylwia Dorozc

 Lorraine Sharp

The St Andrew’s Parish Council met at 7.00 pm on Thursday 14th January 2021, via Zoom

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| **Serial** | **Agenda Item** | **Action** | **Comment** |
| **1.** | **Introduction:*** Fr Behr welcomed Parish Council members, led the opening prayer and gave the apologies for Sylwia and James and Lorraine, who could not attend due to other commitments.
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| **2.** | **Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising:*** The Minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2020 were accepted as a true account
* Fr Behr expressed thanks to the flower arrangers for their hard work in making the church look beautiful and festive for the Christmas season.
* The timetable for services at Christmas worked well and everything went smoothly.
* There has been no action regarding the statue of Our Lady as yet.
* The communication within the parish has been static due to COVID-19 restrictions.
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| **3.** | **Review of the Sick and Housebound within the Parish:*** Visiting the sick at home and in care homes is not permitted at the moment. Access for a priest should be similar to a doctor or nurse. Fr Behr made a request to visit parishioners in Woodchurch House but has had no response yet. Care/nursing homes are under extreme pressure at the moment. Fr Behr is willing to visit at any time.
* Numbers in the local care homes are:

1 in Acacia House; 4 in Woodchurch House; 4 in Halden Heights* Those who are known to be housebound remain at home.
* There are three parishioners who are very poorly.
 | **Jolyon****Fr Behr** |  |
| **4.** | **Saturday evening Mass from the 1st Sunday of Lent:*** Fr Behr would like to offer the option of a regular Saturday Mass from 21st February. He wants to find out who might be interested in attending the evening Mass and also those prepared to steward the Mass. Roger and Pat said they would attend the Saturday Mass when it resumes provided the Covid situation allows. Fr Behr will write a notice for the newsletter.
* Fr Behr feels that the early Mass on Sundays will be phased out due to parishes sharing (and shortage of) clergy. The Parish Priest at Goudhurst has recently retired and Fr Behr and other priests may need to adapt to changes in the future once the COVID restrictions ease.
* Jolyon advised the committee that the numbers attending the 10am Sunday Mass has dropped to 24 due to parishioners being more cautious regarding the virus.
* Fr Behr said that there will still be a morning Mass on Saturdays, which may in the future be a Traditional Latin Mass. This will be as well as the proposed evening Mass.
 | **Fr Behr****Pat** |  |
| **6.** | **Completion of Building Works:*** Roger updated the committee on the status of the works:
* Close to completion
* We are waiting for the final bill from Ash then a 12-month period of snagging will commence
* Any other work that is needed will be paid for as it arises
* The budget allocation was £145K: the amount spent is £130K so the works are well within budget.
* Points raised:
* Jolyon expressed disappointment regarding the quality of the trims in the Sanctuary. He felt they detracted from the finish. Roger will contact the builders.
* There is a need for training on how to operate the heating in the vestibule
 | **Roger** |  |
| **7.** | **Fire Alarm in the Parish Centre:*** Fr Behr informed the committee that the fire alarm in the parish centre had been turned off and had been off for quite some time. The glass window on the alarm panel had been broken, setting off the alarm which caused the alarm to be switched off by an unknown person.

Fr Behr called out an alarm engineer, at a cost of £200, who replaced the glass. He was advised that, although the reserve battery was probably still all right, it might be advisable to replace it. Fr Behr accepted his advice and had the battery replaced (guaranteed for 4 years) at a cost of £200.  |  |  |
| **8.** | **Database Project:*** Information gathering process:
* 300 letters were sent out to those parishioners who don’t have email
* 40 were returned unopened with “Return to Sender” on the envelope
* 70 replies: some said they were not interested; some of the addressees were no longer at the address.
* Many parishioners have updated their details and have been added to the email list. The number on the list has risen from mid-50s to well over 100. Gift-aided donations were enclosed in some, amounting to over £600.
* Janet will be asked to update the database and will make a note of those who have no email address but want to keep in touch. Once this has been done the names of those who did not reply or express interest will be deleted.
* Roger asked if Fr Behr is still intending to purchase a new database app. He replied that the old one will still be used for the time being and it will be reassessed once the update is completed.
 | **Fr Behr** |  |
| **9.** | **40 Days of Prayer feedback:*** The feedback from those who have participated (in all churches) has been positive.
* People enjoyed the online evening prayer services. Fr Behr and Jolyon will discuss the possibility of more regular sessions in the future.
* It might be extended to a wider area, subject to research.
 | **Fr Behr****Jolyon** |  |
| **10.** | **The Parish Centre in 2021:*** The management of the centre has been difficult this year due to Covid-19 and the building work.
* Jolyon pointed out that the lathe under the serving hatch is damaged. Roger suggested that it could be dealt with at the same time as the statue of Our Lady
* Roger informed the committee that the Parish Centre has been fully paid for – the debt was fully cleared before lockdown.
* Those who were contributing to the building of the centre by standing order agreed to continue to do so for the time being – a total of £425 per month
* The cost of running the centre per annum is approximately £10K. £4K will come from standing orders so approximately £5K will be needed (to include payment made to Lesley and to the gardener)
* Money raised from hire of the centre before lockdown was £1K per month so another £150 needs to be raised per month. An increase in charges was suggested.
* Considering the difficulties Covid will bring in employment, housing, pensions etc Fr Behr feels that the centre should be a hub for the welfare of people in need once lockdown is over.
* Roger suggested that, as people have become accustomed to exercising at home, there may not be demand for physical activities so the church could focus on community aspects.
* Jolyon asked for the reinstatement of the Memory Café which ran for 2 hours on Friday afternoons before lockdown. It could be run at a reduced charge.
* Nuala suggested lunches for the elderly.
* Fr Behr would like to focus on the parish community of St Andrew’s and suggested that we put an advert in the local paper asking groups to bid for the use of the hall for a day, explaining why they need such a space. This idea would fulfil the charitable aspect of the centre even though there is a fee.

Roger feels that parishioners should have priority for booking.Fr Behr said there should be a balance between privileged use of parishioners, bid-for use and paid use. He suggested that Lesley should be consulted regarding attracting different groups Fr Behr will contact her and set up a three-way meeting between Lesley, Roger and himself.The centre has a lot to offer but there are points that should be made clear to anyone who wishes to use it:* There is no alcohol licence
* Food cannot be cooked in the kitchen – only kept warm
* Jolyon pointed out that bookings must take into account the liturgical timetable so that clashes with services do not occur.
* My Tenterden was suggested as a good place to advertise
 | **Fr Behr, Lesley****Roger** |  |
| **10** | **AOB:*** The money owed by parishioners for Christmas cards etc from the repository will be requested once life gets back to normal
* Roger would like to refresh the website and asked for new photographs of parishioners participating in services. He suggested advertising for a photographer within the parish. Fr Behr suggested that the professional photographer/film maker who is covering a funeral might be interested and he would ask him what he would charge.
* Roger asked Fr Behr if it would be beneficial to make changes to the website and whether Fr Behr would want to himself. He would need a password in order to do so. Fr Behr has no immediate plans but will give it some thought.
* Fr Behr informed the committee about the St Andrew’s YouTube channel which was set up for 40 Days of Prayer. There is the facility to put on short films and it offers lots of opportunities and IT’S FREE.
* Fr Behr feels there is a really good atmosphere within the parish. The teams work well and he offered thanks to Jolyon for his tireless help and support.
* **The date for the next meeting was set for Thursday 25th March 2021 at 7.00 pm.**

Fr Behr ended the meeting with a prayer. | **Roger****Fr Behr****All** |  |

**FR. BEHRUZ RAFAT, PARISH PRIEST**

**21st January 2021**