



## **Good Shepherd Parish Think Tank Meeting- 23rd November 2024**

Attendees: Isaac Amieghemen, Julian Caesar, Reg Carter (Chair), Ann Lynch and Fiona Mackenzie.

Apologies: Nicky Gudgeon, Moira Hodgkinson, Philip Martin and Sarah Williamson

### **1. Opening Prayer**

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Reg.

### **2. Notes/follow up of the previous meeting held on 28th September 2024**

The notes from the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record. There were no matters arising. **ACTION: Philip Martin** to post the notes on the parish website and the noticeboard in the church narthex.

### **3. Good Shepherd Church Diamond Jubilee**

Update on Jubilee progress:

- The Cantamus Girls' Choir concert on 22<sup>nd</sup> November was very successful, raising £2K overall with a 50/50 split giving the parish about £1K. Julian Caesar will pass a balance sheet and money raised to Fr Philip. **ACTION: Julian.**
- 24th November is the last day of the Liturgical "Jubilee" year.
- The flower festival was also very successful raising the profile of our church with over 150 non-parishioners visiting the church.
- Overall the year had been very successful. Reg offered to produce a summary to highlight the many successes of the year. **ACTION: Reg.**

### **4. Parish social media & communications policy/calendar**

This was sent to members along with the agenda for the meeting.

### **5. Parish pastoral team - feedback**

Points for the think tank to consider as the Great Jubilee Year of 2025 commences on 24th December 2024:

- How can we better "catechise" parents when they present their children to receive the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion
- Are our schools involved in the parish as much as they should be? How can we strengthen the relationship – particularly with our secondary academy. Whilst recognising the pressures teachers have during their working week and their attachments to their own parishes, the school is in our parish.

- It was mentioned to Father Philipp that there is general feeling that any and all initiatives have to be agreed by him. This NOT the case. Whilst Fr would clearly like to know what is occurring in the parish he has no wish to be in control and stifle innovation. This something the think tank can develop (see 7. below on the proposed change of focus for the think tank).

## 6. Alpha Programme

Reg reported that the first meeting went very well. Five people were in attendance from outside the parish with about the same number from within.

The Alpha Programme is a great step forward in our progress towards becoming a truly missionary parish. We hope this is a springboard for even more progress during the Great Jubilee Year in 2025.

These are first steps and Alpha will become a permanent offering of the parish for the future.

Colleagues are urged to take time to have a look at the Alpha website (Alpha.org)

At the moment meetings take place from 6.30 to 8pm on Wednesday evening and incorporate a 25 minute video followed by a meal and discussion about the video content seen during the evening.

## 7. Parish Think Tank - moving forward

The remit of the think tank was discussed at the pastoral management team meeting and it was agreed that there is a need to reset and review the objective of the think tank. Some of the areas discussed were:

- We need to continually discuss and consider ways in which we can take steps to alter how we can adapt and develop our role as a parish with an outward focus and build on our offerings to our congregation
- We need to consider events and developments within our parish in the light of external developments in the wider community
- We need to consider how we can forge a tighter relationship with other ministries, improve “cross-ministry” links and coordinate what is happening within the church. Perhaps have a co-ordinator to build relationships with ministry leaders and arrange for, say, quarterly meetings to ensure more time for planning and communicating events.

For safeguarding purposes, it was suggested that a ‘lead for each ministry’ would be really helpful. It was decided that thoughts on this for the Great Jubilee Year should be brought to the next meeting, along with any ideas on how we can invigorate the team and make it more exciting. **ACTION: All members to consider and bring ideas to the next meeting.**

It was mentioned that there was too much going on in the church narthex which always seems so busy selling tickets for events, raffle tickets, plant sales, Santa

tickets etc. As the area is small it can be overwhelmed with many disorganised messages and posters; consequently many things are in danger of being missed.

It was suggested that better use could be made of the welcome desk with a dedicated “receptionist” manning the desk to give advice, hand out forms, answer enquiries and be a point of contact for Fr Philipp to direct Mass attendees who require help that he doesn’t need to give personally. Sales of tickets, raffle tickets etc should be moved away from the desk so that people can gain easier access.

## **8. Safeguarding**

Julian reported that he had met with Fr Philipp, Christine Thomas and conducted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Safeguarding Self Audit Report review on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024. The minutes and actions from the last Parish Safeguarding Self Audit 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023 and Parish Safeguarding Representative meeting 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024 were also reviewed. Minutes to be issued via the parish admin office.

Some points from the review:

a) safeguarding posters are on display, but prominence is not given to our parish safeguarding representatives. The team will consider how to improve this by perhaps having photos of the parish safeguarding representatives.

b) Risk assessments need to be reviewed for all activities involving working with children. Julian to explore this with the parish office as well as the need for an ID card for those ministries involved with visiting people in their own homes. **ACTION:**  
**Julian**

Other information- currently there are 106 DBS volunteers, 25 non-DBS (do not have a role which requires a DBS) and those leaving the ministry amounted to 27 (since December 2023).

## **9. Any Other Business**

None to record.

## **10. Dates of the meetings in 2025**

These were attached with the agenda. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2025. **ACTION:** **Philip** to book the parish centre for the meetings.

## **11. Closing Prayer**

Reg led the group in the closing prayer.