



St Peter's Eastern Hill, Melbourne

Parish Council Meeting
7:30 pm 25 October 2023
St Peter's Vicarage

Minutes

1. Convening of Meeting: opened at 7.33pm.

We acknowledge the people of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations on whose unceded lands we meet. We respectfully acknowledge their ancestors and elders, past and present.

2. The opening was led by Fr Michael.
3. Attendance. Fr Michael Bowie (chair), Geoff Bush-Coote, Daniel Ferguson, Peter Griffin, Stuart Hibberd, Daniel Mitterdorfer (secretary), Terry Porter, Anne Scott-Pendlebury, Geoff Sutherland, Michael Upson, Peter Wild, Craig Wilson. Apologies: Mthr Kathryn Bellhouse, Rachel Ellyard, Michael Gronow.
4. Minutes of previous meeting: 20 September 2023 **Moved:** Daniel Mitterdorfer; **Seconded:** Anne Scott-Pendlebury; **carried.**

5. Vicar's Report

Fr Michael offered the following report:

As you're aware I have recently been away, during which time I was able to visit Ghent in Belgium, to see the famous altarpiece which is the original of the reredos in the Handfield chapel; it is a huge and beautiful object, well worth visiting should you be in Europe (it was a very easy day trip from London).

While I was staying in Milan, my friends there arranged for me to visit Neuchatel in Switzerland, where there is a La Trobe Memorial Chapel: La Trobe's wife Sophie, who accompanied him to Melbourne and who has a memorial in St Peter's was a member of the de Montmollin family of Neuchatel; their first daughter, Agnes Louise, who was two when they moved to Melbourne and therefore worshipped in St Peter's as a child, is buried there having returned to Neuchatel and married an Italian aristocrat.

I was invited to give a talk in the chapel on Sunday afternoon, 1st October. I spoke a little about La Trobe's role in the founding of Melbourne and our church, but more about St Peter's in 2023. They are a Swiss Protestant congregation who naturally know little of Anglicanism or Anglo-Catholicism but were very interested both in our tradition and our current place in this city, in particular the work of the Breakfast Programme, and our tradition of a daily Eucharist. They have an active interest in supporting refugees and asylum seekers. The Pastor, Constantin Bacha, was keen to see whether we could establish a link of some kind for the future: I'll correspond with him about that in due course.

Marie de Montmollin, a member of Sophie la Trobe's family, was present and I was given a bottle of excellent wine from their vineyard. My friends (who had arranged to give a piano concert at the nearby Giessbach Falls Hotel the previous evening, so that we could make this visit) then concluded our visit with some well-received piano music, before driving me back to Milan. It was a lovely afternoon and I look forward to saying a little more about it on La Trobe Sunday in December.

I'd like to record my thanks to Mthr Kathryn and all who continued the work of the parish so ably in my absence. As you know Mthr Kathryn is now in the UK, and she will be preaching at All Saints Margaret Street next month.

You'll be aware that, last month, a fire was lit in the courtyard between the hall and the church and some minimal and external damage was sustained, most notably to Social Enterprise furniture and the Hughes Room door. Particular thanks are due to Eugene Chin, our Parish Administrator for the swift

and efficient way in which he handled the aftermath and insurance claim, which is proceeding well.

Our accustomed pastoral ministry, offices and Masses continue to be offered; our daily Mass continues to be attended in pleasing numbers, including by Breakfast Programme clients. There have been a couple of weddings while I've been away and it is pleasing to report that Mthr Kathryn believes she has gathered three confirmation candidates for next year's Easter Vigil. Bishop Genieve, with whom I had a constructive meeting this afternoon, will be present at that liturgy to offer the sacrament of confirmation.

DoM – progress: there were six applicants, from which four candidates have been shortlisted. We are proceeding towards an appointment and will report when we have concluded that process.

Property issues continue to be addressed. Again, thanks to Eugene for following up a number of outstanding items.

As I reported at two meetings ago, I discovered that we also haven't had working smoke and fire alarms in church for more than two years: the set up was not fit for purpose and had simply been turned off. Eugene is close to obtaining a comprehensive quotation for two possible systems for consideration by the Foundation, which has generously offered to cover the cost of all these items.

Geoff Sutherland asked what progress is being made towards the appointment of a Director of Music; Fr Michael advised that the committee formed to undertake the search for a new Director of Music has met and will continue to meet.

Geoff Sutherland asked whether the Parish Council could discuss the financial makeup of our liturgical musical offering, as he was unsure as to whether we had consensus on these figures. Those present advised that we had discussed this matter at previous meetings during the year, and that we had majority agreement that the appropriations were sufficient and appropriate.

6. Wardens' Report

Daniel Ferguson advised the wardens were unable to meet in the prior month and thus there was no report.

7. Treasurer's Report

Peter Griffin noted that we have completed the church financial year and draft year-end reports had been circulated to members of Parish Council. No bequests were received and there were also no unexpected expenses. Daniel Mitterdorfer asked whether the drawdown on investments to fund the P&L shortfall was fully realised in the balance sheet as it now stood. Peter Griffin confirmed that the drawdowns had been fully realised in the balance sheet.

Geoff Sutherland asked when exactly the Parish Council was advised that there was a loss in the Profit and Loss reports for the financial year. Stuart Hibberd advised that the losses had been reported each month when we received the financial reports.

Peter Griffin noted that Bookroom income was down about 1/3 against what had been budgeted. Daniel Ferguson elucidated that this was because customers had not returned to buying books from the Bookroom in the same volume that they had been, prior to Covid. Some of that lost revenue had been recouped by the two very successful book fairs run this year. Daniel Mitterdorfer reminded people that the Bookroom can, on request, order in books of a more general nature. He also suggested that this might be something we can advertise in the pewsheets.

Geoff Sutherland asked whether sizeable donations to the parish were being publicly acknowledged. Fr Michael responded that they were acknowledged, where appropriate. Some donors also wished to remain

anonymous.

8. Safe Worship Report

Rachel Ellyard advised there was nothing of note to report for the previous reporting period.

9. Any Other Business

9.1. Upcoming AGM - Daniel Ferguson

Daniel Ferguson reported that, to date, the Parish Office has only received three reports for inclusion in the AGM booklet. He alerted those present that it was important that the office received these in a timely manner so that they could be incorporated in time for the AGM.

9.2. Prayers for the departed – Stuart Hibberd

Stuart advised that this year is the first anniversary of his mother's death and the tenth of his father's death; neither had been noted in the pewsheet under Prayers for the Departed. Stuart also advised that, after inquiring, he was told that the datafile containing the Book of Remembrance had become corrupted. Fr Michael advised that the office is currently going through records and trying to rebuild the register. Other steps are being taken to ensure that this doesn't happen again. Anne Scott-Pendlebury also noted that sometimes people have mentioned to her that the names being read out during the prayers at Mass weren't sufficiently audible or well-enunciated.

9.3. Supervision of Breakfast Programme clients – Anne Scott-Pendlebury

Anne noted that there have been difficult encounters with a number of people from the breakfast programme. The issue of personal hygiene around food-handling areas was also concerning. Another concerning incident occurred where Anne was personally threatened. Anne has asked if sufficient money were available, whether some type of security guard might be possible. Daniel Ferguson said he had spoken to the Breakfast Programme staff, who advised that they have tried many avenues of care in trying to assist a particular person of concern, however the client was not receptive to the assistance offered. The issues seem to be more evident when Anglicare has completed the breakfast programme and the duty of care over the vicinity passes back to the Parish. Daniel Ferguson then asked the Parish Council to consider whether there was sufficient financial resources available to perhaps employ a security guard for Sunday morning services. He asked that if anyone wished to participate in a discussion as to ways forward, to please get in touch with him. Stuart Hibberd asked if the funding of security for Sunday might be something the Foundation might consider. Fr Michael said this is certainly something we can raise with the Foundation. Fr Michael also suggested we could talk to Jason (the Social Worker with the breakfast programme) to see whether he might have any further suggestions for us in handling this situation.

9.4. Children's Choir – Anne Scott-Pendlebury

In reading the job description of the new Director of Music, Anne noted the point relating to the hopeful establishment of a children's choir. Perhaps this could be linked in with the 9.30am Family service, and the children's choir could participate liturgically in this service. Geoff Sutherland remarked that he had been trying to draw the Parish Council's attention to the need to explore these opportunities. He stated he was gratified that serious consideration was now being given to growing the parish's congregations.

9.5. Smoke-free Areas Policy - Mthr Kathryn (Fr Michael)

Mother Kathryn asked this topic to be raised. Tenants in the Church Hall have raised an issue with people smoking on church property, and the resulting second-hand smoke. Stuart Hibberd, and others, said they were in favour of banning smoking on parish property completely, perhaps

implementing this over time. This would also have implications for clients of the breakfast programme, however Fr Michael said he would discuss the matter with the coordinator of the breakfast programme to see what approaches might be considered.

- 9.6. Times of Christmas services - Fr Michael
Fr Michael noted that there had been discussion around the times of the various Christmas services. He confirmed that the Family Christmas Service at 5pm will stay, but raised the question of the timing of the Midnight Mass, as it was poorly attended last year. Fr Michael has suggested starting at 11pm instead, which a majority of the meeting were in favour of. Following his recent visit to CCSL, Peter Griffin advised that that parish had decided on 10.30pm. Fr Michael will consider feedback on the matter.
- 9.7. St Peter Statue in the South West alcove (former baptistry) - Fr Michael
There is an oddity at the back of the church where there are two statues of St Peter, very close to one another. Fr Michael asked if the larger one might be relocated to somewhere more useful, perhaps the Hall, where it is believed to have come from.
- 9.8. Poets and the Faith - Stuart Hibberd
Stuart Hibberd gave advanced notice that Mother Kathryn is running a series of talks next year on Anglican and Roman Catholic Poets and the Faith, running once a month from March until November, on the evening of the second Tuesday of each month, subject to Holy Days.
- 9.9. Challenging Behaviour seminar – Pete-Barnabas Wild
Pete advised that he will hopefully running a session to discuss this further in November. Date TBC, likely after High Mass.
- 9.10. Branding/Badging St Peter's (update) - Pete-Barnabas Wild
Pete will meet with Rachel, Eugene and Mother Kathryn to discuss this and then come back with an answer.
- 9.11. Seventh-year sabbatical - Pete-Barnabas Wild
Pete advised that he'd circulate this notice via email.
- 9.12. Street Signage – Peter Griffin
Peter Griffin wondered what we might be able to do regarding improved street-fronting signage.
- 9.13. Geoff Sutherland asked about our parish links with universities. He said that he had attended the Trinity College Archbishop's Dinner and was surprised that there was no mention of the relationship between Trinity College and St Peter's. Fr Michael advised that next Monday he is addressing a Formation Group at Trinity College. He and Bob Derrenbacker are working on building stronger links between the Parish and the College.

Meeting closed with the Grace at 8.49pm.

Next meeting: 22 November 2023.

It was moved in a motion circulated via email on 17 November 2023 that these minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of proceedings. **Moved:** Daniel Mitterdorfer; **Seconded:** Terry Porter; **carried by reply all email.**