

Laudato si' Meeting, September 22, 7.00 pm, SMSJ School

Present

Mark Wiggin
Anthony Brown
Katrina Harkin
Kay Curphrey
Keely Ireland
Betty Collinson
Phil Ryan
Liz Cullen

Apologies:

Joan Leeming, Anne Peplow, Malcolm Peplow, Andrew Brown, Antony Brown, Sheila Shore, Margaret Spencer, Laura Ashley, Olga Jackson, Grace Fellows,

Opening prayer

Our opening prayer was taken from Psalm 19 and used at the Season of Creation services held at St. Mary's, Sabden and SSMJ, Clitheroe on 20 September.

The Season of Creation is from 1st September to 4th October, the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi. This season is dedicated to prayer and action for the protection of creation. It is a time to renew our relationships with God our Creator and with all creation, as we join together in prayer. "Listen to the voice of creation" is the theme and invitation of this year's Season of Creation. In his message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2022, Pope Francis calls on us to use the season to "cultivate our ecological conversion" and to pray together in "the great cathedral of Creation."

1. Update on work on the gardens

Anthony shared the feedback from the consultation on ideas for the development of the gardens that emphasised the need for community involvement, publicity and communications, rewilding and funding.

A plan of the SSMJ Church garden area was discussed and it was agreed to start initially with the creation of a wood chip path.

For the school, it was agreed to lay the woodchip and start the next raised bed using the eco bricks covered with hessian. We currently have enough ecobricks for the next raised bed and will need another 300 to complete the other raised beds. Ecobricks need to be in 4-pint milk bottles (not 2 litres) and very tightly packed. We have people who can tighten up the bricks if necessary. Timber will be bought from Empress Fencing.

Meet on the following dates for working on the school gardens:

Sat 8th October 10-12noon at SSMJ School
Sat 29th October 10-12noon at SSMJ School

2. The Big Plastic Count

Results from the national Big Plastic Count were presented to the meeting. Almost 250,000 people took place counting a total of 6.4 million pieces of plastic. The Big Plastic Count revealed that UK households throw away 96 billion pieces of plastic every year. That's an average of 3,432 pieces a year, which extrapolates to a UK figure of 96.6 billion pieces of plastic per year. Of this only 12% of it is actually recycled in the UK. The other 88% is burnt, buried, or dumped overseas.

The SSMJ school results will be added to a short newsletter/website update to ensure that parishioners and school know their important contribution to the national survey.

3. Rewilding parish and school land

Discussion centred on rewilding. Liz Cullen outlined expert advice she had received as to the process for preparing the land and the sorts of seeds to sow. The emphasis should be on what Nature wants rather than what is most pleasing to the eye. The sloping area by the wall in the school field was seen as a good area to test out the process.

4. SMSJ school request for volunteer support for children's outings

The school would appreciate two or three more adults to assist with school trips. Date and venue are:

- 26, 27, 28 September, all day at Outdoor Elements, Simonstone
- 18 October to walk the children down for the Annassi Play at the Grand 9.20am – 12. The play is part of Black History celebration month.
- 2 November, 9.00 am to 3.00 pm, Year 5s. Morecambe Nuclear Power Station (Packed lunch). This is a very interesting outing in itself – a geography topic on renewables and non-renewables
- 2 December 12.20 pm to walk the children down to the Christmas Panto at the Grand Theatre.

5. Fund Raising

SSMJ School has secured a grant of £500 from Ernest Cook.

Anthony reported that he has raised approx. £30 from the scrap metal and used gutter brush, which is available to the group to purchase materials for the gardens on the Church side.

The school has also succeeded in obtaining a grant for materials but as Katrina pointed out the procurement procedures of the school need to be followed for purchases.

6. PTA and Seedlings

The PTA is revitalising and open to assisting in fundraising. Seedlings will assist with the plastic milk bottles and meets on Wednesday mornings.

7. Communications

It was agreed that we needed to share more about the work of the Laudato si group raising awareness in the school and parish. Newsletter and websites will be key.

8. Masterplan

It was agreed that a 3-year plan for the Laudato si Group would help in communicating the purpose and progress of the group to the parish and school as well as setting budgets and fundraising targets. Mark will draft the plan.

Dates and times of next meetings

No date/time was set for a formal meeting which will be decided as needed after the two working days of 8 and 29 October (see agenda item 1)