Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

St. Basil's Church – January 12, 2026

Attendance

The following were present at the meeting: Susan Fekete, Peter Veselovsky, Lindsay Moore-Chung, Jean-Paul Ruszkowski, Jennifer Leddy and Greg Mathieu.

Regrets: Father Adolphus

Opening Activities

Greg Mathieu welcomed all to the meeting and then led the opening prayer.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the December 1, 2025, meeting which had been previously distributed in draft form were brought forward for final review and approval. There were two amendments made to the draft minutes.

MOTION: That the Minutes of the December 1, 2025, meeting of the Pastoral Council be approved.

Moved by: Jennifer Leddy Seconded by: Lindsay Moore-Chung
Approved

Business Arising from the Minutes – The Chair will forward the approved Minutes to Judy Young who will see to their posting on the website and provided to the parish office administration.

Finance Council Budget Process Update

The Finance Council met online on December 16, 2025, to finalize the balanced budget that would be provided to Father Adolphus for his approval. With the addition of a couple of specific items related to significant consumable products used in the church the budget was agreed to by the Finance Council. Subsequent to this Father Adolphus approved the budget and forwarded it to the diocese.

Care for Creation Project Update

Peter provided the Pastoral Council with documentation on the genesis of the project after the formation of the Care for Creation Space Task Force which first met in September of 2024. The Green Team had initiated an earlier request to Father Daryold to find an area in the church where Laudato Si and Care for Creation imagery could be located. After various areas were reviewed the underused baptistry was identified as a potential space. Prior to the formation of the Task Force, some early ideas on what could be done in the space were explored however, no design concept(s) has been developed and shared with the community to date.

The Task Force, with Father Daryold's support, provided a summary to parishioners on May 18, 2025, titled Renewal of a Sacred Space for Reflection on Creation and Reconciliation. This summary (attached to these Minutes) summarized the project's intent, guiding themes and next steps. With the departure of Father Daryold, and an intervention by a parishioner to a member of the diocesan administration raising issues of concern to them, the project was put on hold as a directive to Father Adolphus. In another area of the diocesan administration an application to the Diocesan Reconciliation Committee (DRC) for financial assistance from the Task Force was reviewed and approved over the summer. This application was rewritten by the DRC and sent to the National Indigenous Reconciliation Fund (IRF) for consideration with the Archbishop and Leader of the DRC as the applications signatories. Peter informed the council that an amount has been approved for the project by the IRF.

With the above understanding as a common basis the Pastoral Council adopted the following steps to be taken in the next 2-3 months:

1) Continue consultation with the Indigenous community to ensure authenticity,
2) Have a professional conceptual design, with costing, to use as a basis for feedback with the parish community, and
3) Finalize a plan for parish feedback including an Open House / Forum.

Given potential sensitivities around the project it is imperative that further consultation is done in a considerate and respectful manner.

The council Chair will work with Father Adolphus to ensure that he is in agreement with the planned next steps and will address the project hold directive with the diocese before any further time and effort is expended.

Parish Vitality Ministry

Jennifer reported that the committees and groups under this Ministry had been informed of their budget allocations and were pleased with the follow-up from their planning work at the initial stage of the budget process.

She has noted that updates to the identified liaisons in the various groups will be done with the webmaster.

Liturgy Ministry

Lindsay had liaised with Sister Jean in advance of the Liturgy Ministry meeting of January 6, 2026, to allow her to provide the approved budget amounts to the various groups under that Ministry.

Faith Formation Ministry

Susan reported that the job posting for the Part Time Coordinator of Faith Formation for Children and Youth had yielded three applicants to date, all of which met the prerequisites and skills for the position. Although the application deadline is January 23, 2026, it is heartening to know that we have valid candidates at this stage.

It was noted that a matrix to evaluate the submissions to create a short list of candidates to be interviewed would be required. Lindsay and Greg both offered to forward information in this area to the ad hoc committee overseeing the hiring process.

It is planned to have the short list of candidates completed by January 25th with interviews to follow from January 26th onwards.

Outreach Ministry

Jean-Paul added to the job posting discussion around the need for an Enhanced Police Information Check (EPIC) as is being requested by the archdiocese for anyone working with vulnerable persons. At an earlier time, some people required to have the check were concerned that the information was stored in the USA with different laws governing access. It was agreed that we would ask the archdiocese to provide further clarification.

Peter noted that the upcoming Cultural Fair organized by the MSJC on February 15th is an opportunity to have parishioners learn about the homeland of many of our community members. Jean-Paul advised that the task force behind the event will be sharing promotional information in the upcoming weeks.

Other Business

a.) Safe Environment Coordinator – The person who had carried out that role for many years relinquished it in September of last year. The diocese has very specific guidelines for ensuring that each parish has a Safe Environment Coordinator. We will have to reach out to the community to see if there is someone who would be willing to take on this role and has the necessary knowledge to do so.

b.) Peter showed the council a poster that had been provided to the Green Team from the Laudato Si Movement Canada which functions under the Faith & the Common Good title. It was suggested that Peter have Father Adolphus review the poster contents in case there is content that may not be appropriate to be seen to endorse.

NEXT MEETING: February 9, 2026

St Basil's
Catholic Parish
Ottawa

Renewal of a Sacred Space for Reflection on Creation and Reconciliation

St. Basil's Green Team has drawn profound inspiration from Pope Francis's *Laudato Sí*, particularly its spiritual vision of Creation and its integration of Indigenous spirituality and worldviews. In that spirit, the team has envisioned a sacred, reflective space dedicated to *Care for Creation*.

This would be a space to foster prayer, meditation, encounter and spiritual engagement. Acknowledging Indigenous spirituality as a way of life rooted in relationship with the Creator and the Earth, the team affirms the deep connections between Indigenous and Creation Spirituality.

Fr. Daryold proposed repurposing the unused baptistry—a beautiful but long-neglected space—for this purpose. In fall 2024, a parish-wide committee was formed to explore how the space could reflect both the Green Team's vision and the values of the broader parish.

The committee identified two guiding themes – themes that are of particular relevance to the spiritual and cultural context of the Church in Canada today: Care for Creation and Indigenous Reconciliation. The project is especially timely, marking the tenth anniversaries of *Laudato Sí* and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Planned renovations will improve accessibility, temperature control, and acoustics. The space may include Indigenous art, images of St. Kateri Tekakwitha and St. Francis of Assisi, greenery, and a central table for prayer materials. The baptismal font and original wrought iron doors will remain as sacred focal points. Educational elements like posters and videos are also being considered.

Next steps include consultation with Indigenous community members to ensure authenticity, followed by a finalized plan for parish feedback.

(Over)

Funding will come entirely from anonymous donors and external grants, with no impact on the *Under One Roof* Campaign or parish operating costs. A final proposal will be submitted to the Finance Council and Fr. Daryold by June to enable work to begin in the summer. This will ensure alignment with parish reporting and financial oversight.

Your questions and comments can be addressed to the chair of the committee: Peter Veselovsky (peteratkonnexis@gmail.com).

The other members of the committee are:

Margaret Bott (Green Team)

Mireille Church (Diocesan Care for Creation coordinator)

Michelle Gleeson (Finance Council)

Gerry Moore (Parishioner)

Donna Naughton (Kateri Native Ministry)

Maureen Ramsay (Green Team)

Jean-Paul Ruszkowski (Pastoral Council)

Jim Shields (Premises Committee)

John Williams (Mission and Social Justice Committee)

Fr. Daryold Winkler (Pastor)