

Pastoral Council Meeting Minutes

St. Basil's Church – November 3, 2025

Attendance

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

Regrets: Peter Veselovsky

Opening Activities

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

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the October 6, 2025 meeting which had been previously distributed in draft form were brought forward for approval.

MOTION: That the Minutes of the October 6, 2025 meeting of the Pastoral Council be approved.

Moved by: Jennifer Leddy
Approved

Seconded by: Lindsay Moore-Chung

Business Arising from the Minutes – The Chair will forward them to Judy Young who will see to their posting on the website and provided to the parish office administration. The Vision Letter from Archbishop Damphousse will be appended to the minutes.

Themes & Priorities – Diocesan Pastoral Day

Father Adolphus led St. Basil's participation in a Diocese wide Pastoral meeting that included all the parishes in the Ottawa-Cornwall diocese. Greg attended as Chair of the Pastoral Council as did the Chair of the Finance Council. The day was a combination of plenary sessions led by the diocesan planning team and small group discussions on questions posed by the presenters.

The Director of Mission and Pastoral Services for the diocese, Michael Hall, jumpstarted the meeting stating that; We are no longer in a Christian society. Most people we meet now don't have Christian beliefs and don't share Christian values. He cited institutional aversion to the church and the loss of Christian upbringing in the majority of today's 5- to 30-year-olds.

He also noted this to be an opportunity to see these people as pre-Christian and as a blank canvass seeking to learn. They don't know but many want to know and our role is to offer them an invitation to the gospel.

The diocese is working on a strategic plan to implement the principles embedded in the vision of Go Out- Go Deep – Go Together.

Father Gerard Monaghan, Board Chaplain for the Ottawa Catholic School Board and Episcopal Vicar for English Clergy in the Diocese of Ottawa-Cornwall spoke specifically on the objectives of the **Go Out** portion of the diocese vision statement. He noted the following objectives: (1) Embed Mission in Parish Life, (2) Enhance Welcoming & Proclamation, (3) Respond to Community Needs and, (4) Foster Innovation & Evangelization. These will each be further fleshed out in the diocese strategic plan when it is completed and made available to us.

Archbishop Dampousse summarized the discussions of the day by affirming that the vision is one of transitioning into a missional church. He would like to see all parishes working towards the vision as it specifically applies to their parish and in a timeline the parish can manage. The focus on Go Out! will be the next three years with a goal of full implementation of the vision by 2033.

Members of the Pastoral Council noted the many areas where our ministries, committees and organizations already embrace the Go Out! theme and our budget and planning exercise with each have brought forward further information on how each contributes to that theme.

Father Adolphus and Lindsay noted that the initial introduction of this theme by the diocese began in 2023, and it has been more fully built out since then with the Pastoral Day on October 23, 2025 being more of a reaffirmation of the diocese commitment to these principles.

It was further noted that several of the parishes, especially those with larger congregations, have already started down the road of specific outreach and evangelization programs and can offer some guidance and support as St. Basil's takes on this theme within our various ministries.

Finance Council Liaison

As the appointed Pastoral Council liaison with the Finance Council (FC), Greg Mathieu attended the finance meeting on October 21, 2025 which focused on the upcoming budget process and the status of expenses to date with projections to the end of the fiscal year (December 31, 2025).

Finance Council reviewed the multi-year budget planning exercise that has been initiated with Pastoral Council and the planned operating, staffing and other fixed costs for the parish.

There was discussion on the overall administrative needs of the parish as we move into the next fiscal period and how they should best be met. Jean-Paul noted that in his experience the office is called upon by most, if not all, ministries and committees to assist with tasks that allow their proper functioning. That said, the fact that the bookkeeping function has been taken on by two volunteers since the previous bookkeeper left is not sustainable long term and needs to be resolved in short order. Finance Council and the Pastor will take a detailed approach to how the administration functions going forward.

The next meeting of the Finance Council will be November 18, 2025 where the initial budgetary requests from all parts of the parish operations will be discussed and vetted. From there a final version of the budget will be presented for Finance Council approval at the December 16, 2025 meeting. That final budget will then need the approval of Father Adolphus before it is sent on to the diocese.

The report on capital projects noted that the repairs required in the Rectory have been completed, that the lighting in the adjacent parking area is awaiting Hydro Ottawa scheduling and that the leakage in the rectory basement will need to be addressed with a combination of injection patching, removal of trees near the foundation and regrading the area to slope away from the foundation. A plan for this has been put in place.

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Parish Vitality Ministry

Jennifer highlighted the submissions that were made by the various committees and organizations that fall under this ministry. She pointed out that the planning documents submitted by each provided useful background on the status of each and the objectives for the immediate future. Learning more about such groups as the Prayer Shawl caring ministry and the Green Team 'Care for Creation' focus provides increased awareness and understanding of how they contribute to the parish community. We are fortunate to have so many people participating in these activities that allow our church to Go Out!

Liturgy Ministry

Lindsay provided further information on the children's liturgy program that the parish has had as a focus in recent years. The leaders are teachers who have been recruited by Maria Costantini on a schedule that provides them with an honorarium each time they carry out the leadership role. This is a very important function of the parish that will be further amplified in the coming years.

It was noted that the video system used at mass has many components that belong to the video coordinator and he would like to see some of them replaced with church purchased equipment. As a side note, it was pointed out that the acoustics in the church may limit the ability of some parishioners to hear the liturgies. A recommendation to have a technical inspection of the church to optimize sound has been made.

The Music ministry has provided a budget for new hymn books, a plan for projection of the music at mass and noted the need for greater coordination between the four music groups in the church to benefit the parishioners who participate in the various masses that have music.

Faith Formation Ministry

Susan outlined the sacramental teams that are in place and where there are voids that need to be addressed. Father Adolphus spoke of the need for oversight of the First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation processes for this upcoming year and the need to set dates and communicate with the families of children not attending St. Daniel's School but wish to do their First Communion or Confirmation at St. Basil's.

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He sees this as a responsibility of a youth / outreach coordinator that would be put in place soon with his support.

Susan further noted the submission from the Conversations for our Times team and the rich history of the many guest speakers they have organized since 2020 and their plans going forward.

The entire Pastoral Council agrees that a Part Time Youth / Outreach Coordinator (title TBD) position needs to be developed and supported with the thought being that such a position would enable the parish to Go Out in a more defined manner. Lindsay, who held such a position in Toronto in the past, noted that the initial position description needs to be modest and not one that is all things to all people. She cautioned that the person that we would put in this position would need a strong theological / liturgical background and suggested that a St. Paul's University theology degree candidate may be the type of individual needed. She had some cautionary concerns around individuals from identified Christian youth groups that may not share the same theological underpinnings or methodology of our church.

The outline of the part-time position will be developed in the next week for presentation with the Pastoral Council overall budget request to Finance Council on November 18, 2025. It was determined that the recruiting and interview committee would be composed of Susan Fekete, Lindsay Moore-Chung and Maria Costantini with Father Adolphus. A program budget will be developed to enable the coordinator's work. An on-boarding plan and responsibility will be determined following the recruitment.

Outreach Ministry

Jean-Paul provided his summary of the committees under the Outreach Ministry and their plans for 2026 and beyond. He noted that the Refugee Committee collected and dispersed funds on behalf of the chosen refugee family and that there was no draw on the parish operational budget in this area. The Refugee Committee is not planning to take on sponsorship of a new family this upcoming year. It is now estimated that the cost of such sponsorship is \$ 75,000 per family.

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With specific reference to the functions of the Mission & Social Justice Committee it was noted that they plan to have speakers and presenters as do the Conversations for Our Times and Green Team. Jean-Paul felt that each of these committees need to be aware of and respectful of the areas that each will focus on in their presentations. Checking in on each other when a presenter or other function is planned would be helpful.

Other Business

- a.) The Rebirth of the Baptistry – Greg summarized the status of the committee that has been leading the consultation on using the Baptistry as a transformed space that honors both the care of creation and the ongoing work of reconciliation. The committee has received letters of support from Indigenous leaders in our community. The plan set out by the committee has met resistance from some parishioners who have made their views known to the diocese. Father Adolphus needs additional time to be brought up to speed on the background and consultation process for this proposal and how feasible it is to budget to implement it.
- b.) Contact Information for the Pastoral Council – Jennifer noted that it has been two months since the council was named and their contact information was provided to the office. To date the Bulletin does not have the current council names or contact emails nor are their contact emails with the listing on the website. Greg will follow up on this and the general meeting information provided on the website.

Closing

The meeting concluded with Father Adolphus leading the closing prayer.

NEXT MEETING: December 1, 2025