**St Joseph’s Pastoral Council Minutes - final**

**28th May 2025**

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| **Date of meeting** | **30/08/23** | **15/11/23** | **07/02/24** | **08/05/24** | **21/8/2024** | **20/11/24** | **18/02/25** | **28/05/25** |
| **Fr Stephen Baillie** | **P**  **Chair** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **A** |
| **Fr Dan Fitzpatrick –Parish Administrator** |  |  |  |  |  |  | **P** | **P** |
| **Deacon Paul Graham** | **A** | **A** |  |  |  |  | **P** |  |
| **Peter McMillan - Chair** | **A** | **Resigned** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Alison Macdonald** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** |
| **Angela Gow** | **P** | **P**  **Chair** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** | **A** |
| **Jonathon Cumming- circulation only** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **John Sweeney** | **A** | **P** | **Resigned** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Eleanor Maxwell** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **A** | **A** | **P** | **A** |
| **Maureen Harcombe** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** |  | **A** | **A** |
| **John McCarney** | **P** | **A** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** |
| **Siobhan Anderson** | **P** | **A** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** |
| **Margaret Ross** | **Resigned** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Vincent Smith** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** |
| **Marion McPhillips** | **P** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **P** |
| **Jonathon Carroll** | **P** | **A** | **A** |  |  | **P** | **A** | **A** |
| **Andrew Killin** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** |
| **Clare Walker** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **A** | **Resigned** |  |
| **Frank Rankin**  **(Chair from 15-11-23)** |  | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** |
| **Lucy Carson** |  | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **A** |
| **Kathleen Reid**  **(VC from 15-11-23)** |  | **P** | **P** | **P** | **A** | **P** | **P** | **P** |
| **Louise McKean** |  | **A** | **A** |  |  |  | **P** |  |
| **Veronica Dowling Safeguarding committee rep** | **Item 6 only** |  |  |  |  | **Item 6 only** |  |  |
| **David Melvin**  **Safeguarding committee rep** | **Item 6 only** |  |  |  |  | **Item 6 only** |  |  |

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|  | **Welcome** |  |
|  | Frank welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
|  | **Prayer for priests** |  |
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|  | **Attendance and apologies** |  |
|  | See front page. |  |
|  | **Minutes of the last meeting** | **Actions** |
|  | Proposed: Vincent Smith  Seconded: Marion McPhillips |  |
|  | **Matters arising** | **Actions** |
|  | Agenda items carried forward from last meeting:  **C/f** lack of available contact information for Parish safeguarding.  Information on St Joseph’s website now links to Diocesan webpages with relevant contact information. [Diocese of Paisley | Safeguarding in the Catholic Church | Paisley, UK](https://www.rcdop.org.uk/safeguarding). Information is also available in the bulletin.  Fr Dan advised that a new safeguarding co-ordinator is being sought for the Parish as one existing co-ordinator is stepping down.  **C/f** purchase of a screen for inside the Church.  A screen has been purchased but needs to be assembled Frank asked for volunteers to put it together.  **C/f** from Aug: John to place note in bulletin to advise Parishioners of the significant maintenance programme required and costs that this will entail  **Completed**  **Action:** Fr Dan will discuss with the music co-ordinators of the Vigil Mass about the potential to add speakers to the system.  It was noted that complaints about the sound system continue. Fr Dan advised that the sound system is working as designed, but its effectiveness is dependent on the numbers attending Mass, as sound is absorbed when the church is full. It was noted that the design of the ceiling may contribute to the difficulties experienced. Installation of additional speakers may improve the situation, but this is not guaranteed and may incur considerable cost with no benefit. A mixing board, enabling adjustment to the sound during Mass, might offer a solution allowing settings to be varied depending on level of attendance but this would require someone to adjust it throughout each Mass. Separately, the induction loop may not be as effective with digital hearing aids as with older analogue hearing aids.  Kathleen noted that the difficulties are exacerbated when readers do not adjust the microphone to the correct height for themselves.  Fr Dan suggested holding a reflective session for readers that could include a section on use of the microphone and voice projection.  **Action:** Kathleen will follow up with a sound engineer for a second opinion about additional speakers or installation of a mixing board. It was agreed that the funding would be available if either of these offer a genuine solution.  **Action:** Ali will speak to Heidi about running a short reflective session for readers.  **Action:** Fr Dan will review the form requesting baptism and add a question asking for consent for childrens’ names to be included in the prayers for intentions.  **Carry forward to next meeting**  **Action:** Frank will raise availability of the St Joseph’s Hall with the hall co- ordinator and ensure contact details are available.  **Agenda item**  **Action:** Frank will raise with the parishioner who produces the bulletin to see if hyperlinking headings to content is feasible.  **C/f to next meeting**  **Action:** Eleanor to raise the need for an appeal for new Eucharistic ministers with the Eucharistic Ministry co-ordinator. If agreed, Fr Dan will raise this with Canon Stephen.  Eleanor advised prior to the meeting that she has not yet heard back from the co-ordinator of Eucharistic ministers. Fr Dan advised that he had not heard from the Eucharistic Ministry co-ordinator.  **C/f** Andrew to direct young leaders to work more closely with the Parish.  **Agenda item under Parish Youth Engagement Programme**  **C/f** Frank to pick up future plans for Parish retreats with Deacon Paul.  **Agenda item**  **C/f** review of Parish communications to next meeting  **Agenda item**  **C/f** recruitment of new PCC members to next meeting.  **Agenda item**  **Action:** Frank will connect with the head of religious studies in St Ninian’s and ask for volunteers to represent young people on the PCC.  **Agenda item**  **C/F** discussion about second collections to next meeting.  The ongoing financial demands of frequent second collections were discussed. With the Parish debt having been paid off, the Parish is now on a more sound financial footing with the potential to reduce the number of building fund collections when the scheduled dates result in second collections falling on consecutive weeks. Fr Dan advised that national and Diocesan second collection dates are agreed in Dec for the forthcoming financial year. He suggested reviewing building fund collection dates in Jan 2026 once the dates for 2026-27 are agreed and scheduling these to avoid weeks with consecutive second collections.    C/F to review in Jan once the dates for Diocesan and national second collection dates for next year have been agreed.  **Action:** Kathleen will explore the potential for projecting prayers, readings and hymns onto the wall behind the Altar with those who are involved in projecting hymns at the 4pm Vigil.  **Agenda item**  **Action:** Kathleen to organise Adoration on Monday evenings during Lent with Frank acting as a backup.  **Completed.** Frank thanked Kathleen for her efforts.    **Action:** Frank to follow up with Eleanor regarding arrangements for the Good Friday Pilgrimage.  **Completed.**  **Action:** Frank will place a notice in the bulletin advising that the PCC had agreed to a change in process for prayers of intentions.  **Completed.** The improvement was noted. |  |
|  | **PC membership and YP representation** |  |
|  | Frank advised he had spoken to Jonathon Cummings about representation from St Ninian’s pupils for the forthcoming school year. He plans to have a further conversation now exam season is over.  **Action: Frank to follow up with St Ninians regarding pupil representation on the PCC.**  There was a discussion about recruiting additional members to the PC. There are currently 14 lay members and the constitution allows for a maximum of 16. It was felt the issue is not with the numbers of volunteers on the PCC but with the need for additional volunteers to support work being taken forwards by the PCC. The difficulty in motivating volunteers within the Parish and how to generate greater enthusiasm was noted. This is a topic that has frequently been discussed by the PCC but without progress or an obvious solution. One option would be to ask for volunteers from the Parish to help with specific areas such as evangelisation. | **FR** |
|  | **Parish Finance Committee Subgroup Feedback (paper attached)** | **Actions** |
|  | **Parish Finances**  The full parish accounts for 2024 were made available by the Diocese recently. The financial position of the parish is very healthy, with income in the last 2 years restored to and increased above that of pre-pandemic levels, in part as a result of the generosity of Parishioners. Income includes all first, second, special and Diocesan collections as well as legacies and donations. In addition, paying off the Parish debt has allowed the Parish to generate a surplus.  Expenditure includes all special and Diocesan collections, running costs of the Parish and ongoing financial pressures to address long-standing maintenance issues.  The Parish continues to transfer surplus funds from our main account to the Diocesan investment account, generating interest at 2.5%. This surplus funds maintenance costs.  **Building maintenance**   * **External Boundary Wall repairs**   Following the structural engineering report in June 2024, the remaining recommendations are being implemented, removing growth from external side of wall and cutting down trees to stump level.  Three contractors submitted bids in response to the tender for repairs issued by Project Managers KSNPM. A contractor has been appointed following review by the project managers and a sub-group of the PPC. An on-site meeting is scheduled for the end of May, also involving the Diocesan property manager, with work anticipated to take 4-6 weeks over the summer. This will include replacement of all broken bricks, all mortar joints, provision of new copings and a render on part of the internal wall. The Parish has have sufficient funds to pay for the cost of repairing this wall without additional fundraising. The contractor will also be asked to undertake several smaller jobs such as repair of the front wall coping, relining the car park, repairing loose bricks on another wall, and repairing roughcast on the garage.   * **Re-roofing of church house**   Given further leaks and water ingress, re-roofing the church house will be the next major project. Discussions with the Diocese Property Manager are ongoing and a chartered building surveyor survey will be conducted to assess all aspects of the fabric of the parish buildings. The survey will include guideline costs. Repairs will be categorised as urgent, essential and desirable. This will enable roof repairs to progress and help with prioritisation of other issues. These include:   * occasional flooding in lower hall – investigations are underway. * Upgrading central heating system for chapel house (30+ years old) * Upgrading central heating system for church and hall (20+ years old) * Hall refurbishment (external & internal) – see section 7 * **Maintenance Budget**   Work completed includes cleaning of church front turret, the wall and paving at side entrance to church, cleaning and repointing the steps at the front entrance, clearing weeds in remembrance garden and repair of the original emergency lighting.  Work is underway to clearing the drains in church grounds with a date to be confirmed for further exploratory work.  Quotes are being sought for installation of a new handrail at side entrance of church and replacement of external church front doors, although this will be placed on-hold until the roof repairs are completed.  **Survey of Hall usage**  A survey of hall users and parishioners was undertaken with 61 responses received. Some responses covered several groups.  Findings:   * No new information about hall usage/potential usage was generated. * COVID has had a significant impact on parishioners and society in general, and this has changed socialising habits e.g. bars / restaurants may hire out spaces for reduced or minimal cost. * The need to improve the marketing and booking system for the hall was a recurrent theme. There is currently no information available about booking, either on line or in the bulletin.   Findings were discussed at the most recent finance committee meeting and the following points emerged:   * There are restrictions on hall usage relating to physical location and space   + Limited parking   + Connection to Church House   + The upper hall is split over 2 levels, reducing accessibility to the upper level for those with some types of physical disability including wheelchair users   + The space is not flexible – only one group, however small, can use the hall at a time.   + No arrangements are in place to clean the hall after use. * Uncertainty about whether the hall’s function is primarily to support the community aspect of St Joseph’s parishioners or to serve the wider community with the potential for income generation.   It was agreed to update parishioners on the survey findings after summer. A 3- 6 month trial will take place taking hall bookings for limited uses such as dance/judo groups, that will attend to hall cleaning at the end of their session. Information will be provided to those using the hall on how to do this. This would not include social events that generate additional cleaning and administrative costs.  This trial will require a small group to oversee the development of a hall booking system including an on-line diary and an on-line booking request system. It was agreed membership will need to include the person who operates the booking system, the volunteer who ran the survey and representation from groups currently using the hall.  Feeding back the results of the survey offers an opportunity to recruit other volunteers.  Fr Dan suggested maintaining an evening each week for Parish events.  **Action: Establish SLWG to develop a hall booking system -**  **Frank will seek volunteers via the PCC Whats App group and John McC will follow-up regarding those previously involved.**  **St Joseph’s Lottery (previously the 200 Club)**   * 378 entries at end-April 2025 compared with 99 at end-October 2021 * The bank has scrapped the proposed charges for running the account * A new promotion to encourage more members is currently underway. | **FR/JMcC** |
|  | **Mass Times** | **Actions** |
|  | Given time pressures on 9:00am, Fr Dan proposed moving the second Sunday morning Mass from 10:00 to 10:30. It was agreed this could be tested over summer before making any final decisions.  **Action: Move Mass times for trial period over July and August and assess feedback.**  **Frank will place information in bulletin and posters in Porches** | **FR** |
|  | **Parish Pastoral Plan** | **Actions** |
|  | On hold until Parish situation is settled. |  |
|  | **Technology to enhance worship – Kathleen Reid** | **Actions** |
|  | Kathleen advised she had spoken to the Sat 4pm Mass music co-ordinator about the potential to project hymns during each Mass. They advised that the templates and all previous hymns used are saved and copyright issues would be taken care of through existing processes. Each cantor would need to agree hymns on the previous Wednesday and create the PowerPoint, inserting hymn slides into the existing template.  Frank noted that for some parishioners, including those who are neurodiverse, the projection may provide distracting. It was noted that the music input to Masses varied. There is no organist at 9:00am and no music at 4pm on a Sunday Mass, so it is unlikely hymns would be projected at all Masses.  PCC agreed that in principle that projecting the hymns at some Masses is a useful step. However prior to any decisions being made, this would need to be discussed with the music co-ordinator. It was suggested that the music co-ordinator should be approached to bring the cantor group together to discuss this. Kathleen agreed to attend this meeting.  **Action: Fr Dan will speak to music co-ordinator about setting up a meeting of cantors to discuss the potential to project hymns.** | **FrD** |
|  | **Update on Parish Youth Engagement Programme** | **Actions** |
|  | Andrew has contacted Jonathon Cumming regarding young leaders in the Parish however he is yet to hear back. He will follow this up. |  |
|  | **Evangelisation**   * **Parish retreats** | **Actions** |
|  | Frank advised with the review of use of the Hall that he is keen to do more in evangelisation.  The group discussed the last retreat run by the Ignatian Spirituality Centre, which was well-attended and received very positive feedback. It was noted that a whole day weekend event means it is not accessible to all Parishioners such as those with children and it is important to vary the format to allow all parishioners the opportunity to attend, such as running a retreat over three evenings.  Frank advised of discussions with Deacon Paul about running retreats in St Bridget’s with the purpose of moving out of the Parish. However he noted that attendance by St Joseph’s parishioners at events in St Bridget’s during Lent was very low so had some concerns that Parishioners may not travel. However the Sycamore programme that ran in St Joseph’s during Pentecost was similarly not well attended by parishioners.  Kathleen offered to co-ordinate retreats going forwards.  As well as physical events, there is an opportunity to promote evangelisation through the bulleting and via social media. Kathleen has agreed to co-ordinate that as requested that all group members share information. |  |
|  | **Parish Groups**   * **Justice and peace** * **Bethany** | **Actions** |
|  | **Justice and Peace group** – paper circulated and summarised below  Ali advised she was happy to feedback any comments to the Chair of the J&P group.   * The group has amalgamated with the Care of Creation Group, (previously Eco Committee), to align with the Scottish Bishops’ Conference structure. * The group is now a Deanery Group, to date including St Cadoc’s and St Bridget’s, altho’ representation from St. Bridget’s is still being sought. The two remaining parishes will be invited in due course. * Meetings are held monthly, including both traditional J&P issues and matters relating to climate change and the environment. New members were sought however despite an initial positive response, only a small core group attend regularly, leading to concerns about the viability of the group.   Highlights   * National Care of Creation Group – attended by the J&P group Chair, this provides a two-way dialog on environmental issues between the national group and parishes. The National Group are undertaking a survey to determine the structural condition of all church buildings and the steps required to render them environmentally viable. * Eco-Congregation Scotland – the J&P group Chair is the Depute Chair of E-CS. St Joseph’s is now a full member of E-CS, contributing an annual fee relevant to a large congregation. * East Renfrewshire Eco Hub - established last year by East Renfrewshire Council. The J&P group has been invited to join the Hub with the intention of providing and receiving information on environmental issues. * Homeless Collection – Two years ago, Starter Packs were unable to accept the volume of goods donated. The J&P group have since been exploring other options. Initial discussions focused on the Salvation Army who have a well-established structure for collecting and distributing goods, with a plan to place donations directly into vans in the Church car park to avoid the problems that arose previously from storing donations in the Church Hall. However unfortunately the Salvation Army do not do collections on Sundays. Currently donations support the regular collections for Help the Homeless Glasgow. * Virtual Walk to Church – aligned to the Compostela del Santiago, this was supported enthusiastically. Depending on resources, another walk may be organised following other established pilgrimage routes. * Ecumenical Peace & Justice Forum – this was disbanded as, following a decline in attendance by local churches, it became unrepresentative. Previous pre-election hustings organised by the Forum proved very effective, so it has been agreed former members can organised hustings through the J&P group. However to remain ecumenical, these will be promoted under the name of the Forum. Former members of the Forum have been invited to the Justice & Peace Group. * Prayer & Reflection Service for Victims of War & Conflict – in recognition of the number and seriousness of worldwide wars and conflicts, a service took place on Sunday 11th May 2025. Unfortunately only nine parishioners attended. * Website – the St Joseph’s website now includes a webpage dedicated to the J&P group activities: [Justice and Peace – Saint Joseph's Parish](https://stjosephclarkston.com/jp/)   **Bethany Group**  C/f to next meeting |  |
|  | **Parish Communications** |  |
|  | Carry forward as part of Parish Pastoral Plan.  **Action: Frank will recirculate proposals for a communications SLWG and ask for volunteers. Ali, Vincent, and John noted they were keen to support this.** | **FR/all** |
|  | **Items raised by Parishioners – Andrew Killin** | **Actions** |
|  | Andrew raised a number of items about which Parishioners had been in contact.   * **Difficulties with sound system in the Church**   This was discussed earlier and is being investigated.   * **Parking bay lines need to be repainted**   The contractor for wall reparations will be asked to repaint the lines   * **9-10 am Sunday Mass times**   The challenge of ensuring all parishioners attending the 9am Mass leave the church and carpark in time for the 10am Mass to commence was raised. Fr Dan has proposed amending the Mass times from a 10 am start to 10:30 for a trial period over the summer.   * **Music available during Mass**   The matter of hymn choices during Mass was raised. It was agreed that different music groups, organists and cantors mean a variety of hymns of different styles are sung at different Masses. This offers a choice for Parishioners.   * **Railings at back stairs exit**   This is on the maintenance and improvement list, and quotes have been sought but it has been difficult to find a contractor.   * **Request for social events on Friday or Saturday night**   It was agreed that the social side of the Parish is crucial however with a current shortage of volunteers, it is not possible to run social events at present. The review of hall bookings may offer an opportunity to recruit additional volunteers to develop social activities.   * **Need for handheld microphone in the hall**   Given that the use of the hall is under review, it was agreed to review this at a later date.   * **Voting of MSPs noted in the bulletin on Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill**   One contact from a parishioner requested that information in the bulletin include how the MSPs representing our community had [voted](https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-17416) in the [Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill](https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/s6/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill), that passed the stage 1 vote on 13th May 2025. Fr Dan advised that this information has been included in the bulletin dated [Sun 18th May](https://us7.campaign-archive.com/?u=7eaf6ab0da897bf9f1a66c409&id=067469a80f).     * **Confirmations in Cathedral**   A parishioner had asked the reason for confirmations being conducted in the Cathedral rather than the Parish Church. Fr Dan advised that this was a Diocesan decision to hold confirmation in Cathedral. |  |
|  | **AOCB** | **Actions** |
|  | **Process for bringing Holy Communion to parishioners**  Eleanor had asked about the process by which parishioners request that Holy communion be brought to them at home in the event of frailty or illness. Fr Dan advised that in the first instance, the Parish priest should be advised and would make a first visit. Thereafter an Extraordinary minister would be allocated.  **Parish Handbook**  Frank advised that in the current situation in the Parish, it has been difficult for the Parish administrator to understand the processes by which the Parish runs. This would also be the case for any visiting priests. St Josephs’ Wemyss Bay has developed a Parish handbook and are offering a template for other Parishes to use.  It was agreed this would be a useful tool but that it would require someone to take responsibility for ensuring it remained up-to-date.  **Action: Frank will follow up with St Joseph’s Wemyss Bay about the Parish handbook template and advise at next meeting**  **New parishioners**  John McC advised that he receives that names of new parishioners who register with the Parish [on-line](https://stjosephclarkston.com/register/). Previously this was passed to the PCC Chairwho welcomed new parishioners to the Parish. However more recently, John has picked this up. John asked if this could be supported by other members of the PCC.  **Action: Frank will ask members of the PCC WhatsApp group to volunteer to form a rota to contact new parishioners.**  **Continuing uncertainty within the Parish**  Ali noted that on several occasions recently she had been approached by parishioners expressing concern about the ongoing situation within the Parish, both in relation to the level of uncertainty and also the concern for the wellbeing of Canon Stephen.  Fr Dan spoke to Parishioners last week at Mass last week, updating that the situation remained unresolved. He advised that he is happy to pass on any notes to Canon S that parishioners would like forwarded and that he remains in contact with Canon S on a regular basis. During the discussion it was noted the challenge in achieving a balance between ensuring parishioners are kept up-to-date and reassured the situation remains live, and avoiding contributing to speculation. It was noted that the ongoing uncertainty is also difficult for Fr Dan. | **FR**  **FR** |
|  | **Date of next meeting** |  |
|  | **Tues 26th Aug 2025 at 7pm.** |  |
|  | **Closing prayer** |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | **Post-meeting note** |  |
|  | Following feedback on the proposed change to Mass times, the 10am Mass will now start at 10:15 rather than 10:30 for the summer months. |  |
| **Action table** | | |
| **Action:** Kathleen will follow up with a sound engineer for a second opinion about additional speakers or installation of a mixing board. It was agreed that the funding would be available if either of these offer a genuine solution.  **Action:** Ali will speak to Heidi about running a short reflective session for readers.  **Action:** Fr Dan will review the form requesting baptism and add a question asking for consent for childrens’ names to be included in the prayers for intentions.  **Action:** Frank will raise with the parishioner who produces the bulletin to see if hyperlinking headings to content is feasible.  **Action:** Frank to follow up with St Ninians regarding pupil representation on the PCC.  **Action:** Establish SLWG to develop a hall booking system - Frank will seek volunteers via the PCC Whats App group and John McC will follow-up regarding those previously involved.  **Action:** Move Mass times for trial period over July and August and assess feedback.  Frank will place information in bulletin and posters in Porches  **Action:** Fr Dan will speak to music co-ordinator about setting up a meeting of cantors to discuss the potential to project hymns.  **Action:** Frank will follow up with St Joseph’s Wemyss Bay about the Parish handbook template and advise at next meeting  **Action:** Frank will ask members of the PCC WhatsApp group to volunteer to form a rota to contact new parishioners. | | **KR**  **AMacd**  **FrD**  **FR**  **FR**  **FR/JMcC**  **FR**  **FrD**  **FR**  **FR/ALL** |