

St Robert's Church Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of Meeting held at St Robert's Centre

Monday 13th October 2025

Present: Fr. Simon Bradbury, Ed Dyer, Caroline Walker, Hayley Rowat, Paul Barry, Dave Baker, Justin Park, Mick Hopwood, Sue Collins, Margaret Tolan, Jack Clarke, Emma Higgins, Nihal Weerasinghe, Matt Blackamore, Richard Boscoe, Marie Baker,

Apologies: Lisa Madden, Karen Shemwell, Jake Hutchinson

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer

Fr Simon opened the meeting with a prayer.

2. Fr Simon thanked the outgoing members of the PPC for representing the parish so well: Jack Clarke who has been a dedicated and hugely capable Chair and will continue his involvement as a Lector, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, member of the SVP and server, Hayley Rowat who will continue to be involved in the parish particularly in catechesis and in childrens' ministry, Margaret Tolan who continues to be involved as a lector, catechist and member of the bereavement group. Marie Baker continues as the powerhouse behind so many events of parish life as well as being involved in the ministries of the Eucharist, music and Soulcore. Dave Baker continues to support and trains the servers as well as serving in many ways behind the scenes and Lisa Madden who will continue to lead the 11am Sunday choir and offer great support at funerals and weddings. Fr extended his condolences to Lisa, Shaun and Daniel on their recent bereavement.

Fr Simon then introduced Dr Matt Blackamore, Emma Higgins, Justin Park, Nihal Weerasinghe and Jake Hutchinson. Matt is one of our parish musicians and the lead doctor on the diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes, Emma a catechist with much experience in the field of education, Justin a member of the Building Fund Committee with a long memory and much experience in the parish and in the business world. Nihal is one of our Lectors and also brings with him great experience in the business world. Jake is also a Lector who was received into the Church last Easter and helped lead the childrens' bible school in the summer. Jake is well placed to represent the needs of the younger members of our parish.

3. Minutes from the last meeting

Teacher Appreciation to be acknowledged after October half term.

4. Matters arising

No comments made

5. Clergy update

The church bell has been reinstated, thank you to a generous legacy from the estate of Sheila Costigan. Parishioners have been wondering how the bell is operated and Fr Simon confirmed it is operated remotely by one of the altar servers.

We had a healthy response to Adoration on 1st Saturday of the month.

The RCIA group now called Journey in Faith has started with 5 new members. Will look to invite PPC members to join to share our faith. A lady attends Tuesday Mass who has expressed an interest and is receiving catechism from Elena.

All Souls Mass will be held on 3rd November. Families whose funerals have been held at St Roberts in the last year have been invited to light a candle at this mass.

Blessing of graves at Stonefall will take place on 2nd November.

Preparation is beginning for Advent and Christmas.

6. Apologia – Elena Roth led the first session looking at the mass which was done beautifully. Ed leads the next session titled the last things on 2nd Nov. A third apologia session will be planned late in January.

7. Building Fund Update

Initial fundraising £52,000 plus £50,000 from the Albert Gubay trust. The parish will be updated this weekend. Quotes have been received for the 1st phase of work; £107k plus £9k for reinstating the stone cross back on top of the church (plus VAT). The restoration for a listed building is not an easy process; however, work should start in the next few weeks.

8. Committee reports

Social - Marie

- Events over the last quarter included:
 - Bible camp started last week with 30 signed on to the course
 - Marian tea in August was very well attended following the feast day mass.
 - A group attended March for Life in London
 - International Mass was a success, 12 countries represented in Church and 14 countries represented in the parish centre afterwards. Donations were received for the building fund and Ukraine.
- Future plans include:
 - All Saints Day party at the 9am Mass on 2nd Nov – children are invited to dress as their favourite saint and take part in a little parade. Crafts and games will follow and Marie is hoping to get the youth involved to help run the party
 - Soul cakes on 3rd November
 - Wreath making on 1st Sunday of Advent
 - Hopefully, a family Ceilidh at St John Fisher School, February time

Safeguarding - Mick

Difficult to report on Safeguarding as a lot of information is confidential. The software for the DBS provider has recently changed. Caroline is able to verify identification in the parish office.

Children - Hayley

- Each class from school will take turns attending a Wednesday noon mass throughout the year.
- Children's Liturgy is well attended – a new family joined this week. There is a teacher that helps lead who comes across from Keighley
- A family made their holy communion over the summer and 2 of the children are training to be altar servers
- Mary's Angels - 7 children started school in September however, 4 new children have joined
- Baptism mass on Sunday 19th Oct, potentially 3 for February
- The Diocesan Children's choir will attend the 9am mass on 30th November for the 1st Sunday of Advent

Any Other Business

Now is about the time we should start to advertise the Lenten project. We are very grateful for the sacrifice for the building fund in securing the church for future generations which will mean future Lenten projects will be possible. All agreed this year to continue securing donations for the Building Fund and not have a Lenten project but will look to have a Lenten project in 2027.

Quarterly review of Standing Orders is on track and improving, which is great news. It was felt by the finance chair that as people were donating to the building fund, the offertory collection might dwindle but this is not happening.

Following Richard and Caroline handing out the Gift Aid letters a couple of people who thought they had been gift aiding their donations hadn't and we were able to get them to sign a gift aid form enabling the diocese to reclaim their tax. Approximately 80% of standing orders are now gift aided following a push by the parish over the last 12 months.

Fr Simon clarified that previous PPC members could submit reports to be read out at future meetings or, if felt there was a need, they could be invited to attend a meeting.

Lourdes – looking to join the diocesan pilgrimage in July 2026. Matt advised Caroline to contact Kim O'Connor. Matt will address the congregation to promote the pilgrimage.

The groups then split to discuss topics:-

1. What benefit do current members of the PPC feel it brings to the parish?
Mix of ideas, ear on the ground, perspective of what parishioners need, range of thoughts, focal point, supports parish priest, helpful for governance and transparency, talent pool at which to pull resources
2. Are there any ways that the PPC can improve its impact?
Check in with various ministries who aren't represented, communications in newsletters, successes, mix and mingle conduit
3. What are the expectations of new members?
Own skills, openness to listen to others, voices heard, treated seriously, confidentiality, work as a team
4. What questions do the new members have of existing members?
Take some of the weight, length of tenure, sub-committees, Fr Simon confirmed there is a page on the parish website with the constitution details of the PPC

9. Dates of next meeting

19th January in the parish centre at the new time of 7pm

The meeting finished at 9pm with a closing prayer.