

Parish of Onaping Falls and Cartier

Parish Pastoral Council Meeting

September 30, 2026

Minutes

1. Opening Prayer

The meeting opened with a prayer led by **Fr. Joseph**.

2. Words of Welcome

Fr. Joseph welcomed everyone and thanked those present for coming together as a family to discuss ways to sustain the churches and strengthen the faith communities.

3. Attendance

Charron, Elise

Cole, John

Dawson Cole, Mary

Farrow, Janice

Guinard, Steve

Ladouceur, Pierrette

Laurin, Diane

Ogah, Fr. Joseph

Whitton, Michael

Young, Sandra

4. Reading of the Minutes

Pierrette Ladouceur read the minutes of the **November 26, 2025** meeting.

5. Motion to Accept the Minutes

Moved by: John Cole

Seconded by: Diane Laurin

Motion carried.

6. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

Roofing work at the churches in Levack and Dowling was completed by **Strategic Roofing**.

7. New Business

A. State of the Three Churches

St. Étienne Church requires painting. However, the work is currently on hold due to insufficient funds.

B. Finances

A significant portion of the meeting was devoted to the financial situation of the three parishes. As indicated in the parish bulletin, the financial situation is critical.

The following figures were reported:

- The total surplus for 2025 was **\$6,016**.
- The average monthly cost of operating the three churches in 2025 was **\$15,492.16**.
- As of August 31, 2026, the combined year-to-date deficit for the three churches was **\$385.62**.
- As of September 30, 2026, the three parishes had a combined financial reserve of approximately **\$22,682**.

It was noted that expenses will need to be reduced further if additional income cannot be generated.

Ways to reduce maintenance costs were discussed, including:

- Snow removal in Dowling and Levack
- Grass cutting in Dowling and Levack
- Church cleaning in Levack

The church in Cartier is maintained entirely by volunteers.

Volunteers currently clean the churches in Dowling and Cartier. **Reliable** provides cleaning services at St. Bartholomew Church in Levack. The possibility of finding volunteers to assist with cleaning in Levack will be explored.

The cost of operating the church in Levack in 2025 was particularly high, at approximately **\$12,700**.

C. Increasing Parish Income

The Council discussed the need to increase parish income in a **sustainable manner** in order to support the continued operation of the three churches.

- It was noted that the **Knights of Columbus** and the **Chevaliers de Colomb** have generously supported the parishes.
- Across the three parishes, approximately **50 parishioners currently contribute regularly through the envelope system**.
- Regular parishioners will be encouraged to **continue their financial support as they presently do**, whether through the envelope system or by direct deposit, according to whichever method is most convenient for them. They are also encouraged to continue their support when they are away on holiday, when possible.
- A particular appeal will be made to **parishioners who attend Mass only occasionally**, such as at Christmas and Easter, but who value the presence of the churches in the community. They will be encouraged to consider a regular contribution of **\$20 per month** to help provide a consistent source of income and support the continued operation of the parishes.
- **Direct deposit or automatic withdrawal** was suggested as a convenient way for occasional parishioners, as well as others who wish to support the churches, to make a regular monthly contribution without having to be present at Mass.
- The importance of **increasing awareness of the parishes** and making greater use of social media was also discussed, particularly to communicate the need for financial support and to promote convenient ways of contributing.
- **John Cole**, a parishioner and financial adviser, volunteered to speak to the three parishes in **October, at Christmas, and at Easter** to encourage financial support for the continued operation of the churches. He also offered to provide the necessary forms and assist those who wish to use **automatic withdrawal** as a means of supporting the parishes financially.
- The proposal was **accepted by a show of hands**.

D. Fundraising

Possible fundraising activities discussed included:

- Chase the Ace
- Lions Club Bingo

Further information will be gathered about these possibilities.

8. Liturgy

Christmas Masses

December 24, 2026

- 5:00 p.m. – St. Bartholomew
- 7:00 p.m. – St. François Xavier
- 9:00 p.m. – St. Étienne

December 25, 2026

- 8:30 a.m. – St. François Xavier
- 9:45 a.m. – St. Bartholomew
- 11:00 a.m. – St. Étienne

Reconciliation

- **St. Bartholomew:** Tuesday, December 15, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
- **St. Étienne:** Wednesday, December 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.
- **St. François Xavier:** Reconciliation will continue to be available before Sunday Mass.

9. Other Business

- The cost of flowers for decorating the churches at Christmas has increased to **\$15**.
- It was suggested that the meeting minutes be included in the parish bulletin.

10. Proposed Date for the Next Meeting

The proposed date for the next meeting is **February 3, 2027, at 6:00 p.m.**

11. Closing Remarks

Fr. Joseph expressed his gratitude for the **fruitful and active discussions**, despite the low attendance.

12. Closing Prayer

The closing prayer was led by **Fr. Joseph**.

13. Motion to Adjourn

Moved by: Mary Dawson-Cole

Seconded by: Michael Whitton

Motion carried.