

## **Annual General Assembly**

24<sup>th</sup> June 2025, St. John XXIII Parish

### ***Minutes of the Meeting***

The General Assembly for 2025 was convened at 18:30 p.m. and chaired by Mr. Joselito Benitez, Vice-President of the Parish Administrative Council (PAC). The meeting was attended by 20 parishioners/participants as indicated in Annex I (attached). The following officers of the Parish Administrative Council (PAC) were present:

Fr. Paul C. Friel-Parish Priest  
Mr. Joselito Benitez-Vice President  
Mr. Augustine Agyeman Duah-Treasurer  
Ms. Camille Roney-Maison Diocésaine de Genève Liaison  
Ms. Sandra Simpson-Safeguarding  
Mr. William McClain-Human Resources  
Mr. Julien Senderos-Property Management

The following officer of the PAC was absent:  
Mr. Oscar Mbeche -President (Work Commitment)

#### **1. Opening Prayer (Fr. Paul, Parish Priest)**

Fr. Paul C. Friel, Parish Priest opened the General Assembly with a prayer, invoking God's guidance and blessing for the meeting. Following the prayer, he warmly welcomed all participants and thanked them for their presence.

#### **2. Welcome and Opening of the General Assembly (Joselito Benitez, PAC Vice-President)**

The welcome and opening remarks were delivered by Mr. Joselito Benitez, PAC Vice-President. He welcomed the participants of the General Assembly, including the PAC officers, and informed them that the President, Mr. Oscar Mbeche, was unable to preside over the meeting due to work commitments. In line with the parish statutes, Mr. Benitez, as Vice-President of PAC, presided over the General Assembly.

He reminded the participants of the Parish Mission Statement:  
"We, the English speaking Roman Catholic parish of St John XXIII, coming together to share our gifts as a community of diverse nations and cultures:

- Celebrate and live our faith through prayer and the Sacraments and service to others;
- Teach and proclaim the good news of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ;
- Reach out in solidarity with all people of goodwill to promote Truth, Justice and, Peace.

Mr. Benitez also pointed out that the Statute provisions were met for this General Assembly's decisions to be valid, including meeting quorum, presiding by the Vice-President of PAC, notice to members of the agenda, communication of date and venue 15 days in advance, accounts and budgets made available on the website at least 15 days in advance, and the meeting taking place no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June.

He then declared the opening of the 2025 General Assembly.

### **3. Approval of Provisional Agenda**

Mr. Benitez confirmed that the Provisional Agenda was available on the parish website since 6<sup>th</sup> June together with the accounts and budget reports. He further confirmed that no proposed additions or amendments to the agenda were received in the last 7 working days. The General Assembly unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

### **4. Approval of May 2024 General Assembly and the March 2025 Extraordinary General Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the General Assembly held on 30 May 2024 were approved by the Assembly without objections nor amendments. (*Minutes GA 2024 have been posted on the Parish website*).

The minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 14 March 2025 were approved by the Assembly without objections nor amendments. (*Minutes EGM 2025 have been posted on the Parish website*).

### **5. PAC 2024 Report**

Mr. Benitez reaffirmed the PAC's role in managing parish resources to support its spiritual mission. In 2024, PAC oversaw communications, finances, HR, Safeguarding, and facilities management, despite economic challenges and reduced post-pandemic revenue. The PAC 2024 report highlighted the following:

- a) By the end of 2024, the parish had 3 890 registered parishioners, with approximately 1 200-1 750 attending Masses regularly. The parish celebrated a large number of Weddings, Baptisms, First Holy Communions and Confirmations. Major events supporting outreach and fellowship included the international Street Food Festival, Goan Sunday, Filipino Barrio Fiesta, Christmas Sale, and the multi-choir concert.



- b) Religious Education served 266 children with the support of 44 volunteer catechists, including 8 teen assistants. Ongoing formation programs such as Marriage Preparation, Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, and sacramental preparation continued to nurture the faith of children, youth, families and adults.
- c) Key policy and procedural updates included a review of financial and administrative controls (2021), HR policies (2022-2023), and a complete overhaul of safeguarding protocols (2023). The renewal of the parish Statutes and By-Laws in collaboration with the ECR was finalized in June 2024.
- d) Maintenance and oversight of the parish's facilities remained a priority. In 2024, major repairs to the 60+ year old church buildings were completed, including a significant CHF 260 000 roof reconstruction project, which significantly depleted parish savings.
- e) Parish revenues grew modestly year-on-year post-lockdown, reaching 727 000 in 2024 (+ CHF 36 000 vs 2023), though still below pre-pandemic levels (CHF 813 000 in 2019). Despite inflation and rising costs, overall expenses were kept stable.
- f) Progress was made in repaying the CHF 5.2 million renovation loan, with CHF 100 000 repaid in 2024. The outstanding loan balance was reduced to CHF 140 000 by June 2025.
- g) The parish continues to maintain an employed staff of 4 persons: the Accountant, Secretary, IT Coordinator and Director of Religious Education. As always, the PAC is very appreciative for all the staff does, officially and unofficially, to support the parish and our activities.
- h) Looking ahead, the report emphasized the importance of continued fundraising and community support to sustain parish operations and prepare for future capital investments, especially in line with the Canton's long-term energy efficiency goals.

The General Assembly noted and approved the PAC Report 2024 by Mr. Benitez (*view full report as well as other PAC reports on our parish website*)

## **6. Parish Finances 2024 and Auditor's Report (Mr. Augustine Agyeman-Duah, PAC Treasurer and Mr. Erwin Policar)**

Mr. Agyeman-Duah presented the financial report and highlighted the following based on the Financial Statement as of 31 December 2024: The parish maintained a strong financial position, recording a surplus of approximately CHF 190 000 before factoring in amortization of church premises (CHF 189 836). Income increased by 5% compared to the previous year, reflecting stable and growing contributions from parishioners. Expenditures were well managed and came in 3% under budget,

resulting in a saving of CHF 23 000. The parish’s liquidity remains healthy, with a cash balance of CHF 450 000 at year-end.

In terms of debt, the parish made significant progress by paying CHF 100 000 towards outstanding loans, bringing the total remaining balance down from CHF 200 000 at the end of 2024 to CHF 140 000 currently. This includes our renovation related loans with the Mission Interieure which were fully paid in 2023. Covid-related loans with the Swiss Government have also been fully repaid.

Mr. Agyeman-Duah expressed gratitude to the parishioners for their continued financial support, noting an encouraging improvement in the redemption of pledges as an essential income source alongside offertory collections. Looking further ahead to 2025, the parish aims to reduce its outstanding loan and continue exercising prudence in managing expenses.

Mr. Erwin Policar, the External Auditor in his report affirmed that the financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2024 fairly represent the parish’s financial position in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Mr. Policar reviewed the balance sheet activity and cash flow statements, and related notes, and found no material misstatements.

The report confirms that the parish’s administration council fulfilled its responsibilities for preparing accurate financial statements and maintaining appropriate internal controls. The audit supports the integrity and reliability of the parish’s financial reporting and concludes that the financial statements are a true and fair reflection of the parish’s operations and financial condition for the year 2024

The General Assembly noted and approved the parish financial statements of 2024 as audited by the External Auditor (*view reports on our parish website*)

The General Assembly approved the renewal of Mr. Erwin Policar as the parish’s External Auditor next year.

**7. Budget for 2026 (Mr. Augustine Agyeman-Duah, PAC Treasurer)**

The budget for 2026 for the parish is set at CHF 754 895

<i>Parish Activity</i>	<i>Budget 2026</i>	<i>Budget 2025</i>	<i>Audited 2024</i>
Parish Ministries and Programmes	59 600	60 600	41 444
Outreach Programmes	106 000	100 000	80 057
Facilities	184 459	184 459	151 983
Parish Administration	215 000	215 000	262 964
Growing in Faith Initiative	189 836	189 836	189 836
Total Functional Expenses	<b>754 895</b>	<b>749 895</b>	<b>726 285</b>

The General Assembly noted and approved the parish budget for 2026



## **8. PPC report 2024 (Ms. Olga Menang PPC Head)**

In her 2024 report, Ms. Menang reaffirmed the core role of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) which is to organize and implement pastoral activities for various ministries within the framework of the Parish Mission Statement.

Ms. Menang noted that 2024 was a successful and productive year. The Council experienced significant growth in membership, expanding from 6 to 11 members which brought greater diversity and strengthened the capacity for ministry coordination.

Key highlights included improved parish communication, notably through the support of Ms. Karen Reyes in creating and distributing ministry flyers with QR codes for easy access to parish information. The parish currently supports over 30 ministries including Catechism, Men's Breakfast, and Walking with Purpose, all aimed at spiritual growth.

The parish continued its outreach efforts, including volunteer support at the Geneva-based charity *Carrefour-rue*, where parishioners served at the soup kitchen 5-6 times throughout the year.

Several liturgical events were held during the year, including Ash Wednesday services, a Lenten recollection, an interreligious service in collaboration with the Holy See Mission, and multiple sessions on Theology on Tap.

Among the major fundraising events, the Barrio Fiesta in May and the International Street Food Festival in June stood out as highly successful initiatives. These events not only raised funds but also served as important moments of fellowship. Ms. Menang extended her gratitude to parish staff and volunteers for their invaluable contributions.

Other notable events included the Welcome Weekend in October, which provided an opportunity to welcome new parishioners and encourage greater engagement across parish ministries. In November, a special Choir Concert was held, featuring performances by five parish choirs.

Ms. Menang concluded by thanking all members and volunteers for their commitment and looked forward to continued growth in 2025

## **9. Report 2024 from Director of Religious Education (Ms. Anna Berkeley, Religious Education Director)**

Ms. Berkeley pointed out in her report that during the 2024-25 year, 266 students participated in Religious Education at St. John XXIII Parish. Sunday morning Catechism classes for children aged 4-13 were successfully consolidated into a single 10 a.m. session, aligning with new Mass times and improving resource use. Confirmation preparation for 14-16-year-olds was held biweekly on Thursday evenings. Ms.

Berkeley expressed her gratitude to Angela Yankson for providing excellent leadership during her maternity leave.

A total of 44 volunteers, including 8 teen assistants, supported the program. Confirmation students took part in 13 sessions and formation days, with 27 attending the Kairos Retreat in October. On May 27, 25 students received Confirmation from Archbishop Ettore Balestrero.

Fifty children received First Holy Communion on May 24, following a retreat day in April. Forty-two students celebrated their First reconciliation in May, with 6 more doing so during the Communion retreat.

Ms. Berkeley extended thanks to all coordinators and volunteers involved.

#### **10. Parish Administration Council (PAC) Elections**

The term for the PAC position of Human Resources delegate Mr. Bill McClain was renewed.

The term of the PAC position of Safeguarding delegate Ms. Sandra Simpson was renewed.

Ms. Angela Yankson was elected to the PAC position of Fundraising delegate.

Ms. Olga Menang's appointment as the Parish Pastoral Council delegate to the PAC was confirmed.

#### **11. Any Other Business/Q & A**

No other business was raised.

#### **12. Conclusion and Closing**

In his closing remarks, Fr. Paul extended his sincere thanks to Mr. Benitez for chairing the meeting and guiding it smoothly. On behalf of the parish, he expressed appreciation to the Parish Administrative Council (PAC) for their hard work on statutes, safeguarding, finances, and ensuring compliance with Cantonal requirements, recognizing the time and effort these responsibilities entail.

Fr. Paul thanked the External Auditor for his dedication, and Olga Menang for her initiative in launching the successful volunteer appreciation event. He also expressed gratitude to Angela Yankson for stepping in to support the Religious Education program. Fr Paul also thanked Maribel who was present at the meeting for her dedication, and as well as all the office staff.

Addressing the future financial concerns raised by the PAC report, Fr. Paul acknowledged the economic challenges many parishioners are currently facing.

Nevertheless, he emphasized that as a faith-based community, the parish continues to trust in God's providence and in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, reaffirming the community's belief that God will provide a way forward.

He concluded the meeting with a prayer for a successful General Assembly meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 19:25 p.m.



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Maribel Mapanao  
GA Secretary



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Joselito Benitez  
Parish Administrative Council  
Vice- President

## **Annex 1**

### **General Assembly 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025, St John XXIII Parish Attendance**

1. Maribel Mapanao
2. Anna Berkeley
3. Sandra Simpson
4. William McClain
5. Julien Senderos
6. Camille Roney
7. Augustine Agyeman-Duah
8. Joselito Benitez
9. Erwin Policar
10. Ken Belasco
11. Evelyn Benitez
12. David Roney
13. Sara Grummer Strawn
14. Larry Grummer Strawn
15. Dannette Haley
16. Olga Menang
17. Marigel Barroto
18. Angela Yankson
19. Charles Martin Jjuuko
20. Patricia Jjuuko