

Council Minutes

July 21, 2025

Attending: Dan Strehlow, Alex Zuzek, Dolores Pemble, Dave Fry, Jen Klos, Maria Gathje, Natalie Carda, Pastor Geier, Lois Twedt

Call to Order by President Dan Strehlow at 6:02 p.m.

Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt

No changes were noted in the June minutes. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes of the June meeting as written. Dolores seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer Dolores Pemble

Council Action Required

FMT met on Monday, July 14 at 6:30 pm. We approved the June financials. Old business was discussing the Business Manager position transition which has been going well. We approved continuing as it is now. Final expenses/donations are still coming in so no final garage sale total yet. ELCA St. Paul Area Synod sent a letter requesting a bump in contributions from churches. After committee discussion, we are proposing a .5% increase in the synod tithe. We have been at 9.5% for quite a while so FMT is proposing an increase to 10% with council approval. Since we started the new AB Government fund with Edward Jones, our Designated bank account has fallen below the minimum balance needed so we have been charged a \$10 monthly fee. FMT discussed the validity of maintaining that account. It was decided to close that account and roll it into the general account. The columbarium sidewalk is in the works. Donation has been received, down payment has been paid and we are waiting for confirmation for the work to be done. Mary Fisher scholarships have been awarded. Over the 12 year span of the scholarship, 36 women have been awarded \$24,750. August meeting will be held by email as we examine and approve the July financials. A motion was made by Jen and seconded by Natalie to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Vice President Alex Zuzek

No Council Action Required

Prime activity for June and July for Buildings and Grounds has been done by those who "Adopted a Spot". Ten spots were accepted by members, which is so appreciated. The Columbarium is not one of the "10 Spots", but is covered by Al Todnem who waters and pulls weeds in that area several times a week. The "Adopt a Spot" areas were accepted by one or two households per spot.. Our goal is to have the grounds free of unsightly weeds and shrubbery trimmed down to an appropriate size and shape. All this takes a lot of labor and skill.

Serving Ministry Report—Dave Fry

No Council Action Required

Fellowship:

There will be a blood drive and pie at LeDuc in August.

Lucas Ussatis (violin and piano) has committed to entertainment for Philadazzle first Sunday of Advent, Nov 30.

Stewardship:

The Stewardship Ministry Team will re-convene on August 12 for the purpose of writing the plan for St. Philip's fall stewardship emphasis. We'll select the date for pledge returns, temple talk selections, pancake breakfast date and details, and the plan for what goes in the packet. Dan Strehlow has already provided some theme ideas, Al Todnem often comes up with a graphic. Pledging to both General and Mortgage Funds will continue. We have success with it.

We've had Stewardship Corner articles in the newsletter along with Staying Connected which is done by Gerri Lundby. Glenda Schnirring did the Stewardship Corner piece for the August newsletter.

HR Report—Natalie Carda

No Council Action Required

Minnesota Paid Leave Act update: Minnesota Legislature passed new state budget. Many proposals relating to Minnesota Paid Leave program were discussed, only one change was passed: new maximum premium rate. However, this change does not affect the 2026 premium rate of 0.88%.

Annual Performance Reviews: employee reviews completed and filed in Employee Personnel File.

Contacted Council President, Dan Strehlow, asking for an update regarding the completion of Pastor Geier's annual performance review.

Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje

No Council Action Required

No meeting in July. Nothing to report.

Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos

Council Action Required

Pre-School:

No meeting in July.

Faith Formation:

- VBS Review we have 69 kids signed up. We discussed options for VBS offering this year and decided on Alex's lemonade stand, an organization that gives to childhood cancer research. Our VBS kids had a lemonade stand after church on Sunday June 20th to collect money for the cause. They collected over \$600.
- Children's ministry upcoming events
- July - VBS
- August – ice cream social
- September – Rally day
- October – Trunk or treat
- Youth ministry upcoming events
- July - middle school day camp/high school paint and pizza
- August – middle school ping pong show down/high school laughs and crafts
- September-middle school lock in/high school laser tag
- October- middle school yard clean up and game day/high school help with trunk or treat and movie night
- June's event recap
- Children's game day after service had 3 families attend. Very hot outside that day
- So far Lydia has had two high school coffee chats that brought up lots of great ideas for future high school events.

- Sunday school recruitment will take place on Sunday mornings in August. We will have sample curriculum and answer questions for people considering helping out.
- Big topic is how to get people to volunteer with these up-coming events. We will be trying to make more personal invitations. We have so many ideas moving forward to do with our children and youth but it's going to take more than five people to make them all happen
- Additional note to add:
- In September, Youth Ministries will be seeking donations to stock the Youth Room with snacks. This donation request will be put off until after the school supply drive to avoid a saturation of requests for donations from the congregation at one time. Other funds will be used to initially stock the room with snacks. A second round of donations may take place after the New Year if supplies are running low.
- Lista is going to investigate purchasing an additional laptop for the CYF staff. Now that we are fully-staffed, there has been a need for an additional device. Becky and Lydia are currently sharing a laptop which has been harder in the summer months as they are in the office at the same hours, both needing to use the computer.

ASG:

No report.

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – John Nye

No Council Action Required

CMT got Lista's camera monitor working finally. They talked a little about the electrical outlets for the cameras and Bruce said he's going to try to get the ball rolling on that. Bruce said he's going to try and talk with the person we got the quote from the first time and have him look into it a little more. They want to take the vent covers off again and have him go up and look. The original quote was from just eyeballing it from the floor.

We also ran into a hiccup with the Vanco QR Code and awaiting the test from Deborah following the latest Vanco statement.

Pastor Geier — July 2025 Council Report

- Participated in ministry team meetings, staff ministry team meetings and weekly contemplative prayer group meetings.
- Two pre-marriage counseling meetings
- Multiple pastoral care opportunities
- Met with a Payton Perske to go over his faith statement (Scheduled for August 3).
- Visited nursing home and home bound members and celebrated Holy Communion.
- Campfire Conversation June 22
- Led worship at Oak Ridge on June 25.
- Met with new pastor from Prescott on June 26
- Middle School Bonfire Game Night on June 29
- Committal Service for Eloise Arndtson on June 30
- Synod Candidacy Meeting on July 2
- VBS training on July 12 & 13
- VBS on July 14-17
- Campfire Conversation on July 20
- Worship at Benedictine on July 21
- I have completed all staff ministry team performance appraisals.

- I will be on vacation August 8 and 18-24, missing next month's council meeting.
- Pastor asked members to let him know their plans for continuing on Council.

Your Servant in Christ,
Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

Old Business

Most members have submitted their Council job descriptions to Jen and Natalie.

The contract for the Columbarium sidewalk project has been signed, the deposit has been paid and we are waiting for the contractor to let us know when they can begin, probably in 6 weeks.

The discussion on "What is our focus" continued. Some thoughts were:

- *concern not to be complacent
- *possibly the council could set 2 goals and challenge standing committees to see what part they can play
- *is there a unified message for focus from the leadership retreat
- *suggestion for visibility-pass out water, have popcorn or a fish pond during and before 4th of July parade
- *possible outreach for Seniors in the fall, also something for young adults
- *encourage new members of past 5 years to become involved—ask them to do a task that doesn't involve committee commitment
- *overall goal—building a community of faith and service

This discussion will be continued at the August meeting.

New Business

Motion was made by Jen and seconded by Natalie to approve a .5% increase in Synod Tithing. The motion passed.

Motion was made by Dolores and seconded by Maria to approve the purchase of an additional laptop for staff, not to exceed \$600. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Jen and seconded by Dave to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary