

Council Minutes

August 18, 2025

Attending: Dan Strehlow, Alex Zuzek, John Nye, Maria Gathje, Dave Fry, Natalie Carda, Dolores Pemble and Lois Twedt

Call to Order by President Dan Strehlow at 6:03 p.m.

Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt

No changes were noted in the July minutes. Natalie made a motion to approve the minutes of the July meeting as they were written. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer Dolores Pemble

No Council Action Required

The FMT does not formally meet in person in August but does review and approve the July financial report by email. We decided at the July meeting to close the Designated bank account since most of the money in there had been moved to a money market account with a higher interest rate. I did close out that account and Deborah Dreher will be keeping a running accounting of the balances of the designated funds. At our September meeting we will begin looking at the 2026 budget. The question was brought up as to why our YTD Expenses are \$40,000 more than last year. Dolores will report back on that. A motion was made by Natalie and seconded by Maria to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Vice President Alex Zuzek

Council Action Required

"Adopt a Spot" has been a big help in weed control. Ten spots were listed and adopted and they are being tended to. The corner sign is much improved with the attention of Denise and Jim Jacobs. The parking lot islands get a lot of attention from Bruce Akins and Steve Wolverton and others. The two large rain gardens have caretakers doing the best they can with them. Al Todnem cares for the Columbarium and portion of the courtyard facing 15th.

A fallen tree was completely cleaned up by Bruce Arndtson, Dan Strehlow and Dave Tank during our July windstorm. It was the birch between the 15th St. entry and exit.

Bruce Arndtson also trimmed the overgrown River Birch out the east door and the hydrangeas along the sidewalk. This was necessary for the onset of preschool.

Other unnamed volunteers pull weeds frequently.

Interior repair has been a service call on the AC unit serving the new wing by Binder.

Glenda is wanting carpet cleaning done in the newer narthex when possible. I know Heidi's team will do it when she has recovered, and around the church schedule.

Three items need addressing by an electrician. These needs are--two exit signs, five outlets in the youth room, and Sanctuary outlets. Bruce Arndtson shared his bids from three companies. Alex made a motion that \$3500 be budgeted for this project and the committee should move ahead with this plan. Dave seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the Council.

Serving Ministry Report—Dave Fry

No Council Action Required

Fellowship:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. OUTDOOR SERVICE JUNE 8: Beautiful morning, good turnout. There were about 20 left over ice cream cups from 120 purchased. Youth to use during the summer. Mary C, Darla and Emily helped Camille serve. Set up area seemed to work well.
2. SAINTS GAME JULY 27: Dolores Pemble helped order, sell, deliver the check and pick up the 37 tickets that were purchased at \$22 each. Mary C also helped sell tickets during the Sundays in May. We'll send Dolores a thank you note. We discussed how it's a commitment for families to plan so many weeks ahead in the summer, as Saints organization requires a down payment to order tickets. It was a very hot Sunday afternoon. Maybe go back to Ladies Night Out, leave family activity planning to the Youth and Family Directors.
3. PIE & CONCERT AT LEDUC AUGUST 31: Glenda has info in the August newsletter, bulletins and on the kiosk. Patty and Pam offered to help with hauling supplies, maybe Brenda. As it is Labor Day weekend, 16 pies and one pan of brownies will be requested for donations. Costs: \$4/slice, \$4.50 alamode. Double Down Daredevils will provide entertainment.
4. NICK CLARK, INTERIM YOUTH MINISTER, FAREWELL MAY 18: Six dozen frosted cake donuts were purchased. Worship coordinators, Jay and Becky Raimann, helped cut in half and served the donuts.
5. DUANE HUNSTAD FUNERAL MAY 10, estimated about 75 guests were served.
6. BLOOD DRIVE THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, noon-6:00: Katy had information in August newsletter and bulletins. Out of 65 donation slots, 17 have been filled. Katy had many sign up to help. Mary C and Emily can help with set-up. WE STILL NEED SOMEONE TO HELP AT END OF THE EVENING BETWEEN 6-7, BE SURE CHURCH IS LOCKED UP.
Katy REQUESTED THAT HELP SIGN UP SHEET BE RESENT SO VOLUNTEERS KNOW THEIR TIMESLOT.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. NEW MEMBERS' RECEPTION SEPTEMBER 14: We will be meeting before the reception, decide who can help with baked goods and treats.
We have 4 possible families to join.
Kristian Seminole & Abigail Matthews—married this year, received info in February
Gary Afdahl
Brett & Brooke (daughter) Gjesme?
Linda & Brianna Thorland?
2. PHILADAZZLE SUNDAY, NOV. 30: It will be Thanksgiving weekend. Lucas Ussatis is available for providing entertainment of violin and piano. His fee is \$300, I told him that was within our budget. We will plan for interest and a committee meeting in September. Italian theme?
Need to talk to Ptaceks. We were disappointed with some of the catered food last year.
3. HELP FOR BROMMERS: Thanks to all who stepped up to help with meals for Brommers in June/July. Patty, Darla, Kathy, Brenda, Mary R, Pam, Filkins, Twedts Dolores Pemble (gift cards). They really appreciated the help! They now could use rides getting to church. Both use walkers so need good sized car. But maybe someone could drive Brommer's car.
Sadie Reiners, Jim Wagner?
4. LIST FROM CONGREGATION: We have a very extensive list from Time and Talent info for those willing to help with meals and household needs besides our committee. That will be most helpful!
5. THANK YOU FROM LISTA: Lista sent card of thanks for flowers in April.
6. GARDEN SHARING: Began in August. Will be able to use the old welcome cart when school supplies drive is over at end of August

Stewardship:

General Fund and Capital Fund Offerings were reviewed through July 31.

The new QR Code giving tool was discussed for clarification to members on the team.

The Stewardship Team is pleased to have an additional means of receiving offerings, and providing this new convenience to St. Philip's members

The schedule of the 2026 Stewardship campaign is as follows:

- Theme for the 2026 campaign will be "Rooted in Gratitude, Growing in Faith".

Theme focus: Stewardship as a response to God's blessings, encouraging growth through giving. A graphic logo will be researched or created by Al Todnem.

- Scripture: Colossians 2:6-7 "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him.

- Message: Emphasize giving as an act of thanksgiving, and show how generosity deepens spiritual roots and supports the growth of the church.

- Stewardship Pledge Sunday will be November 9, followed by a complimentary Pancake/Sausage breakfast for all those at worship.

- Temple Talks will begin September 21 or 28

October 12

November 2

Names were nominated to invite to offer a Temple Talk. Team members will be doing these invitations. (Jeanne Evans, Glenda Schnirring, Al Todnem will do the asking)

- The all-member Stewardship mailing will be done on Oct. 14 or later with inspirational material along with a pledge card.

- Monthly newsletter writings called "Stewardship Notes", around the 2025 theme "Abiding in God's Abundance" will be done by Jeannie Evans for October and Krystel Ebel for November.

"Keeping Connected" articles recruited by Gerri Lundby will resume in October.

HR Report—Natalie Carda

No Council Action Required

Assisted Pastor with staffing and new hire orientation of Director of Youth Ministries.

Assisted Pastor with employee voluntary termination process of Director of Children's Choir.

Began annual process for Benefit Renewal with Portico, (ELCA provider of rostered staff benefits).

Annual Performance Reviews: the completion of Pastor Geier's annual performance review is in process.

Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje

No Council Action Required

Service Debrief: Attendance has been higher than average compared to past summers. The problems with the online service production have appeared to be resolved. John has put many extra hours in the last several weeks to correct the problems with the sound and slides. In-person services are going well. The VBS children's service the Sunday after VBS was well-attended, drawing in families from outside of the congregation. The outdoor service went well, with the set-up of the band on the cement.

Praise Worship: Meg has been doing a good job with music. Providing words to the songs is helpful.

Providing the written music to the congregation is not feasible because the format of contemporary music is not linear in nature like traditional hymns, making it difficult to print and follow. It was suggested that people be invited to listen at first and join in when they feel comfortable with the music.

Music planning:

- August 10: Unity
- Sept 7: Rally Day; Praise Worship with Meg Rein
- Sept 21: Unity
- Sept 28: Bells
- Oct 5: Praise Worship with Meg Rein
- Oct 12: Adult Choir
- Oct 19: Unity
- Oct 26: Bells

Looking ahead: Nov 9: Adult Choir, Nov 16: Unity, Nov 23: Bells, Nov 30: Adult Choir

Noreen Swanson is the accompanist on all Sundays except Praise Worship, the first Sunday of the month. "God's Work Our Hands" ELCA Initiative: Becky drafted an item for the September newsletter. This was edited at our meeting.

Hymnal Supplement: it was brought to our attention that there is a new supplement to the red hymnal.

OSL choir is using it. Becky will investigate.

Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos

Council Action Required

Pre-School:

No meeting this month

Faith Formation:

1. Reviewed guidelines for Youth Room. These will be published in the September newsletter, sent home in Sunday school paperwork, and posted in the Youth Room for easy access (see page 2 of minutes).
2. Following worship on August 3rd & 17th, Lydia and Becky will be setting up a volunteer opportunity table for children and youth events. As a member of the InterServe team, Becky is going to make an announcement at worship asking people to consider volunteering for an event. Becky will focus on Sunday School, Family of Faith Events, and the Children's Christmas Program, while Lydia will focus on High School and Middle School fellowship events from August through December. They plan to do this again in December for the events happening January through May.
3. At the last meeting, we had briefly touched on some possible new technology. Since then, the church has purchased a TV for the Youth Room and an additional laptop for Becky and Lydia. The Youth Room is receiving an estimate for five additional electrical outlets and two illuminated exit signs.
4. Lydia purchased laser tag for 16 people. After researching the cost to rent, the cost of buying four sets was less than renting for one evening. This will allow us to use laser tag several times throughout the year.
5. Upcoming events for CYF include an Ice Cream Social on August 5th for Families, where families will have ice cream sundaes and be able to make a craft either on their own or as a family. Both middle and high school events for August are on the 17th. The middle schoolers will have a ping pong tournament in the afternoon. Lydia is trying to include a service aspect to the middle school events to help students achieve the service requirement for confirmation. When students are not playing ping pong, they are able to make cards of encouragement for teachers for the upcoming school year. Cards will be dropped off at local schools and distributed to teachers within the congregation. The high schoolers will have a craft night where they will be making bracelets and key chains. They will also have a service aspect of their night as they will be making keychains for the upcoming blessing of the backpacks on Rally Day. After the event, Lydia and Becky will connect to see if additional keychains need to be ordered, as this Sunday is typically a highly attended one, and preschoolers will also be receiving the keychains.
6. Schedules are set for Sunday School and Confirmation. Becky will be ordering curriculum and Bibles for the incoming 3rd-grade students soon. Lydia discussed looking into some type of curriculum or already developed devotions for older students for their Sunday School sessions.

7. Jen Klos is going to follow up with the council about Lydia requesting donations of snacks for the Youth Room post Rally Day to avoid over-asking for donations from the congregation.
8. Lydia is going to talk to Lista about the possibility of ordering donuts for the middle and high school students for their Sunday School time. Can this be covered by the fellowship ministry?

ASG:

Jennie will submit info in August for the September Newsletter

All are in favor of renewing Wired Word.

Chuck will discuss with Lista forwarding Wired Word to list-serve after Doug notifies her that we officially want to renew it.

New Member Sunday: concern of timing conflict with Adult Forum? Just tends to make stragglers later, won't change our schedule. Orientation will be informal, more 1:1, so no conflicting Sunday morning meeting.

Pastor Geier:

1. We will not be having Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, Assistant to the Bishop for Lay Leadership and Equity Initiatives, preach at worship and lead an ASG session as he is not available.

2. Pastor is hoping to get someone from Shobi's Table, (www.shobistable.org) this Fall. [Shobi's Table is a Pay-As-You-Can Community Café on wheels. Our Mission is to be a common table where all are fed in body and soul.] Deacon Kari Alice Olsen is the director, mission developer and head chef, but there are other staff members that might come. An additional connection is that Linnea Ronning is serving a paid internship through the synod's Planting Hope campaign with Shobi's Table this summer. Jennie to check with Shobi's Table contact from the Synod Assembly

3. Pastor suggesting having someone talk about how to get rid of fraudulent Facebook accounts, and other fraud related topics. Jennie will check with the Police or Sheriff's Dept about a possible speaker.

Fall Tentative schedule:

September

9/7 Rally Day; Sunday School Kick-Off

9/14 Lisa Bergert, Biblical sites in western Turkey--Part one

9/21 Lisa Bergert, Biblical sites in western Turkey--Part two

9/28 Paster Geier – confirmed with him

October

10/5 Jewish Community Relations Council speakers, \$100 honorarium

10/12 Udai Singh, Hindu explanation [or 10/26]

He is available both days and is flexible

I promised Udai a \$100 honorarium, to go to a library in India

10/19 Paster Geier; MEA Weekend – confirmed with him

10/26 Jennie will try to get Islamic or Buddhist speaker for the other week and/or Nov 2

November

11/2? Buddhist or Islamic speaker – possible tour at the temple south of Hastings. Jennie to try to get a hold of them.

11/9 Commitment Pancake Breakfast

11/16 Pastor Kathryn Tiede, LSS; Associate Vice President of Philanthropy, Lutheran Social Service of MN

11/23

11/30 [Thanksgiving weekend] Philadazzle in the evening

Possible Future Adult Forums

A session brain storming, new blood [This might fit Palm Sunday, ask for topics for next year]

12 step program for treatment (??) by Lisa Bergert

Discovery Team update, survey summary – per Pastor, nothing new since January, so should have been covered in the two spring sessions.

Chuck questions if we should be more actively involved in the annual Overdose & Fentanyl Awareness Day, such as being a sponsor, like Our Saviors. Action: Get on list for voting at annual meeting as one of the local organizations.

Possible annual program conflicts on Sunday morning

Jan/Feb Financial meeting and February Annual meeting

Increased stragglers—

Officer installation, New member orientation and reception, and Teacher appreciation reception

June Graduation Recognition Sunday – usually after our season is over anyway.

September Rally Day; Sunday School Kick-Off – already not meeting

November Ministry Fair--Per Pastor, no noise about it this year, maybe an every other year event.

No Sessions--November Thanksgiving weekend. December Stewardship Sunday, breakfast

December Christmas and New Year weekends

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – John Nye

No Council Action Required

John will be available in the gathering area, 1 or 2 Sundays in September to assist anyone needing help with using the QR Code.

Pastor Geier — August 2025 Council Report

- Participated in ministry team meetings, staff ministry team meetings and weekly contemplative prayer group meetings.
- Four pre-marriage counseling meetings
- Multiple pastoral care opportunities
- Visited nursing home and home bound members and celebrated Holy Communion.
- Met with Justin Grimm, Assistant to the Bishop on July 25
- High School Pizza and Paint on July 27
- Led worship at Oak Ridge on July 30.
- Campfire Conversation August 10
- Worship at Benedictine on August 11
- South Conference Meeting August 14
- Wedding rehearsal and wedding for Kevin Ekstrom and Erica Swenson on August 15 and 16
- I am on vacation August 18-24, missing this month's council meeting.

Your Servant in Christ,
Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

Old Business

The job descriptions document is in progress.

Rain has delayed the sidewalk for the Columbarium.

“What is our focus”—continue to include new members with “little asks”—especially the Fellowship Committee. Check into Time and Talents Sheets for potential volunteers. We will ask Lista for the Time and Talents results and talk to Stewardship about disseminating this information. Sponsors of New Members should do a 3 and 6 month follow-up to be sure they are feeling comfortable and welcomed at St. Philips’. It was suggested that personal interests be added to the Time and Talent Sheet to encourage socializing of those with similar interests. We will continue this discussion in September.

New Business

Natalie made a motion, and Alex seconded the motion to honor the request from the Bells of the Bluff Handbell Ensemble to present a concert at St. Philips on Saturday, May 9, 2026. They will be asked to pay the Usage Fee.

Terms of Council members were reviewed as there is concern regarding the large turnover. We will continue to monitor this.

Faith Formation has asked for donuts for Sunday School children. The Council has some concerns and will get more information from Jen.

Faith Formation has requested money to provide snacks for youth. Natalie made a motion that a line item be added to the budget using marketing funds to provide \$200 for snacks for 2025. John seconded the motion. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Dave and seconded by Dolores to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary

