

Council Minutes

October 20, 2025

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

Call to Order by President Dan Strehlow at 6:00 p.m.

Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt

No changes were noted in the September Minutes. No changes were noted for the October 1 Special Meeting on Building Use. The notes from that meeting are as follows: Pastor will contact the Concert Association to get Certificate of Liability Insurance. Dave Fry and Dolores Pemble will meet to slim down the current Building Usage Guidelines and present them at the next Council meeting. Recurring events, such as Concert Association, will need to provide custodial needs and sound booth needs before each event. Both John and Paul will need to receive pay for their services. Dave and Dolores Pemble will serve as St. Philips Ambassadors at the next concert—Oct. 12. Buildings and Grounds or Fellowship Committee or other members of the church will be contacted to serve as ambassadors at each of the remaining concerts. A motion was made by Dolores to approve the minutes of the September meeting as well as the October 1 meeting. Natalie seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer Dolores Pemble

No Council Action Required

The Finance Ministry Team met on Monday, Oct. 13 and reviewed and approved the September Finance report. We are getting some feedback from other ministry teams on their 2026 Budget Requests which are due to the Finance Ministry Team by Oct. 27. Work Comp and Property & Casualty policies have been renewed with a 12% increase in property due to insuring the new addition for the whole year instead of just 3 months. There is a 2% decrease in the Work Comp policy due to some changes the insurance company is requiring, so our limits have changed. Portico benefits have been investigated, and Pastor is viewing the options for renewal. MN Paid leave act figures have been included in our budget projections. We are proposing a 3.5% salary increase for all employees in the 2026 budget. Our next meeting is Nov. 10. A motion was made by Natalie and seconded by Jen to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Vice President Alex Zuzek-Buildings and Grounds

No Council Action Required

Buildings and Grounds will meet Wed. Oct 15, at 6 p.m.

Repairs are done often by Steve Wolverton when they come up such as a recent sink leak in the narthex restroom.

We'll review all changes which take place as the fall season commences.

A grounds clean-up day will be discussed and scheduled.

Bruce Arndtson and Al Todnem have continued to groom the Columbarium area. A new sidewalk was installed in September. The edges of the new walk were filled and seeded by Bruce Arndtson.

The work on the youth room has been completed and is up to code with outlets and signs.

The budget for 2026 will be examined for anticipated needs.

Some additional folding chairs are likely to be needed given the breakage that happens with too much concentrated weight happening when a chair is used in lieu of a step stool.

Serving Ministry Report—Dave Fry

No Council Action Required

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **PHILADAZZLE:** Bruce Arndtson is willing to be our emcee, we gave him duties from last year. Committee met last month, most of last year's crew returned, Brenda is our new member. "A Little Bit of Italy" as our theme. Margaret wrote articles for the October bulletins and November newsletter. She's updating them each week. Margaret and Camille went to Ptacek's to pick out menu: antipasto and Caesar salads, 3 kinds of lasagna, garlic sticks, gluten free macaroon cookies. We'll also have sparkling wine. Gerri Lundby talked to Lock and Dam Eatery, they gave us very generous deal on tiramisu desserts. Next meeting is Oct. 21 at 5:00.
2. **NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION SEPTEMBER 14:** Three family groups welcomed: Gary Afdahl, Abigail and Kristian Sebion, Brett and Brook Gjemse. A lovely table and variety of treats well-received by the congregation. Thanks to those who dressed the table, baked items, and served that morning. We'll always need to plan on 5 pans of treats.
3. **BROMMERS RIDES:** Due to more health complications, Brommers won't need rides to church at this time.
4. **HALLOWEEN DOWNTOWN EVENT OCT. 26:** There's a sign up for cocoa and marshmallow donations and volunteers. There's been article in Oct. newsletter and weekly bulletins. Camille will make an announcement for more help or donations if needed on Oct. 19.
5. **COFFEE:** There was article in newsletter and weekly bulletins asking for regular coffee. No need for regular. Could use some decaf.
6. **MILITARY RECOGNITION:** We asked for updates of military members for prayer card and bulletin board. We'll send out cards for Veterans Day next month.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **CHUCK TAFTE FUNERAL OCTOBER 9:** Pam, Mary R and Lois Twedt will co-chair taking over from Glenda as coordinator. They worked with Taffe family event coordinator for funeral, expecting about 150 guests. Food and finger food stations in narthex and fellowship hall.
2. **HASTINGS CONCERT SERIES:** They will be holding their concerts at St. Philip's this year. Glenda was "Congregational Ambassador" during the concert on Sept. 28. She manned the welcome center, oversaw preparations, and spoke with visitors. Pemples offered to take on the job on Oct. 12. Council appreciates our committee making sure there is someone from the congregation available to help on those days. Dates are Oct. 12, Nov. 5, Feb. 22, Mar.24, May 6
3. **TIME AND TALENT SHEETS:** Council would like us to try to involve more people in the events that we sponsor, so to be sure to ask people who have volunteered on time and talent sheets (like bringing food to receptions, meals after surgery, etc.) New volunteer sheets will be going out with the Stewardship packets in the next month.
4. **BUDGET DUE OCT. 27:** You'll notice donut costs are taken out of our account each week. I asked Deborah Dreher if we get the money from the collection on Sundays. This is what Deborah said: Accounting practices are that expenses are posted to the Expense account, in your case the GL for Caring or Inviting ministries. Money collected and offering are income and only posted to Income general ledgers. For donuts, that income is credited to the Youth General Ledger under Designated accounts. For expenses, there is not a split between income (general or designated accounts) or the budget account. This mean you should budget the total amount expected to be spent for all categories, no reduction for income.

We used to split costs of cups, etc. with general funds, but it appears we should budget for it. Camille will talk with Deborah for more clarification before submitting budget numbers in the next couple of weeks.

5. PASTOR APPRECIATION SUNDAY OCT. 12: Pastor Appreciation card for signing. We decided to present Pastor with the card and \$100 Visa gift card. Dan Strehlow will present.

6. CHRISTMAS CARDS: Save unsolicited Christian Christmas cards, think about who we should send cards to this year, and we'll compile a list in Nov., to address in December.

7. LADIES NIGHT: We discussed skipping Saints game next year, especially now that have a Youth and Family director for family events. Something else to do as ladies together in winter? Spring? Think about and can discuss it in January?

Stewardship:

The Stewardship Ministry Team met Oct 6, to edit its material for the bulk mailing to all SPLC members.

Assembly of the mailing will be on Oct. 23, done by the Stewardship committee.

Temple Talk assignments are in place with Oct. being Wes and Linda Ask, and November being Patty Wilson.

Pledge Sunday is Nov. 9, followed by a pancake and sausage breakfast. We will prepare for 120 based on historical response for that event.

“Staying Connected” series for the Newsletter continues with one household per month going forward coordinated by Gerri Lundby.

Up to date “Time and Talent forms for 2026, will be included in the bulk Stewardship mailing sent out late October.

HR Report—Natalie Carda

No Council Action Required

No report.

Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje

No Council Action Required

Service Debrief: Attendance has been stable, on average higher than last year. More families are back, especially with children taking communion. Services have been going well. Children's messages are good. Nice to have the bells with their variations of music. There have been more new people coming to worship. Kevin's Temple Talk was well-received. The new hymn “Trumpet Sounds” with Maria's leadership and Noreen playing the melody first went well. Praise group is sounding good, with more musicians involved. Three large-print copies of the hymnal have been purchased. They require an assembly of pages in use each week. Volunteers may need to be recruited to assist with this.

Future Planning:

- When the choir sings, there will be a congregational communion hymn sung during distribution that will be familiar.
- During services with Temple Talks, it was suggested that the number of verses in hymns be cut back.
- If Meg would like to play percussion during Praise Worship, it was suggested that another pianist could be used, such as Sam Willis or Gary Afdahl.
- Communion bread servers are asked to monitor space between them and the wine servers. Becky will see that all bread servers are aware of this.

- Kelsey will set up the candles for All Saints Sunday. There are enough supplies for this.
- The new liturgy called “Peace on the Prairie” was reviewed by Becky. She will consult with Cindy about how it was used at Lake City Lutheran. It is about 30 minutes in length, but parts could be used as desired, possibly during the summer.
- Christmas poinsettia prices are set at \$15 each.
- The Hastings Concert Association has the piano tuned prior to each use. Altar Guild requests that the candles and bible stand on the altar be placed in the sacristy when the altar is moved to the side for concerts. Concert ambassadors will be assigned to each concert who are SPLC members.
- Christmas program is Dec 14.

Music planning:

- Oct 19: Unity
- Oct 26: Bells
- Nov 2: Praise Worship
- Nov 9: Adult choir
- Nov 16: Unity
- Nov 23: Bells
- Nov 30: Adult Choir

Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos

Council Action Required

Pre-School:

- ☐ Last year’s numbers MWF 24 TTH 19 this year as of Oct 1st (have a two day a week student transferring to 5) MWF 23 TTH 18.
- ☐ First week updates. Start was very busy but starting to settle into a routine.
- ☐ Upcoming events include Rio agility team demo, fire truck visit, trunk or treat (Nov 1st), library visit (Nov).
- ☐ Culvers night Oct 20th 5-7
- ☐ Budget and banking info discussed. Will lose money again this year but still have a bank account to cover. Raise right and other donations/fundraisers are also helping us very much right now!

Faith Formation:

1. The budget for 2026 was submitted to Finance.
2. Updates on evacuation plans/locking down.
 - a. Clipboards for Sunday School & Confirmation Teachers with evacuation routes and parent emergency contact information.
3. Recapped September Youth events
 - a. Middle School Lock-In had 14 kids, some came from the postcards that were handed out to VBS volunteers.
 - b. High School Laser Tag had 14 kids.
 - c. Both events had great turn out for kids and volunteers.
4. Sunday School Updates
 - a. The PreK-5 classes are having 5-6 kids average each week.
 - b. The MS/HS group have 2-3 middle school students attending.
5. Upcoming Events
 - a. October 12th – Middle School Fall Festival

- b. November 1st – Trunk or Treat (Children and Family Event), High School is volunteering at Trunk or Treat followed by a Movie Night in the Youth Room

ASG:

Newsletter: Submission of Adult Forum items in October for November Newsletter will be done by the whole group.

Tentative schedule:

October

10/5 Steve Lear and John [??], Jewish Community Relations Council, will speak and help our congregation to better understand and support our Jewish neighbors

10/12 Udai Singh, Hindu explanation

10/17 Friday, Possibly trip to Luther Seminary to see a Smithsonian Exhibit on Exploring Human

Origins: What Does It Mean to Be Human?

Jeannie offered to lead a group, carpool to visit the site

10/19 Jennie Orr Thomas will lead discussion on What Does It Mean to be Human following the visit to Luther Emarium [MEA Weekend]

10/26 Buddhist or Islamic presentation (Jennie checking this week) [Maybe] Still up in the air

November

11/2 Buddhist or Islamic presentation (Jennie checking this week) [Maybe]

Still up in the air

11/9 Stewardship Sunday; Pancake breakfast

11/16 Pastor Kathryn Tiede, Associate Vice President of Philanthropy, Lutheran Social Service of MN will speak on ways to strengthen the connection between St. Philip's and the larger body of Christ

11/23 Pastor Geier: the Old Testament in 45 minutes

11/30 Wired Word [Doug Shultz] [Thanksgiving weekend]

December

12/7 Shobi Table, still in the works, Jennie

12/14 Wired Word

12/21 Pastor Geier

12/28 No program

January

1/xx Presentation on possible charity partnership

Local, state, region & foreign

1/25 Financial / budget meeting

February

2/1 Annual meeting

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – John Nye

No Council Action Required

The electrical work was completed on Friday.

Pastor Geier – October 2025 Council Report

- Participated in ministry team meetings, staff ministry team meetings and weekly contemplative prayer group meetings.
- Two pre-marriage counseling meetings and a pre-baptism meeting
- Multiple pastoral care opportunities
- Two hospital visits

- Visited nursing home and home bound members and celebrated Holy Communion.
- Boundaries Training Workshop on September 16.
- Synod south conference meeting on September 18.
- Led worship at Benedictine on September 22 and October 20.
- Led worship at Oak Ridge on September 24.
- Hastings Ministerial Association on September 24.
- 6th grade soccer game on September 27
- Confirmation started on September 3.
- Opening the Bible Class on September 6
- Synod Candidacy Meeting on October 2
- Rischette/Schwartz wedding on October 4.
- Visitation and funeral for Chuck Taffe on October 8 and 9.
- Carlson/Schmidt wedding on October 11
- Bishop's Fall Theological Conference in Alexandria on October 12-14
- More members need to be added to the Columbarium Committee.

Your Servant in Christ,
Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

Old Business:

The final draft of Council Members' job descriptions will be forwarded to members and approved at next meeting.

What is our focus—we will begin looking at various age groups to determine if needs are being met— young adults with and without children as well as singles. There is a need for creating times for fellowship and connectedness. Pastor will have conversations with the 20 to 35 age group to see what would be of interest for them and what activities would encourage their involvement. He will share what he learns at our next meeting.

As a first step on the Active Shooter Plan--The Sunday School leads have folders with names of students and their parents or contact people. Discussion will continue at next meeting.

Discussion on the Director of Children's Music is tabled to next meeting.

A motion was made by Natalie and seconded by Jen to have The Constitution Updates be available to be presented at the annual meeting for congregation ratification. The motion passed.

Jen made a motion, and Maria seconded the motion to approve the Building Use Guidelines with two changes—Sound Board Operations (base \$100) and eliminate 'sweep and mop floor' from Kitchen Check List. The motion passed. A list of potential ambassadors for Use of Building will be developed from Building and Grounds, Welcome Center volunteers and Fellowship Committee members.

New Business:

Jen made a motion, and Maria seconded the motion that Hastings Concert Association be permitted to use St. Philips for the 2026-2027 year. The motion passed.

Dolores made a motion, and Natalie seconded the motion to honor Star Quilters request to use our facilities on December 9. The motion passed.

Natalie made a motion, and Alex seconded the motion to approve the Christmas Shoebox program. The motion passed.

Alex made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Maria seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary