

Council Minutes

November 17, 2025

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

Call to Order by President Dan Strehlow at 6:01 p.m.

Secretary's Report, Lois Twedt

No changes were noted in the October Minutes. Natalie made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer Dolores Pemble

Council Action Required

The Finance Ministry Team met on November 10, 2025. October Financial report was approved. Our main order of business was getting the 2026 Budget approved to submit to Council. After some final tweaking it is ready for Council approval and is attached to this report.

It was noted that some "end of the year" donations have been arriving, and we are blessed to be receiving them. A motion was made by Jen and seconded by Dave to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Vice President Alex Zuzek-Buildings and Grounds

No Council Action Required

Buildings and Grounds met Oct 15th. The agenda covered the seasonal assignments that the building needs. Accomplishments over the summer were reviewed and appreciated.

The Adopt a Spot program worked well. No fall clean-up was scheduled as we wouldn't have had sufficient tasks to assign.

Monthly tasks were reviewed:

Clocks : Time re-set done by Bill Pavlish

Fire Extinguisher Dates Checked. Steve Wolverton questioned which authority does it. Glenda is to follow up.

Furnace Filters are done by Binder, with interior ones done by Bill Pavlish.4Xyr.

Putting water in all Floor Drains - Bill Pavlish

Drain exterior hoses - Bill Pavlish

Clean the vacuum compressor in kitchen refrigerator - Bill Pavlish

Put out shovels and salt - Bill Pavlish

Gutter cleaning will be done by Bruce Arndtson when the time is right to avoid ice dams.

Trim lower branches on the swamp oak which surround the lot - Bruce Arndtson.

Trim the magnolia around the corner sign for easier reading.(Preschool Sign)

Budget needs were discussed.

2026 - we expect to fill parking lot cracks (\$3600 is likely)

Mulch for building surround and islands \$300

Add up to 12 folding chairs which have broken @ \$45.

Discuss paint touch- up need on in the interior public areas. Unresolved .

Narthex and east hall carpet needs cleaning. Glenda will discuss with Heidi Nelson.

Installation of additional outlets for exit signs and additional service in the Youth Room was reported on by Bruce Arndtson. That job has now been completed. East Hall exit light will be done separately.

Garbage and Recycle Services from Highland, Update - A new dumpster has been brought in as the former one was totally worn out.

Bruce Arndtson, Dave Tank and Steve Wolverton have now trimmed any low limbs on the swamp oak that surrounds the property. This will allow those trees to continue a more vertical growth pattern. A new faucet was installed in the new narthex women's restroom by Steve Wolverton.

Serving Ministry Report—Dave Fry

No Council Action Required

Fellowship:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. TAFFE FUNERAL: It was unique, as family chose the way to serve, food, etc. About 180 at service, 140 stayed after, but not all ate.
2. PHILADAZZLE, "A Little Bit of Italy": Tickets sold for 4 Sundays in Nov., and in the office, striving for 80 guests. About 20 were sold on Nov. 2. Brenda will oversee scouts help, Lois Twedt will oversee kitchen. Bruce will be emcee. Lucas Ussatis will play violin and piano for entertainment.
3. BUDGET: We had an increase of \$700 over last year, \$4,300, allowing more for supplies and food coming out of our funds. I had a \$200 addition error in original budget submitted. See attachment for total.
4. Halloween Downtown Event, Sunday, Oct. 26 2-5: About 800 cups, 45 gallons of cocoa served. Fifteen people donated 26 bags of marshmallows, 19 cocoa mix. Have 9 cocoa mix for next year. Warm day. Thirteen people helped set up, serve, clean up and return supplies to church.
5. PASTOR APPRECIATION SUNDAY, OCT. 12: A \$100 VISA card was presented to Pastor by Council President, Dan Strehlow.
6. MILITARY AND STAFF BIRTHDAY CARDS: Cards were sent to 6 military names currently on our prayer list for Veterans Day. Brenda took over sending birthday cards to staff members.
7. COFFEE AND DONUTS: We asked for more decaf, plenty of regular came in. Donuts collection goes to the youth program traditionally. We can't get reimbursement from the collection. We have plenty of all. We'll order 8 doz. for the winter months.
8. COMMUNITY CONCERT WED, NOV. 5: Glenda oversaw welcome center. Great concert! Next one won't be until February.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. EDUCATOR APPRECIATION: Marge Peterson and Camille Johnson-Oster have planned a February event for about 34 educators. There will be some small gift from Etsy, food treat, youth help with notes. Will be made available for pick up from the Welcome Center during the month. Should run about \$10/person. Will budget for each year. We hope there will be a presentation acknowledging the educators.
2. CHRISTMAS CARD LIST: We have a preliminary list. Think of people to add and let Camille know in the next month. We'll get addresses for cards to delegate at December meeting.
3. FOOD COLLECTION: There was a Food 4 Kids collection. Discussed that HFS is in extra need this year. We'd have to get an ok from council for designated money collection. Cindy Toppin would write something up.
4. LADIES NIGHT: Emily Preston had an idea of a stained glass art design for individuals to make. She'll join us in Jan. to discuss possibilities. The presenter said it doesn't set up well in winter.

Stewardship:

The Stewardship team met two times in October in order to complete all components of the Stewardship mailing which was sent to 325 recipients. Regrettably, I have learned of three key homes which did not receive the Stewardship mailing. For this reason, we have pledge cards and envelopes on the Welcome Center along with the Time and Talent form which can be turned in through December 28.

Three fine members delivered “spot on” temple talks which began in September. They were Kevin Eckstrom, Wes Ask and Patty Wilson.

Stewardship Sunday was Nov 9th, when the first of the pledge cards were turned in during worship, followed by a complimentary breakfast. 90 people were served at the breakfast. The kitchen crew for the breakfast were Bruce Arndtson, Tim Preston, Al Todnem, Mary Rock, Kurt Zabel, and Kevin Eckstrom. Sam Willis secures the pancake mix. Sausages are purchased at Patecks.

As of Nov. 9th, 68 pledge cards were returned and 48 Time and Talent forms.

It is our hope that the stewardship emphasis around the theme “Rooted in Gratitude, Growing in Faith” was meaningful and that a high percentage of members respond with an anticipated pledge for 2026.

HR Report—Natalie Carda

No Council Action Required

Continuing with implementation of the Minnesota Paid Leave Law, effective January 1, 2026. Employee Notice will be completed prior to December 1, 2025. Posters and policy updates will be completed prior to January 1, 2026.

Employers begin payroll deductions on the first payroll following January 1, 2026, and employees may begin applying for benefits after that date.

Premiums paid by both employee and employer are paid quarterly. Finance included the employer premium in the 2026 Budget.

Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje

No Council Action Required

Service Debrief: Attendance continues to grow. Services have been going well. Confirmation service went well. All people enjoy the children’s sermons. Praise Band is doing a good job. All Saints service was well-received, especially having the opportunity to light candles. It was suggested that next year we have a bell toll for each of the people who passed away during the year. Temple talks were very good, especially at addressing the theme. Having one per month for three months worked well. Bells were nice to hear, especially noticed how well the children are doing. Richard did a good job reading. Choir and Unity are a good enhancement to worship. Cindy’s message regarding support for needy was very timely.

Future Planning:

- Lori will be reminded to get the sign-up posted for Christmas Eve worship leaders.
- November 23, 3:30 PM: Ecumenical Thanksgiving service. Jay is at soundboard. Becky will be available for Worship Coordinator duties.
- List of possible families to light advent candles is created.
- December 21 (3 PM?) Blue Christmas service. Becky will contact Kelsey about set up of candles and singing.
- 43 poinsettias will be delivered December 22. Set up time will be set at next meeting.
- December 28: Service of Lessons and Carols
- Beginning January 1, Sunday altar flower arrangements will be priced at \$30.
- Pastor Geier will be on leave January 1-9.
- April 5: Easter, 8:30 service: traditional with brass, 10:30 service : Praise worship (Pr G will talk to Meg to confirm)

Music planning:

- Nov 16: Unity
- Nov 23: Bells, song leader: Lori Best
- Nov 30: Adult Choir
- Dec 7: Praise Band
- Dec 14: Christmas Program. song leader: Becky Raimann
- Dec 21: Unity

- Dec 24, 3 PM: Unity (Prelude), Bells, song leader: Julia Ronning
- Dec 24: 5 PM: Strings?(Becky will contact Mary Ellen). Not live streamed
- Dec 28: Lessons and Carols, Bells, song leader: Maria Gathje

Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos

No Council Action Required

Pre-School:

- 1) M/W/F 25 T/TH 28 (Eight of these students come every day)
We have two new students since last month's meeting
- 2) We have many special activities planned, including trunk or treat, Librarian visit, picture day, conferences, and feast day.
- 3) Christmas program will be one program December 19th at 6:00 pm
- 4) Ongoing fundraisers include RaiseRight and our quarterly Culvers night. As of now we don't have a total from our October Culvers night, but it was a good one with great attendance!
- 5) Budget was reviewed. Currently on track for about the same numbers as last school year.

Faith Formation:

November 4, 2025

- New confirmation forms were discussed. We will be having parents review the prior year's form and sign off that it is still current. Hoping this helps us keep up to date info and families not needing a whole new form every year.
- Forms we be put online and handed out to students who bring a friend. It is important for safety and liability that we have parent permission for visiting friends. Forms will have parent contact info, allergies, and waivers on them. Form will be good for one year.
- If yard clean up needs to be canceled due to weather decision will be made Friday afternoon via app and social media. An announcement will be made looking for individuals or families to then sign up to help with those yards.
- Dawn is going to make some food for Friendsgiving for our high schoolers.
- Looking for ideas to get people to sign up to help with events or RSVP to events. We do announcements in church, slides, newsletters, and bulletins. Still thinking on new ways.
- Upcoming children's events include family Sunday school, pancakes and prayers, and the Christmas program.

ASG:

Schedule so far for Fall 2025:

October - recap

10/5 Jewish Community Relations Council speakers – very well attended (30+) and received. Several people wanted to hear more from them.

10/12 Udai Singh, Hindu explanation (25-30), also well attended and received

10/19 Discussion of Luther exhibit on human origins – only 2 people did the field trip, about 12 came

10/26 What is Isaiah and what are the current issues – Ben Whalen, the Suburban Congregational

Organizer for Isaiah, 23 attendees. People wanted more discussion before committing to anything.

November – Jennie did the newsletter blurb, will send in bulletin blurbs when 11/2 speaker confirmed.

11/2 Food insecurity – someone from HFS (Amy is probably not available) or Chuck will do. Resources from Isaiah sent to him and to Amy Sutton to pass on.

11/9 Stewardship Sunday pancake breakfast with legislator letter writing option in the North Room

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

11/23 Pastor Geier – OT in 45 min.

11/30 [Thanksgiving weekend] no Adult Forum or Wired Word. With Doug – his choice

December - Jennie to submit bulletin blurbs

12/7: Further discussion of what we as individuals or St Philips want to do with advocacy with Isaiah or otherwise? Yes, - Jennie to see if Cindy will help moderate

12/14 Shobi's table (same day as Children's Christmas program)

12/21 Pastor: More Lament scriptures in prep for Blue Christmas that afternoon.

12/28 Off - Christmas break

Current business besides the schedule:

ASG budget: We want to be sure we spend our allotted amount for 2025 to make sure we have a case for what we ask for in 2026. Doug found out that we have \$182 remaining – agreed to send half to Isaiah and half to Shobi's Table, will add \$18 (designated offering from a committee member) so can be full \$100 each.

Since outside speakers have been very well received, ask for \$600 for next year for more outside speakers. Jennie to send email to Deb Dreher, Dolores Pemble and Doug Schultz to get it in the budget – done and responded to by Deb Dreher

Since people complained about not being able to hear the Jewish speakers well, we've been using the portable sound system, which has limitations. Chuck Clanton has looked into options for upgrading the sound system:

Updating sound system—options

1. Do nothing, use existing system

2. Add remote, wireless clip-on microphones

a. Single 1-person mic, RODE Wireless GO II; \$204

b. Dual system 2-person mic, RODE Wireless GO II; \$278

c. Adapter to connect transponder to existing system; \$19

d. Glenda Schnirring suggested submitted budget to Communications Committee

3. Permanent speaker system for the room

a. Sound bar under flat screen; \$35.00

b. Install pair of speakers in corners

4. Use the flat screen's sound system, figuring out how to input microphones into a laptop & then to the TV

Decision was to have Chuck ask the IT team to put \$300 in their budget for the dual clip-on wireless mics and adapter for current sound system. That way it can be used both in the North Room and in the Fellowship Hall. For now, use the corded mic for passing around for questions – will work for our purposes in the North Room, not so sure about the logistics in the Fellowship Hall. Pastor thought it could be left set up but unplugged in the North Room unless needed elsewhere to lessen the hassle of setting it up each Sunday morning.

Possible Future Adult Forums (major topic for discussion in November):

Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer is no longer with the synod so not a speaker option.

Possible session or sessions in Jan about the organizations or programs on the list for possibly directing the building fund tithe in 2026.

Tanzanian mission emphasis in the spring (April?? after Easter April 5):

Pastor – email from Sally Harris, Bega Kwa Bega Microfinance banking

Shoulder to Shoulder (Iringa related medical mission)– Jennie to check with them – sometimes hard to reach

U of M Students without Borders (Uganda and Mali) ? Engineers without Borders instead, if in Tanzania – also possibly – per Synod web site, St. Paul Partners is doing water and hygiene work, mostly digging wells.

talk to the Synod about other Tanzanian programs (such as Radio Furaha)

Possible spring end of life discussion again:

Starkson willing to come again. Last came two years ago. "Who gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3NNoVRQpI8>

from Univ of Minn Extension, 38 minutes. Accompanying Workbook: – Nov 1, 2011, 104 pages, direct from U of M Extension, 1-24 copies, \$12.50 ea, 25+: \$7.50 ea

Other ideas:

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

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

Do we want to still try to get Islamic and Buddhist speakers to complete our other faiths series?

The pair from the Jewish Community Relations Council would like to come back and several people spontaneously mentioned that they would like to hear from them again. What topics would we want covered? Steve said, "Tell us what you want and we'll make it happen"

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – John Nye

No Council Action Required

Three security cameras have been ordered for the sanctuary.

ASG has requested a Bluetooth microphone be purchased for Adult Education

Pastor Geier – November 2025 Council Report

- Participated in ministry team meetings, staff ministry team meetings and weekly contemplative prayer group meetings.
- Multiple pastoral care opportunities
- Visited nursing home and home bound members and celebrated Holy Communion.
- High School Band concert on October 21.
- Hastings Ministerial Association on October 22.
- Feed My Starving Children with confirmation class, high schoolers and adults on October 22
- Confirmation stole making and rehearsal on October 25
- Downtown Halloween Celebration on October 26
- High School Orchestra October 28
- Led worship at Oak Ridge on October 29.
- Joint Ministerium at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Roseville, October 30
- Lefse making on November 1
- Trunk or Treat on November 1
- Middle School musical on November 6
- Leaf-raking with middle school (and adults) on November 8
- Led worship at Benedictine on November 10
- 7th & 8th grade band concert on November 11
- Preschool chapel on November 11 and 12
- Family Event – Pancakes and Prayers on November 15
- High School Friendsgiving and karaoke on November 16

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Our office administrator, Lista Klocow, gave notice of her retirement after 23 years of faithful service with St. Philip's Lutheran Church. Her last day of work will be January 30, 2026. While I am certain that we will want to do something to show our appreciation and gratitude, Lista does not like to be the center of attention. I am sure we will figure something out together.

Update on Ministry to and with Young Adults

- On our official membership roster there are 248 individuals between 20 and 40.
- I have categorized them into three groups: Single, Young Married, & Young Families.
 - o Approximately 28 single members who have worshipped at least once in the last year.
 - o 2 young married couples who are very active.
 - o 23 young families who are members who have worshiped at least once in the last year and over half of them worship regularly.

- There is clearly a need to “clean up” or at least update our records as there are 101 “young” adults who are no longer part of their parents’ household and yet we do not have any updated contact information for them.
- There is also a sizable number of “members” who have not worshiped or had any connection to St. Philip’s in at least 5 years and some I have no recollection of ever meeting.
- It is my hope to develop an informal and short questionnaire to see what type of event (service, fellowship, study, etc.) would be most likely to engage and support each group. If anyone would like to advise or assist, please let me know.

Your Servant in Christ,
Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

Old Business:

Council Members received the final writing of Job Descriptions.

What is our focus? Our list of members needs to be clean up. Many independent adult children are still listed with parents. Pastor will send a message to those asking if they wish to remain on the list. We have many members—young adults that are singles, married, and married with children. Pastor will connect to see how best we can meet their needs.

Active Shooter Plan for Sunday School/Confirmation—each lead/teacher has a list of contact information for each child under their supervision.

No movement on Director of Children’s Music.

The final Building Use Policy has been completed.

Star Quilters will be allowed to use the facility as a Council Member will be in charge.

New Business:

Pastor used Discretionary Funds to give aid to HFS and Food 4 Kids--\$2000 and \$1000, and the funds collected at the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service will also go to these organizations. Therefore, we will not have a separate collection at this time.

Permission was granted to sell quilts at the Sunday morning, November 23rd service. But Council did not feel it was appropriate to sell at the Ecumenical Service.

Following a short discussion and clarification on a few items in the 2026 Budget, Dave made a motion and Alex seconded the motion to approve the 2026 Budget. The motion was approved.

Natalie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alex seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary