

Council Minutes

January 19, 2026

Attending: Dan Strehlow, Dolores Pemble, Natalie Carda, Jen Klos, Dave Fry, Alex Zuzek, Maria Gathje, Sammi Warnecke, 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 December minutes. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Dave seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer Dolores Pemble

No Council Action Required

The FMT met on January 12, 2026 and approved the December, 2025 financials. There was a brief discussion on the start of the MN paid leave law after the first payroll of 2026. Note was made of the Jan. 25 budget discussion for the congregations as well as the Feb. 1 annual meeting. With Lista's retirement, we needed a second signer on the checking account and Ron has volunteered. Judy Hansen is retiring from FMT as she takes a position on the council. The audit committee met on January 14 and we received a glowing report on how organized the finances are. They found no concerns as they went through the audit worksheet. Jen made a motion that was seconded by Natalie to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed.

Vice President Alex Zuzek-Buildings and Grounds

No Council Action Required

While the team did not meet in JA, there has been service done on the HVAC mechanics in the new wing. Binder is the church's HVAC contractor and has been called to determine heating issues in the area. Their attention to this is timely and we hope it will soon be resolved. The coffee maker was limed up and cleaned by Steve Wolverton.

The putting up of the Advent mural and the taking down was done in large part by B & G members. The Christmas Tree was donated this year by Jim and April Wagner. It has its own large red container which is housed in the former library's annex room.

Parking lot surface has been acceptable but challenging during the ice episodes. Snow collection is stacked in piles on the south rim to spare water run-off into the neighbors back yards.

Budget was submitted without any anticipated large outlays of \$ during 2026.

Serving Ministry Report—Dave Fry

Council Action Required

Fellowship:

1. LADIES NIGHT: Emily Preston presented an idea of a stained-glass mosaic project. It's a 2-hour class, conducted by Janet Gray, fee of \$55 each. Sunflower, dragonfly, possible other shapes

available. Could be evening or Saturday morning. Emily will get more info. Camille will put a "watch for it" in January newsletter. We're thinking about sometime in March.

2. ANNUAL REPORT: Attached is the Fellowship Ministry submission with corrections.
3. EDUCATOR APPRECIATION: Marge, Camille JO, and Lydia are getting things ready for educators to pick up gifts at Welcome Desk on Feb. 1 & 8. We'll ask Camille JO to write a small paragraph for the bulletin.
4. DONUT HOLES: Worship and Music and our committee both recommend that Council change the policy that money collected for donut holes go towards the costs. Any extra can then be directed to Youth. COUNCIL ACTION needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. DEVOTIONS SIGN UP: We're good through May.
2. NEW MEMBERS RECEPTION JAN. 18: We have 5 families expected to join. Glenda and Dolores will meet with families this week. Patty will bake sweetbreads for gifts. Brenda, Patty and Darla will bake bars. Camille will ask others outside the committee for 2 more pans.
3. FEBRUARY CARE PACKAGES FOR 2025 GRADS: We'll order books and gift cards for grads to assemble care packages in February.
4. LISTA'S RETIREMENT RECEPTION JAN. 25:
 - Paragraph put in January newsletter notifying congregation. Glenda will have a bio insert about Lista to put in the Jan. 25 bulletin.
 - Camille will ask Lista to invite family.
 - Table by water fountains, extra tables and chairs down by former narthex.
 - Set up Sat. afternoon, Glenda can let us know what time.
 - Color scheme of purple, sage, blue?
 - Decorated sheet cake, a cheese & meat tray, crackers-Camille order from Cub
 - Flowers: Camille will order a bouquet for altar and corsage from Hastings Floral. Glenda will get sprigs for reception table and bud vases on other tables.
 - Coffee & water will be available at Welcome Center.
 - Plastic clear plates and forks used.
 - Patty and Darla will cut cake.
 - Becky Kaphing made a slide for screens, for narthex, and a sheet to put in Plexiglas frame for the cards basket. She said she'd have info ready for Jan. 18 on sanctuary screen.
 - We'll decorate a high-top table for cards, Camille has a large basket.
 - Council will provide appropriate gift.

Stewardship:

The Stewardship Team will not officially meet. Its annual report has been written, and the members will review it for input.

As a summary of the year, it was a strong and fruitful year.

1. Stewardship added Krystel Ebel to the team, making it a seven-person committee.
2. "Staying Connected", the monthly feature in the Newsletter continued under the watch of Gerri Lundby. This feature will continue as long as Gerri can find new writers.
3. The Pledge Card returned finished the year at 109, (up 3 from last year)
4. Pledged giving is up in the General Fund. (All numbers will be in the annual report.)
5. Pledged giving is up in the Capital Fund. (All numbers will be in the annual report.)
6. 110 members attended the Stewardship Sunday pancake breakfast.
7. The theme "Rooted in Gratitude, Growing in Faith", found by Dan Strehlow worked out well with all Temple Talk people-Kevin Eckstrom, Wes Ask, and Patty Wilson expressing it well.
8. Time and Talent forms came back from 78 households, up from 62 last year.

9. St. Philip's mortgage with Merchants Bank is beautifully down from \$2.7MM at its inception in 2013, to \$1.5MM at the end of 2025. (See annual report)

HR Report—Natalie Carda

Council Action Required

The HR Ministry Team of Nina Meyer and Deborah Dreher assisted Pastor Geier with the process hiring of Dawn Owen as Office Administrator.

Dawn's first day of employment will be January 19, 2026. Pastor, Deborah and Lista will be responsible for New Hire Orientation that day. Dawn will be able to shadow Lista for two weeks. After Lista's retirement, Pastor and Deborah will be responsible for training.

While discussing, in detail, the tasks of the Office Administrator position with Lista, Deborah focused on the priorities of the position. She identified tasks that are system and/or technical in nature. Her plea is for the CMT to recruit more members that have skills to manage the technology of St. Philip's.

Worship Ministry Report— Maria Gathje

No Council Action Required

Service Debrief: Christmas Eve services had record attendance. The flowers were very nice, provided by Gerten's. The 300 hand-held candles were not enough at the 3 PM service. It was suggested that we put together 325 next year. A glitch in the 3 PM Christmas Eve slide presentation is being addressed. Services continue to go well. Music is good. Julia Ronning did a nice job singing on Christmas Eve.

Future Planning

- Worship Leader assignments/volunteers have been working out. Lori will be reviewing the Time and Talent sheets for updates.
- There are two additional people who have expressed an interest in working at the soundboard. Paul Hellen has been helping with slide construction, as needed.
- Teacher Appreciation: Feb 1 & 8 there will be gift bags for teachers to pick up at the Welcome Center. Camille Johnson-Oster will pass them out Feb 1 and Lori will pass them out Feb 8. They will be in a bin that can be stored in the education office during that time.
- Lenten service musicians are being recruited.
- Becky is looking into recruitment for special music on Feb 8 and Mar 29. Youth Bells may possibly play Mar 29 (Palm Sunday).

Music planning:

- Jan 18: Unity
- Jan 25: Bells, song leader: Maria Gathje
- Feb 1: Praise Band, Meg
- Feb 8: Song Leader: Lori Best
- Feb 15: Unity
- Feb 18 Ash Wed: Unity
- Feb 22: Bells, Song Leader: Maria Gathje
- Feb 25, Lent1 Wed: Song Leaders: Maria Gathje & David Weisser
- Mar 1: Praise Band, Meg
- Mar 4, Lent2 Wed: Song Leaders: Lori Best & Ryan Hummel

Council Item: The Worship & Music ministry team supports the request from Fellowship Ministry to use the weekly donut hole donations to finance the cost of purchasing donut holes with any excess donations going to Youth programming.

Dolores Pemble may be willing to sing with me at the third Lenten service on March 11. David Weisser and Ryan Hummel agreed to sing with Maria and Lori, respectively, at the first two Lenten service.

Kelsey: Would you and your girls be interested in leading the singing at either of the last two Lenten services, March 18 and 25? We can confirm later, as we closer to the dates.

I contacted Lois and Judy about getting a new Advent Wreath.

Learning Ministries Report –Jen Klos

No Council Action Required

Pre-School:

No meeting

Faith Formation:

- Some families have shown interest in going to camp Wapo this summer. It has been brought up to maybe go with Our Saviors. (at least the same week) Lydia will look into this more.
- Youth updates
 - Dec middle school babysitting event 10 kids to be watched and 5 middle schoolers helped. Raised \$120 for feed my starving children.
 - Jan middle school game night 14 kids
 - Jan high school event Feed my Starving Children will be Jan 24th.
- Team was made away of the designated youth funds account.
- Children's updates

Dec Christmas program had a wonderful group of children ages 2.5-12 helping spread the good news. January family event pizza, pj, and game night maybe canceled due to numbers.

- Becky is looking to put together a survey asking families more specifically what events they'd be interested in, days or times that work, and other details to hopefully increase attendance for events.
- Youth and children's volunteer tables will be set up Feb 1st and Feb 8th after service.
- This committee will be meeting on the second Tuesday of the month moving forward. Next meeting February 10th at 7:00

ASG:

Newsletter: Doug will submit info in January for February Newsletter

Chuck will write up for Jim Dontje & Laura Lindell for their presentation

Budget

Assumed zeroed out for end of 2025

For 2026, assume \$500 budget

\$100 for Krishona Martinson, Chuck promised

\$100 for Jim Dontje & Laura Lindell

Updating sound system

System and two wireless microphones are working OK

Discussion was made on

where to store the plastic box containing the RODE Wireless GO II

possibly in the storage closet or in far right draw across from education storage

Steps and when to charge mics; options will be tried

Where to store the notebook of user manuals

Winter Tentative schedule:

January, 2026

1/4 Charity partnership in 2026 [Jennie]

Jennie requested to switch to a The Wired Word discussion because of the detailed description in the January Newsletter

1/11 Who gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate [Chuck]

1/18 Krishona Martinson, Navigating unexpected losses [Chuck]

1/25 Financial / budget meeting [Jennie]

February, 2026

2/1 Annual meeting, no Adult Forum

2/8 Synod on Tanzania [Jennie is working on a contact]

2/15 Krista Lind, Deacon & Assist to Bishop Lull

2/22 Tanzania Jim Dontje & Laura Lindell—missionary work on daily life and drinking water supply and quality. Zoom connection them in Tanzania

March

3/1 Tanzania—Shoulder-to-shoulder by Jeannie or Medical / Health by Doug

3/8 Tanzania—Shoulder-to-shoulder by Jeannie or Medical / Health by Doug

3/15

[Mar 16-20 ISD200 Spring Break]

3/22

3/29 Palm Sunday

April

4/5 Easter Sunday

4/12 Sarah Wise Schwieger, Starkson Family—funeral preplanning and Pastor Geier—funeral arrangements within St. Philip's Lutheran

4/19

4/26

Communication/Marketing/Tech Report – John Nye

No Council Action Required

- Completed installation of all security cameras
- Had new outlets installed for cameras
- Replaced the rise vision display stick to a new updated one for the narthex display TV
- Moved a phone line for the music office
- Ordered new microphone system for the adult spiritual growth team
- Renewed 3-year contract with comcast for phone and internet
- Assisted with annual meeting and counting ballots
- Reinstalled the old camera system at Lista's desk so they can continue to be utilized for live viewing from her desk

Pastor Geier – January 2026 Council Report

I have tried to attend or at least be in touch with our ministry teams and think that they all have been doing an admirable job in their respective spheres of ministry even though some are in critical need of additional members.

- I have attended school events to support our young members and connect with their parents including:
 - o 5th grade vocal music concert and 6th grade vocal music concert on December 16
 - o HS Show Choir Preview performance on January 13
- I attended the Hastings Ministerial Association on December 17.
- I attended our synod's south conference meeting on December 18 at Prince of Peace in Burnsville.
- The Blue Christmas worship on December 21 was not well attended. However, three different people made a point of telling me how much it meant to them to have this service.

- High School Youth Christmas party on December 21
- I lead worship at Oak Ridge on December 31
- Middle School Game night on January 11

Thanks for your partnership in the Gospel.

Your Servant in Christ,

Gregory A. Geier, Pastor

Old Business addressed via email previous to Jan. meeting

Dan asked council members to vote on how the tithing money be dispersed to the chosen organizations. Council voted, via email, to give the top two organizations in each category the tithing money. The other option was to do a waterfall split between the four organizations in each category.

Old Business:

Dolores made a motion, and Alex seconded the motion to move “What is our focus” to CMT—need to focus on providing opportunities for various age groups to help build connections between members.

No new activity on the Director of Children’s Music.

New Business:

Discussion on donut hole money. Jen made a motion, and Dave seconded the motion to increase the Inviting Ministry Fund to accommodate the purchase of the donut holes. The money from the donut holes will go to the General Fund.

CMT is being asked to provide office support on technical issues. Pastor will develop a list of tech skills needed that have formerly been handled by Quentin Nelson. Jen made a motion for CMT to have our website updated; this may mean posting a job opening. Natalie seconded the motion, and the motion passed.

Dolores made a motion that was seconded by Natalie to give a gift of \$1000 to Lista for her 24 years of service to St. Philips. This motion passed. Dolores will take care of this.

Jen will talk to Becky and Lydia about providing possible childcare during the annual meeting.

The Tithing vote at the annual meeting will take place after the presentation of the 2026 Budget.

Mention will be made at the annual meeting of a correction on page 14—8th paragraph—“hydrogenous” should state “hydrangeas”.

A motion was made by Alex and seconded by Maria to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Twedt, Secretary