



1/13/26 – COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

7:05 p.m. Meeting called to order by Mikel Jones, President

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mikel Jones (via Google Meets), Sherri Eriksrud, Bill Tyler, Ashley Pederson, Eric Larson, Kate Peterson, Bill Tyler, Pastor Laura Laughlin, Deb Mangen, Pastor Reggie Klindworth, Bob Chinnock, Kristi Kirsch

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

7:06 p.m. Devotional: Bill Tyler
A New Year of Hope

7:09 p.m. Approval of December Council Minutes

- Deb Mangen made the motion to approve the minutes, and Kate Peterson seconded the motion.
- No discussion.
- All in attendance at the December meeting approved. No one objected.
- Pastor Reggie, Bob Chinnock, and Kristi Kirsch were not at the December meeting and abstained.

7:10 p.m. Financial Updates: Ashley Pederson

Contributions

- \$73,000 for December.
- We ended the year at \$572,081, which is \$12,081 over our budget of \$560,000.

Rent

- Rent for Vida Nueva was waived for December and will be waived for January as well. This was approved by the Finance Committee.
- The Driving School has not paid November and December. They think they have so Ashley will check again.
- The Preschool Place is looking forward to being a continuing renter. We will move forward with a one-year lease extension for now.
- We have not received the ERC (Employee Retention Credit) check yet.
- Fundraisers performed well over goal.
- Ashley has requested currently dated 501c3 documentation from the IRS.

Misc.

- Connect and Confirmation registrations have not covered all the expenses, so we are starting to pay for this from the general fund.

7:19 p.m. Budget Review: Group Discussion

General Overview Revenue (Ashley)

- The current version includes feedback from the Finance Team meeting last night.
- Contributions are budgeted at \$580,000. Ashley did a summary of Grant's analysis of his baseline revenue guideline of \$568,000.
- Rent:
 - Preschool Place is budgeted with a 4% increase (11 months), DJ at \$345/month, two congregations leasing (total of \$800/month). The Finance Team suggested we consider planning for the congregation not meeting right now. The Pastors suggested budgeting for just 6 months but not absolve the contract.
 - Mikel asked about DJ's known intent. Reggie responded that he will continue to use the parking lot year-round and the meeting room during the peak months. The projected revenue only includes the parking lot lease.
- Fundraising was set at \$20,000 in the first draft of the budget. When projecting the expected money raised, the total was adjusted to \$28,000.
 - After the Finance Committee meeting it was advised to move the amount to a more achievable amount, that creates less pressure on volunteers.
 - We have money in the bank. We would like to keep a cushion of \$50,000 and could be used for projects (for example: carpet, sound system, etc. with a formal request).
 - Sherri shared the idea of mixed fundraising for both the General Fund and Projects with communication that after achieving the fundraising goal set for the event, the remaining fundraising could go to a designated project.
 - Ashley brought up the building committee to help bring forward and vet projects.
 - Mikel shared results of the volunteer survey. Of the key 8 volunteers, 7 expressed intent to continue. They also said that we may raise more money if it was for a designated for a purpose.

General Overview Expenses (Ashley)

- Staff changes
 - Add a building coordinator position, 3% raises, contract employee increase of \$25/session for musicians.
 - Finance team in favor of the raises. Lots of conversation about the building coordinator position and suggested job description updates.
- Youth Mission Trip was increased.
- Benevolence was increased to \$7300. \$5,000 of that is to be paid to the synod.

Discussion (Group)

Benevolence Budget

- Last year, benevolence money went to special events, like the fundraising background checks.
- We used to have an emergency fund and haven't had that anymore. This is a fund for the Pastor to use at their discretion for urgent special needs requests.
 - Ashley asked if we want to re-establish this fund. We do not have a designated fund to help families in need.

- Reggie thinks we should continue the current plan to use the special gifts fund.
- Deb expressed that having a money surplus but giving to benevolence does not seem right.

Facilities Expense

- The Finance Committee suggested we increase the facilities expense.
- Ashley added more for Cintas based on the current year.
- Ashley added an extra month of pest control.
 - Deb asked about research on the expected utilities increase.
 - Ashley said she had researched that and used the percent in the budget. She thought it was 3.4%. Eric looked up the published projection while the meeting was in progress and communicated that it is a 3.6% projected increase in 2026.
 - Bob asked about the maintenance expense and recommended that we assume we would have one large and/or unexpected repair during the year.
 - Kristi inquired about the CINTAS expense compared to LY. Reggie shared that we used to pay independently for mats for both sides of the building and have combined into one account.

Additional expense recommendations

- VBS (Sherri): We planned for a donation again in 2026 but don't have one committed so we should budget for the expense.
- Confirmation/Connect (Kate): If we are underfunded this year from the enrollment fee, we should plan it will be the same next year and budget for the impact on the General Fund.
 - Confirmation fees were \$1600 in 2025
 - Connect fees were \$470 in 2025.
 - Sherri suggested adding 2500 in the budget to account for a similar performance in 2026.
- Benevolence (Bill): We have not kept up with an appropriate amount over the past few years.
- Additional positions (Reggie): Suggested we only move forward with the Building Administrator role in the requested additional staff budget.
- Revenue projection (Bill and Reggie): The projection is conservative and we should look at adding to that as well.
 - Sherri suggested that the current projection now includes a strong year and the stock gifts are not necessarily repeated.
- Use of Capital Fund (Mikel): For line items where it makes sense, we could consider the potential to use the Capital Fund to pay for an idea instead of putting it in the budget. He used the need for a laptop for the new positions as an example.

Misc

- Bill asked why the difference in "other income" budget compared to 2025. Ashley explained that this account is for income/expenses that are "in and out" like poinsettias for Christmas service where we collect money from congregation members and then use that to pay the vendor for the poinsettias. The plan is to change methodology this year and remove the in/out from the budget so it is not comparable to 2025.

Summary

- The proposed budget was unbalanced by \$38,000 before tonight's discussion.
- The Finance Team has requested that we present a balanced budget at the annual meeting and the Council agrees.
- We have added some additional expenses, so we now need to look at options to cut to be in line.
- Mikel requested that Ashley send out an updated budget for the Council to review and be ready to discuss options for budget adjustments at the next meeting (January 27). Bill suggested we look at revenue as well. The projection is conservative and we should look at adding to that as well.

8:22 p.m. Pastor Reports

Pastor Reggie

- Stewardship Review:
 - 113 pledges were turned in.
 - We broke our record with a commitment of \$419,000.
 - Grant has done an incredible job of summarizing all types of givers we have. Pledgers make up 52% of all our giving.
- The Veum family were former members of our congregation. They left the congregation years ago. They now live in Chaska and have asked to hold a funeral at Crown of Glory. This will be the third funeral since December 17.
- Reggie encouraged the group to read his entire report for more detail.

Pastor Laura

- The Cantata was a key focus over the last month.
- Laura performed a baptism.
- Laura communication of accepting a Senior Pastor call at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepard in South Minneapolis.
 - This upcoming Sunday, they will be voting to officially call her as their Senior Pastor.
 - This is her former internship congregation, and they reached out at beginning of her sabbatical and she declined to interview because of the start of her sabbatical. She invited them to follow up in September if still looking for a Senior Pastor.
 - They did follow up and she has been in discernment about the position. Laura is feeling called by God to accept this call and with a mix of joy and grief, she will be turning in her resignation from Crown of Glory.

Timing of next steps:

Sunday 1/18	Lutheran Church of the Good Shephard votes to affirm the call of Pastor Laura
Sunday, 1/18	Laura sends letter of resignation to Pastor Reggie and President Mikel Jones
Wednesday, 1/21	Laura informs participants in the music ministries
Sunday, 1/25	Laura announces to the congregation at the end of the church service
Monday, 1/26	email of announcement and start of arrival of letters to homes
Sunday, 2/15	Laura's last service at Crown of Glory with sendoff from Assistant to the Biship and refreshments/fellowship after church
Tuesday, 2/17	Laura's last day in office

Next Steps for Crown of Glory

- Reggie has been in touch with the Minneapolis synod. He has written a job description for our interim.
 - We will have a bridge interim pastor.
 - 6 months is recommended.
 - He will get profiles to read within the week.
 - Reggie will cover the profiles with the Executive Committee, and they will work together to select an interim.
- Budget impact
 - It has been recommended by the synod that we continue with the budget as if Laura were remaining and that will be sufficient to cover the costs of the interim pastor and other costs of music leadership as well as the call of a new Associate Pastor.
- Music Leadership
 - Reggie is talking to Ginger about what she will be willing to take on in the interim.
 - Grace has just started a graduate school program so will not be available right now for additional responsibility but may be in the future.
 - Worship and Music is not a common position or skill set within the Twin Cities. It is unlikely we will be able to replace exactly with the interim or in a new associate so we will need to consider what our structure looks like going forward.
 - Laura has worship planned ahead through May.
- Steps in the Call of a new pastor
 - Towards the end of lent, we will schedule table talks to invite feedback on what we are looking for in our next call. The goal is to have gifts of the best use.
 - There are forty congregations open for call right now.
 - It is unlikely that we will be able to do a replacement in our current structure and should plan that we will also have to hire a choir director.

Please keep this news confidential until it is announced in worship. This is important to allow for communication to happen respectfully for others who need to hear from Laura.

There was sharing of sentiment in appreciating Laura's gifts and contributions at COG. We are sad to see her leave and wish her the best with congratulations on her new call.

9:12 p.m. Closing

Next Meeting:

- The meeting is scheduled for 1/27/26.
- The focus of the meeting will be on the budget and the presentation for the annual meeting.

Devotion for the January meeting: Eric Larson

Closing Prayer: Pastor Reggie

Motions:

- Bob moved to close the meeting.
- Reggie seconded the motion.
- All members present approved the motion.

Submitted by Sherri Eriksrud 1/26/2026