

**Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes**

July 24, 2025, 2025 | 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Attendance: **Present:** Breanna Dauphinee; Jeff Gerstenberger; Lisa Klima; Pastor Aileen Robbins; Laurie Simonson; Mark Sutliff; Sheri Treadwell; Amy Trichanh; Andy Mitchell; Paul Williams
Absent: Jim Hartmann

Devotions and Prayer: **Leader:** Amy Trichanh
Theme(s): Psalm 100 – What am I grateful for?

Agenda Review:

- Other Business - Messiah Pride & Budget needs
- Other Business – Pastor Aileen's upcoming retirement

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- June 5, 2025 – no additions or corrections.
Accepted as written.

Financial Reports: **June 2025 Reports:**

- Close to breaking even for the June Budget.
- Discussion was opened to ask Julie Gerstenberger for insights.
- Appreciation for Julie's work was expressed.
- Working to not just stay on top of finances but improve them.

Extended Ministry Team Report:

Finance:

- Feelings / words to describe finance: ugh, overspent, anxiety, hoarder, spending plan / road map, teamwork.
- Council's role in the finance team is financial insight. Goal is to have a better understanding of this.
- Andy Mitchell shared a few slides regarding what's going on with the finance team.
- Appreciation was shared for the finance and auditing team.

Last Year's Goal:

1. on time monthly reports
2. 2 times a year finance meeting (which are happening more regularly),
3. survival mode has changed to a growth mindset,
4. a collaborative budget review committee (2 happened in 2024 and hoped for 2025 – this removes the anxiety and surprise in January).

Request = start budget process a lot sooner, Andy will be providing feedback and insight sooner.

2025 Priorities:

- Auditing processes/ procedures were updated and reviewed.
- Voting and approving an audit committee as a council

Meeting Minutes Submitted By: Breanna Dauphinee

Date: 7/24/25 **Time:** 8:44 PM

(included as a vote for council officers after the annual meeting)

Finance Scavenger Hunt:

- Paul gave a 30-40 second overview of a council person's role in the budget process.
- 2025 Budget was shared on the screen, to remind council of total budget amount, and review for the process looking to 2026.
- The spreadsheet used to populate the herald summary was shared. (In the spreadsheet we're able to see income versus expenses in each month "net cash flow". Row 7 shows the full budget divided by 12 months. The spreadsheet was turned into a graph for easier review and see the cyclical set of spending. The expenses also seem to follow the follow of income.

Prediction conversations:

- ½ group is a 5-year trend report plan review (breakout room 1), ½ group where we're reviewing the June update (breakout room 2). The goal is to make predictions based on the generalized data.
- "I don't know" and "I have no idea" are not allowed to be shared.
- Predict – go visual – observe – infer or question

STEP 1 – Predictions / Go Visual:

- Everyone makes a prediction without a strong opinion.
- Predictions from each group was shared.

STEP 2 – OBSERVE:

- Make observations based on the data
- People are generous – outlook looks healthy/ on track.
- We're closer to 50% of annual spend than we thought but felt overwhelmed by the number of things to track.

STEP 3- Infer

- It's hard to make inferences when the 5-year trend doesn't include actuals

Terms to Consider:

"Net Cash Flow" = income minus expenses. If there is more income than expenses the number is positive, and the inverse is also true.

Other Business: Messiah Pride & Budget Needs:

- Expenses from the parade came from an endowment grant fund. With this being a new, on-going ministry, we should consider how this will be funded going forward.
- Unless things change, this will be added to the budget starting in 2026. Anything further in 2025 should be a case-by-case basis

through the remainder of the year.

- It was asked if there were multiple requests for a grant, would it be possible. Big picture, the expectation is that there is no longer eligibility for grant money due to being an established ministry.
- This seems to fit in the Youth and Family budget line. – Andy is adding the line item.

Giving Update:

- \$20,000 gift from Jan Schroder's estate with no direction on use.
- Enjoyed worship, study, and being with Kids.
- There are no strings attached.
- Suggested to add some to the endowment, the Greater Messiah Fund, some special project, or an area that is in need. Could we use for project wish lists.
- It was asked about the candles on the altar to replace, or to ask about replacing needs on the altar. – there is money in the memorial fund. (Bree will bring to W&M about these things)
- As a practical person, it seems to be "like Jan" to support property. It was suggested possibly half for the Greater Messiah Fund.
- A high priority task for property right now would be exterior work, including the crosses on the side of the building.
- It was suggested to bring a wish list to future conversations.
- It has been put in the Greater Messiah Fund for now, as it needed to go somewhere initially, but can be reallocated.

Pastor Aileen's Upcoming Retirement & Incoming Plans:

- This is being deferred to a future meeting as it is 8:40 and people are tired.

Next Meeting:

- September 4, 2025 | 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **on zoom**

Extended Report: Stewardship | **Devotions and Prayer:** Andy Mitchell

- Council Summer Party @ Pastor Aileen's house. (July 27 @2PM)

Closing Prayer: Amy Trichanh