

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

Council Meeting Minutes

December 4, 2025 | 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Attendance: **Present:** Breanna Dauphinee; Andy Mitchell; Laurie Simonson; Ralph Jones; Sheri Treadwell; Paul Williams; Lisa Klima; Jeff Gerstenberger
Absent: Amy Trichanh, Jim Hartmann

Devotions and Prayer:

Leader: Laurie

Themes: Morning Prayers – Ear Worms

Agenda Review: All set, minus the wrong time.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: **November 6** minutes approved as written!

Financial Reports:

November 2025 Reports:

- Appreciated the positive space.
- YTD \$43,000 positive for net cash flow, we're not sure when/if this has happened before.
- Reaping benefits of consistent and regular communication.

Ministry Team Reports:

Property – Hearing Assistive Technology

- Notes were sent about a recent meeting with team.
- Noted in the document was a proposal for an Auracast hearing assistance system for \$6540.
- The Hearing Association of Rochester said they have grants to cover 50%.
- Ralph was asked about feedback he may hear regarding the current system and said that there are some members who consistently struggle to hear, even with the current radio-based system.
- New system would work with compatible hearing aids and headphones.
- It was asked if there is a way to get feedback from communities using their product. (JCC & Auditorium Theater are being installed here)
- We could list Auracast capability on our web site as an available feature
- It was asked about non-amplified sources (organ/choir) if these would be picked up with the new system. Not with the current setup.
- There were concerns regarding the cost of the system. We would like more clarification on why

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Date: 12/04/2025 **Time:** 08:50 p.m.

they're so differently priced on Amazon (about 1/10th the cost).

- Paul will connect with the team to get some feedback on cost differences.
- Jeff and Paul will discuss how audio works in the sanctuary.

Property- Boiler:

- Gasket failed on large boiler resulting in hot water and steam discharge. Paul worked with Emcor to get it fixed very quickly.
- Hoping for the bill to be sent and paid this year.

Other Business:

Allocation of \$20K gift to Messiah – remaining \$5,000:

- Suggestion would be to put into the updates to the hearing aid project in the sanctuary.
- It was suggested to put the money in the memorial fund
- There was also a suggestion to put 10% (\$2000) in the food pantry.
- It feels like it would make sense to put it in memorial fund!
- **Motion: Allocate the remaining \$5,000 as \$2,000 to the food pantry and \$3,000 to the memorial fund.** Paul made a motion to approve it. Laurie made a second to the motion. All of council was in favor.
- Andy will inform Julie.

Request for a use of Parking Lot:

- Nothing else heard yet. Pastor Aileen will let council know if/ when we have more information.

New Banners

- \$208 was spent for new Christmas season banner.
- **Motion: Approval for up to \$550 from Memorial Fund for new banners.** Council voted in favor.
- Andy will inform Julie.

Council Nominations:

- Review of Nominating Committee List.
- Spouses of other council members or of pastor was discussed. There is nothing in any of our documents that say anything about this, and it should be listed there somewhere. No problem with 2 family members, 3 seems a bit hesitant. Policy update will be considered in the new year.
- The nomination list approved as is

Celebration of Ministry for Pastor Hans- 2/15:

- Paul and Pastor working on building a group.
- Han's will retire from his covenant position within the congregation but will remain active in the congregation as

any other member is.

- A fancy celebration would make him uncomfortable. Something he can take home and read privately would be good.
- Paul wants to put this information in the bulletin before January 10. It feels like there should be a more formal announcement. A bulletin insert may be good.
- ROCUBUNTU Clergy would be invited.

Annual Meeting:

- **Motion: To hold the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 25th after worship.** Paul made the motion, Laurie made a second for the motion, all voted in favor.
- January 18th will be the finance forum.
- Pastor Aileen will reach out to Carol for Coffee hour.
- Childcare is good. Linda Williams offered to watch the children.
- Each ministry team must send Cathy a report before 1/1.

Synod Assembly (May 26 & 27):

- We get to send two lay representatives.
- Will be in Syracuse.
- Bree volunteered to go, looking for 1 other person.

**Budget
Development:**

Review 2026 Income Estimate:

- Donation pledges to Greater Messiah Fund and to the Food Pantry should not be included in our expected operating budget (but we still want to track and celebrate this giving).
- We are currently showing income 1% lower than last year, and 1 more giving family this year.
- Two red blocks emphasize no need to pull from Concord or Carryover Fund (hopefully).

Review 2026 Expense Estimate:

- Budget expenses are currently reduced by 2.3% from last year.
- While there is a little buffer, it isn't too much of a need to adjust.
- Staff Evaluations were reviewed and compensation adjustments were proposed by the Mutual Ministry Team earlier this week. Those proposed adjustments were accepted by Council and are part of the current expense estimate.

Hospitality Designated Fund:

- We've gotten better at asking families to help cover the cost for funeral receptions.
- We also reduce costs by relying on donated items.
- Finance team is suggesting we establish a designated fund

Called into community, gifted to serve. Glorifying God through love in action.

for Hospitality to better track donations against our expenses.

Next Meeting: January 8, 2026 | 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. **ON ZOOM**

Extended Report: Communications | **Devotions and Prayer:** Jeff

December Holiday Gathering: December 6, 4:00 PM, at Paul and Linda's House (177 Harvington Drive) Don't forget a white elephant gift.

Closing Prayer: Laurie

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