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

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2026 **|** 9:30 PM – 12:00 PM | In Person

Attendance: **Present:** Breanna Dauphinee; Carol Dunn; Jeff Gerstenberger; Ralph Jones; Lisa Klima; Joanne Niemi; Andy Mitchell; Mark Sutliff; Kacy Treadwell Collins; Sheri Treadwell Collins; Paul Williams

Devotions and Prayer: **Leader:** Joanne Niemi
Theme: Believe your eyes (video)

Agenda Review: Property has a few topics to add.
Outreach would like to add discussion about fellowship and advocacy.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- **February 12, 2026,** accepted as written.
- Note: Annual meeting minutes need to be corrected for Joanne's last name.

Financial Reports: **February 2026 Reports:**

- Net income vs. expense is ahead of plan – although not as far ahead of plan as this time last year.
- Andy requested that each ministry team leader review their spending.
- It was noted that fluctuations in the stock market only impact the endowment fund.

Ministry Team Reports: **Youth and Family:**

- Messiah Pride starting back up! No other pressing information to share currently.
- There was a question about Sunday School, and the number of youth and teens. There is a concern about our demographics.
- Has there been an attempt to connect and follow up with MAD camp kids? -YES, however most kids who attended are already in a church.
- Bringing our website into a modern/ updated interface may help to draw younger families. Along with doing a bit more PR.
- Discussion about how do we invite younger families without being overly aggressive.

Other Business: **Property:**

- **Hearing assistance** vendor came to demonstrate to 14 folks. There was a strong interest, although most people don't know the capability of their hear aids and a number are not confident in using the technology involved. If people who are mic'd are facing forward, it's easier to hear, but if people turn their heads, it's harder to hear. With our current system, hearing aid users are made 'obvious' because of headphones or a neck loop and it isn't quite accessible. While there are benefits of the Auracast

system, there would be significant teaching required. A survey will be shared with folks to better understand issues. Jeff will look the operation and use of our current system.
- **Fire Suppression** with 10 burners and a shelf on the stove, requires either a 4th nozzle spray to be added or the removal of the shelf. Suggestion was made to remove the shelf. Paul will investigate feasibility.
- **Small Boiler** would be about $75,000 for total replacement. It was agreed to spend $748 to replace a failed switch on the small boiler related to sensing the proper flow of exhaust gases up the flue.
- **Dishwasher** was fixed. Not sucking up enough soap. Problem may be a clogged tube (only costs about $12 on the internet). A little more work is needed.

Outreach:

- **Asked about the bells**. – Wille will be contacted about when they'll come back.
- **Food and friends** & **RocUbuntu** flyer were shared about group activities. With Food and Friends, Greece Baptist Church is looking for volunteers between the Messiah / GBC / other local church communities to host monthly (and ultimately weekly) free community meals.
- There was a question about how we're advertising programming and how we're providing information for people to be involved.
- Discussion about where **Fellowship** and **Advocacy** belong in the ministry team organization will be deferred to the next Council meeting.

Retreat Discussion:

Anxiety in a Healthy System:

- What causes you to have anxiety?
- What does anxiety accomplish? Can trigger fight, flight, fret or freeze.
- Responses to anxiety include: overfunction, underfunction, forming triangles (e.g., parking log conversations), distance, avoidance, or all out conflict.
- Reactivity versus responding.
- Non anxious response (like asking curious questions) can be helpful.
- Calming the system is more complicated when there are a number of other people involved.

Dreaming Big → New goals and ideas:

- A big concern here being with our congregational demographics and finances. The concern is the sustainability for the premises and our outreach ministries (specifically our food pantry, and also funeral ministries).
- An anxiety is the spending needed for upkeep of the property. Do we need to consider alternatives?
- It seems that confirmation is the last time we see many of our youth. How do we reframe confirmation not as a

graduation, but a shift in relationship in the community? It calls into question appeal versus impose.
- What reasons are we giving youth and young families to STAY with us?

What's next → what do we need?
- Why can't we invite young people into our meeting(s)? (e.g., Grace/ Quincy/ Maya)
- We need to keep a focus on justice issues. Goal 1 as it currently stands is an important goal. We need goals that are outward facing. Could we have a goal that supports the 'neighbors' around Messiah?
- No wrong way to pray / serve / ask.
- Pastor Aileen, Andy, and Carol will meet to plan/discuss gathering input from young families in the congregation about their needs, wants, and desires. This input will be brought to the next Council meeting.

Next Meeting:
- April 9, 2026, 7:00-8:30 pm (Extended Report, Pastor Aileen; Devotions & Prayer, Ralph Jones) **ZOOM.**

Closing Prayer: Joanne Niemi

Meeting Minutes Submitted By: Breanna Dauphinee
Date: 03/10/2026 **Time:** 2:10p.m.