

Church of St. Paul – Comfrey
Administrative Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 26, 2026 – 7:00p.m. – Church basement

Members present: Fr. Craig Timmerman, Fr. Sam Perez, Jim Rathman, Dale McMullen, Connie Kelly, Darrell Platz, Marianne Schotzko (via phone), Denice Evers, Judy Augustin, Nellie Richter – Secretary
Members absent: Matt Eischen, Fr. Nathan Hansen, Matt Grausam, Shelley Roufs
Guest: Thomas Juhnke-McPhee

Fr. Craig led the group in prayer.

Meeting was opened by Chairman Rathman at 7:08 a.m.

Agenda: Additions: Request was made about putting handicap rails in basement Men's bathroom. Rathman will look into this. The bathroom stalls in basement are not 'handicap accessible' and fairly narrow so could only put on the outer walls, if at all. The family bathroom in the elevator addition is handicap accessible.

Minutes from the November 18, 2025 Administrative Council Meeting were approved prior to meeting via email responses from Schotzko, Eischen, Augustin, Evers and Kelly.

Financials from November, 2025 thru January, 2026: Schotzko asked about the bill paid for pruning trees and shrubs on the church campus. Previous years, this was done free of charge, but now the son has started a side business. He and another worker were here about 1 ½ days, cleaned-up and hauled away everything they trimmed (was 2 years' worth of trimmings). No objection was made to use their service in the future.

Matt Grausam had notes: We are behind in budget with our Adult support. Investment market gains added \$11,783.63 this fiscal year so far. Budgeting for next Fiscal Year has begun. Expenses will need to be increased to cover the rising costs, so Adult support may need to be increased again. Payroll for St. Paul's employees has now been combined with other churches in our AFC. Will help reduce time and paper paychecks will no longer be issued unless an employee elects to have one. M/S/C Evers, Kelly to approve Financials.

Religious Education Report (Roufs/Richter): We have 12 students in Grades 1-8 and attendance has been really good so far. First Reconciliation was held for AFC second graders on Saturday, January 24th at St. Mary's. First Communion Meeting with parents only will be March 1st and then on April 19th. First Communion is Sunday, May 3rd at our 10:00a.m. Mass. Stations of the Cross will be March 4th with Students and Confessions offered on March 25th. M/S/C Evers, McMullen to approve.

Liturgy Report (Augustin): Lent Season began February 18th, Ash Wednesday. Lent is a time to focus on spiritual renewal through giving up things, increasing prayer, attending weekday Mass and Stations of the Cross, to name a few things. Choir practices are held Sunday mornings prior to Mass in preparation for Lent and Easter Season. There is room for anyone interested in joining the choir! M/S/C Schotzko, Platz to approve.

CCW Report (Schotzko): Good attendance at the Christmas Party/meal we hosted. Several women helped with the December 6th St. Nicholas Meal for seniors/shut-ins in and around the community. Funds were received to help cover the costs. 90 meals were made. Amaryllis were given to shut-in's and CCD teachers, and monetary gifts to staff for Christmas. Several members are helping on committees for the April 25th Diocesan Convention held at Morgan - Registration, Silent Auction, Name tags and 'Mary's Garden'. Next CCW meeting is March 5th and Spring Gathering for Deanery 1 is March 19th at St. Mary's in Sleepy Eye. M/S/C McMullen, Evers to approve.

Liturgical Environment (Schotzko): 3 volunteers helped the committee with decorating from Advent to Christmas. Thanks to all! Many poinsettias were donated this year. Thanks to Jim Rathman for donating artificial Christmas trees that can be used starting next year.

Lent décor is austere to prepare us for Holy Week. Nothing yet on flower cooler for storeroom north of sanctuary. Looking for one with one glass door. M/S/C Evers, Platz to approve.

Calendar Raffle Report: We sold more tickets this year than many previous years, so income was \$6,621.82 this year. M/S/C Schotzko, McMullen to approve.

Cemetery Report: Fr. Craig mentioned that he talked with Travis Braulick earlier and the annuity was rolled over, with interest rate as well.

New refrigerator in kitchen: Evers purchased it for us and she and Jim Rathman picked it up in Tracy and Matt, Kurt and Dan Eischen helped with lifting it and putting it in place. Craig Moody borrowed us his appliance cart and he also took the old fridge. Thanks to everyone for helping!

Church kitchen basement telephone – Do we still need to have? Schotzko feels we do not need it anymore and can get canceled. Office will double check with the elevator company and if we have to have a landline connected for it to work.

Fr. Craig wants announcements on Sundays simplified and to announce only things going on that Sunday or if weekday Mass times change, etc. Not things that are in the bulletin and can be read at a later time.

Stations of the Cross will be at St. Paul's every Friday at 7:00p.m. with Confessions until 8:00p.m. Fr. Craig would like to propose that we have only one Christmas Mass as he was here for both Christmas Eve & Day Masses and attendance wasn't very good at either. Choir members and pianist have to attend both now along with servers, etc. and we just would need to decide which will be better to keep – Christmas Eve is usually the better attended out of the 2.

Elevator: Mike, MEI mechanic, talked with Nellie on 2/25/26 and separately with Matt Eischen: Hydraulic jacks are showing internal wear and would need repair (not replacement) at some point – the quarterly maintenance checks will determine when necessary. However, repair is not cheap! Even though Mike doesn't do the billing, he is guessing a price tag of \$15-20K. We already have a tank heater in the 'Pit Room' so another heater or heating system in the Pit or Mechanical rooms would probably not be beneficial and also be expensive. Mike said he sees maybe 1% of elevators he services with heaters in the Pit Room.

The last fault we had last year (when mechanic was here) had nothing to do with hydraulic oil temps, but with jacks not syncing. St. Mary's had same issue with their elevator (same brand, but their 'levels' are taller than ours) approximately 3-4 years ago, and the hydraulic jacks had to be repaired due to sync faults. Although our elevator is used less often than theirs, problems still occur.

No decision necessary for this, as only informational at this time, but if others want to look into other maintenance company options other than MEI, they can.

Next Administrative Meeting will be held on Thursday, June 4th at 6:00p.m. with budget to be discussed. (Executive CCW Meeting will be at 7:00p.m.)

Meeting adjourned at 8:10p.m.

Sincerely submitted,
Nellie Richter - Secretary