

**SAINT LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Minutes of the Church Council Regular Meeting**  
**January 27, 2025**

The Church Council convened for the public January Regular Meeting on Monday, January 27, 2025 in Room 19 and via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 P.M. by Barbara Smith, President of the Council.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Amanda Boyer, Melinda Borman, Kirk Dalgaard, Phil Denton, Katy Forand, Wanda Gillman, Tracy Mulderig, *Marty Schmidt/Zoom*, and Barbara Smith. || Nine members.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rev. George Miller, Senior Minister, and *Rev. Janet Pillman, Associate Minister of Pastoral Care and Visitation/Zoom*.

**VISITORS PRESENT:** *Bill Brinkhorst/Zoom, Joan Dalgaard/Zoom, Joy Dressel/Zoom, Pat Fribis/Zoom, Ken Hamilton/Zoom, Dan Herron/Rm 19, Kathy Herron/Zoom, Ellen Littleton/Zoom, Cynthia Rosfeld/Zoom, and Jackie Zeitingner/Zoom*. || Ten Visitors.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Barbara Smith opened the meeting with a prayer and invited each Council member to share one thing for which they felt grateful.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

It was moved by Kirk Dalgaard and seconded by Wanda Gillman that the following items be approved by consent agenda:

- A/V Committee Meeting - December 23, 2024, Minutes
- Physical Facilities Committee Meeting - January 16, 2025, Minutes

The motion carried unanimously (9-0) by show of hands with no abstentions.

**GENERAL BUSINESS:**

**A/V Committee Report** – Dan Herron appeared on behalf of the A/V Committee to provide an oral update during guest comments.

- A/V is partnering with the Personnel Committee to backfill Trevor's role.
- A desktop computer replacement is needed and expected to cost less than \$2,000.
- A/V requested that Jeff provide an itemized report from to help the committee track its spending against budget and ensure that expenses are charged correctly. Ideally, this would be automated monthly. A similar report would likely benefit all committees responsible for a budget.
- The cancelation of the January 5<sup>th</sup> service due to a snowstorm was discussed. The A/V Committee is eager to offer support and brainstorm options to prevent a total cancelation of worship in the future (e.g., record Saturday night service, broadcast a message from Pastor George).

During discussion, the Council concluded that the laptop purchase would require approval at the next meeting because it was not included in the budget even though the A/V Fund exists with a sufficient balance to cover the expense.

**Staff Reports** – Two written reports were submitted to the Council prior to the meeting.

- Senior Minister Report – January
- Associate Minister of Pastoral Care and Visitation Report – January

No additional discussion was necessary.

**Finance Committee Report** – Financial Secretary Wanda Gillman submitted two written reports to the Council prior to the meeting.

- Balance Sheet Analysis as of December 31, 2024
- Analysis of Revenue and Expenses as of December 31, 2024

Wanda supplemented the written reports with an oral update that the December 2024 Regular Offering (\$100,244.23), December 2024 Total Income (\$328,828.24), and 2024 Year-to-Date Actual Income (\$1,122,036.66) were all overbudget. Primary drivers of the budget surplus were the Beitel bequest (\$154,150.25), revenue from the Preschool (\$30,000), the PET distribution (\$23,348.54), and donations for the Backpack Ministry (\$15,000). Total expenses for December 2024 (\$75,410.57) and 2024 Year-to-Date (\$1,049,670.83) were underbudget. The Net Total for December 2024 was \$253,417.67, with a year-end budget surplus of \$72,365.83. Without the Beitel bequest, St. Lucas UCC would have closed 2024 with a budget deficit of \$81,784.40. There are 496 active members on the anonymized giving report according to the most recent bimonthly refresh.

In gratitude, the Council discussed ideas for honoring the generous bequest by Robert and Joan Beitel. Immediate actions included an engraved brick, a letter to the family, and a thank you message in the eBlast. Phil Denton strongly advocated that the Council explore a more significant, permanent display for large bequests to encourage this behavior. The Council discussed working with the Memorial Committee to develop a plan and the opportunity to leverage Totenfest. Jackie Zeiting reminded the Council that at least two estates in the past exceeded \$300,000 and nothing special was done to recognize them during her time on the Caring Ministry.

Phil Denton congratulated the Finance Committee for their progress improving the financial reporting and recommended that strategic discussions about how the church is organized be initiated if 2025 continues to show improvement upon the deficit.

**Physical Facilities Committee Report** – Kirk Dalgaard reported that the existing roof leaks will be repaired by Glandt Roofing once the weather improves. The Council was reminded of the need to check that all lights and faucets are off prior to leaving the building.

Phil Denton raised concerns about minor (e.g., faucet replacement) and major (e.g., garage door) maintenance costs for the Parsonage. The property is currently being operated as a mission project to support a large family in the Lindbergh School District and grants are available to recover the costs of environmental sustainability improvements if the occupants remaining in the home for two years. The Council expressed a desire to better understand the long-term cost of expected and incidental repairs, and whether an exit plan exists if operating this mission is no longer in the best interests of the church. Barbara recommended tabling the discussion and requesting itemized reports from Jeff.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Senior Pastor Housing Allowance** – Approval is needed for a flat rate renewal of Rev. Miller’s housing allowance. This item was tabled until next month to allow time to identify the exact amount for the required motion.

**Stewardship Campaign** – Katy Forand and Tracy Mulderig provided an update on the upcoming February “Love Grows Here” campaign to inspire increased giving to meet the revenue growth goals reflected in the 2025 budget. The purpose of the campaign is to highlight different giving options. With the support of Rev. Miller, the committee recommended returning to the traditional offering plates in February for more efficient loose offering collection. The use of baskets has increased the loose offering considerably.

Marty Schmidt recommended that the goal should be for general offering to meet or exceed all operating expenses so that endowments can be used for special purposes instead of closing the deficit. The Council discussed that it is difficult to pinpoint a total expense target given that there are open staff roles funded in the budget. Wanda Gillman reminded the Council that online contributions incur a 2-3% fee, whereas checks in envelopes and ACH transfers do not. Members can elect to cover the fee as part of their gift.

**Personnel Ministry** – Phil Denton, Barbara Smith (President), and Katy Forand (Vice President) agreed to decide on a plan to convene the committee. There was no update at this time.

**Saturday Services** – Barbara Smith reported that the future of Saturday night services remains an open topic for discussion. Julie Kies covered preaching for January. Marsha Fey volunteered to fill the pulpit for February.

**Cabinet Meeting** – Barbara Smith reported that the meeting was well attended. The need for a document capturing key committee information (e.g., name, members, meeting times, facilitator) was discussed with the attendees.

**Land Use / Sports Contracts** – Barbara reported that it was unclear whether the cost-neutral agreement to lease the fields to the Lindbergh School District would be renewed, as Violet Brooks previously managed this relationship on behalf of the Council.

Marty Schmidt recommended talking to Violet about whether she wants to continue leading this in collaboration with the Physical Facilities Committee. The Council discussed that Kirk Dalgaard should be the person to sign the contract if we choose to renew the agreement. Barbara Smith agreed to email Violet Brooks and Donovan Larson about their desired level of involvement on this topic moving forward.

**Workshop Area** – No change since last month – Tabled.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Duties of Council** – Barbara Smith continued the discussion of Council responsibilities that were not covered during the Council Retreat. The Council was encouraged to use the Sign-Up Genius website links to ensure sufficient coverage for each task below.

- **Offering** – Barbara explained the process for securing the weekly offering collections and gathering coffee hour donations, which requires two people as a best practice to prevent fraud.
- **Communion** – Barbara explained the diagram for serving Communion. The Sign-Up Genius needs to be updated for 2025. A Worship Committee is needed to help set-up for Communion, change the paraments, and assist with hymn selection.
- **Meeting Prayer** – Barbara expressed a wish to continue the one-word gratitude statements at the start of each meeting.

The public session of the Church Council meeting recessed at 7:22 P.M.

*(Minute marker: 1 hour/19 minutes)*

Respectfully submitted,  
Tracy Mulderig  
Recording Secretary

*The next regular meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.*

Approved by the St. Lucas UCC Church Council on March 24, 2025