

Church Council Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

Attendance:

Council Members Present: Andrew, John, Gary, Bridget, Dan, Jerry, Jo, Joan

Staff: Pastor Paul, Katherine (Kat), Pastor Jon

Zoom: Linda (Council), Catherine (Staff)

Absent: Council Members Chris, Rita, Karen

2. Bridge Pastor Welcome Remarks

Pastor Paul opened with the lighthearted question, "Are we having fun yet?" and shared a message emphasizing the holy value of joy. He highlighted his effort to understand the ministries and culture of St. John's. He also recommended an inclusive workshop involving council, staff, the call committee, and potentially lay ministry leaders. The Executive Committee previously discussed this idea.

The workshop will focus on: "How are we feeling about the current transition? Are we aligned with our direction? Where are gaps or strengths?"

Katherine Thorpe will send a Doodle poll to identify the best date for the workshop, scheduled from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at St. John's, including lunch.

Potential Dates: November 22, 2025; December 6, 2025; January 10, 2026; January 24, 2026.

If held in January, four prospective new council members may be invited.

3. Devotions

Devotions were led by Lynn Gilbertson.

4. Approval of September Minutes

Motion to approve: Jo Hoffmeier

Second: Jerry Kilbert

Motion approved. Two abstentions: Pastor Paul and John Bailey.

5. Reports

Financial Report – John Bailey

Revenue:

- Monthly and year-to-date giving are ahead of budget.
- Employee Retention Credit received: \$81,625 (credit) and \$24,521 (interest).
- \$3,000 in donations collected for Oktoberfest.

Expenses:

- Salary expenses continue to reflect the \$54,295 retroactive overtime payments made earlier this year to three employees.
- Benefits allowance remains high, though showing monthly reductions year-to-date.

Net Income:

Month: \$69,670

Year-to-Date: \$135,566

Investment strategy updates include transitioning funds using Merrill Lynch and a MIF one-year certificate due to favorable interest rates, per Finance Committee recommendation.

Administration – Katherine Thorpe

Discussion centered on the absence of a consistent policy for merit and cost of living salary increases, resulting in annual budget challenges. Katherine will contact the Personnel Committee for review and a potential recommendation. Pastor Paul noted that staff management, including HR and salaries, ultimately falls under the incoming Senior Pastor. Updates will be provided at the November meeting.

Stewardship – Linda Etchyson

As of October 20, 2025, 56 pledges totaling \$270,389 have been received. Linda reported having a strong team and follow-up strategy. Andrew reminded council members to submit their pledges if they have not already done so.

Good Neighbor Policy Update

Catherine Slabaugh presented revisions to the policy originally submitted in September. Recommendations came from the Direct Services Discernment Task Force and Direct Services leadership. Catherine emphasized this as a “reset” that will undergo continued evaluation.

Key Revisions:

1. Security staff will be scheduled with varied timing, with at least one shift occurring at the end of each direct service offering to support volunteers.
2. Policy rollout will begin November 1, 2025, including meetings for leadership and volunteers, posted communications, and announcements during direct services. Implementation begins December 1, 2025.
3. Reminder: St. John’s authority extends only to campus property; sidewalks are city owned.

Motion to approve the revised policy: Jerry Kilbert

Second: Jo Hoffmeier

Motion approved with one abstention.

Catherine will distribute the finalized policy, and Jo will forward it to council.

Leadership Request

Andrew reminded the council of upcoming vacancies on the Executive Committee in 2026. Interested members are encouraged to contact any current Executive Committee member and will be invited to attend the next Executive Committee Zoom meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.