



January 20, 2026

Council Members Present: John Bailey, Rita Blomster, Chris Dawson, Linda Eytcheson, Andrew Ford, Jo Hoffmeier, Jerry Kilbert, Bridget Malme, Dan Maloney, Karen Olson, Joan Slabaugh, Pastor Paul Baglyos

Directors Present: Pastor Jon Haug, Catherine Slabaugh, Kat Thorp

Guests Present: Lynne Gilbertson, Nancy Bukowski

1. Call to order: 6:33 p.m., Andrew Ford, Council President

2. Opening Devotion: Lynne Gilbertson, Council Chaplain

a. What have you learned about yourself in your service on the Church Council? Most important thing accomplished? What did not get accomplished? Biggest surprise?

3. Approval of Minutes from previous meetings: Chris Dawson, Council Secretary

a. December Meeting: Moved by Chris Dawson, seconded by Linda Eytcheson, approved unanimously.

b. January Special Meeting: Moved by Chris Dawson, seconded by Jo Hoffmeier, approved unanimously.

4. Reports and Presentations (no action)

a. Land Acknowledgement Subcommittee: Nancy Bukowski

i. Following the 2016 repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery by the ELCA, many congregations have done work to understand their relationship with the peoples who first held the land where their congregations now reside. St. John's Subcommittee has done this work and is presenting educational hours in January.

ii. Working to complete a land acknowledgement statement, to be lead-written by Bonnie Gen-Holmes and reviewed the ELCA First Nations Chair. Plan to have completed in time for approval at the March Council meeting.

b. Staff Reports:

i. Bridge Senior Pastor, Pr. Paul Baglyos

ii. Youth and Family Ministries, Pr. Jon Haug

iii. Communications and Community Engagement, Catherine Slabaugh

iv. Administration, Kat Thorpe

c. Financial Report, John Bailey, Council Treasurer

i. End of year highlights:

1. Net surplus of \$245,000, which includes \$100,000 bequest, \$106,000 Employee Retention Credit, and \$39,000 from operations.

2. Total pledges will approximate \$1,100,000 (roughly \$200,000 less that prior year) and '26 Budget Draft will reflect that.

3. In-kind facility use is \$48,000 (roughly half of that for Midtown HEART)

4. Benevolence is 10.7% of total revenue and includes \$15,000 remittance for Gift for the Christ Child (St. John's Program for Real Change and Central Downtown Food Basket) as well as annual benevolence to the

Synod.

- ii. 2026 Budget Preview
- iii. Pastors' Housing Allowance (see action items, below)
- d. Direct Services Taskforce, Jo Hoffmeier
 - i. Moneys are allocated. Task force will have a final meeting and will either end or go to ad hoc status.
 - ii. Karen Olson will provide a final report with recommendations to Council, as specified in the formation document.
- e. Safety and Security Taskforce, Jo Hoffmeier
 - i. Gary Ely-Grisham is chair but will step down due to his seminary obligations. ii. Intent of group is to study and prepare for any safety related contingency; not just disruption or intrusion, but also fire/emergency/medical. Will prepare a safety template for each meeting. Will need to be related to new approach related to direct services to unhoused.
 - iii. Bridget Malme and Rita Blomster will join as Council representatives.

5. Action Items

- a. Pastors' Housing Allowance.
 - i. "Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Council voted to designate \$65,196 of the salary for 2026 to be paid to the Rev. Paul Bagylos as a housing/furnishing allowance in response to the pastor's request and acknowledgement that the allowance so designated does not exceed the fair rental value of his/her home, furnished, plus the cost of utilities. Therefore, cash salary shall be \$65,000 and the housing allowance shall be \$65,196.
 - ii. "Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to designate \$39,000 of the salary for 2026 to be paid to the Rev. Jon Haug as a housing/furnishings allowance in response to the pastor's request and acknowledgement that the allowance so designated does not exceed the fair rental value of his/her home, furnished, plus the cost of utilities. Therefore, cash salary shall be \$71,693 and the housing allowance shall be \$39,000.
 - iii. These items were moved by John Bailey, seconded by Dan Maloney, approved unanimously (Pr. Paul Bagylos abstained.)

6. Announcements

- a. Upcoming Meetings
 - i. Annual Congregation Meeting: January 25, 1:00pm
 - ii. Extraordinary Council Meeting: January 25, 2:00pm
 - iii. Next regular Council Meeting: February 17, 6:30pm
- b. Thank you to outgoing Council Members from Church Staff

7. Adjournment, 8:08 pm.

**Respectfully submitted,
Joan Slabaugh, Council Secretary**