



December 2025 Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 12-09-2025	Time: 6:30 PM	Location: Fellowship Hall and Zoom
<p>Those present are indicated in bold: Pastor Dan Nelson, Deacon Savannah Olaphson, Pastor Steve Olson, Kelly Meyers (Church Administrator), Tom Getchius (President), Julie Maes (Vice-President), Kirsten Stenoien (Treasurer), Rick Ites (Financial Secretary), Kim Whalen (Secretary), Jennifer Johnson (Adult Faith Formation), Emily Sienkowski / Karina Nelson (Children's Education), Amanda Ropchak (Evangelism), Bev Osekowsky / Ruth Lunde (Parish Fellowship), Jolene Engler / Nicole Seieroe (Middle School Youth), Ellie Scheler (High School Youth), Lou Hernandez (Property), Kelly Robert (Social Ministry), Jim Andreen (Stewardship), Eric Lovestrand (Worship, Music & Arts)</p>		
Call To Order: 6:33 PM	Devotion: Kirsten S.	Adjourned: 8:14 PM
Approval of November Minutes: will be done via email		

Action Item	Who	Status	Expected Completion
Update the proposed motion not to allow non-member use of space (that is not non-profit or for-profit)	Kelly M.	In Progress	Dec 2025
Plan communications to encourage year end giving to Immanuel	Executive Committee, Kelly M, Pastor Dan	In Progress	Dec 2025
Review constitution and by laws to make sure ballot is correct. Remove co-chairs. Indicate left column is people who sit on council.	Tom G., Kim W., Nominating committee	In Progress	Dec 2025
Work out what communications related to capital expenses should happen at annual meeting	Kelly M., Lou H., Kirsten S., Rick I. Pastor Dan	In Progress	Jan 2026
Proposed updated constitution and bylaws, including a change to the Service & Justice committee name.	Pastor Steve	In Progress	2026

ATTENDANCE AND FINANCIAL UPDATES

Attendance - Rick I.

- More people livestreaming last month. Year-to-date there are still about 2 in-person worshippers per 1 livestream.
- We had higher attendance during the last six-month period than in the same period in 2021.

Giving - Rick I.

- We are under budget for offerings for the month.
- Our total income was under budget by about 31,000 for November, but year-to-date, we are hanging in there.
- Our 12-month rolling income went negative again compared to the previous 12-month period ending in November.
- Kirsten S. noted that the giving budget for December is an even bigger number than November.
- Per Kelly M., a lot of people have increased their pledge for 2026 over 2025.

Financial Statements - Kirsten S.

- Statement of Financial position
 - Now includes building (but not land)
 - Account 3000 Net operating unrestricted is cash on hand (contingency fund), which is currently a little less than four months of reserve.
 - The other funds represent money we have that is already earmarked, so we are only allowed to spend it on specified types of expenditures.
 - Jolene E. indicated that more work is being done to make sure the youth fundraising detail is up-to-date.
- Income Statement
 - No notable changes compared to previous months.
- Budget
 - Each committee should have recently received budget reports.
- Finalized documents will be included in the Annual Report.

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA - Tom G.

- Tom presented the proposed agenda for the January Annual Congregational Meeting.
- Council members are asked to attend, but not expected to give presentations.

- We had a discussion that it would be nice to highlight a few positive things from 2025, plus some opportunities for 2026.
- We also had a discussion about how to explain the building contingency fund, which could alternately be called renovation reserve.. Pastor Dan suggested starting with a "silent campaign" to ask some donors to seed the fund. Julie M. suggested we get a team of congregation members to help put together a plan. Jim A. suggested we develop a more specific plan before discussing it at a congregational meeting.

ANNUAL REPORT - Kirsten S.

- The Annual Meeting is more forward looking, but the Annual Report is more backward looking
- We would like the Annual Report to include volunteer opportunities.
- Sarah is working on compiling the various committee reports and other sections.

OPEN COUNCIL POSITIONS - Tom G.

- We discussed the ballot and have an action item to follow up on some details.

CLERGY AND STAFF UPDATES

Pastor Dan

- Working on the parochial report to get good numbers for members, baptisms, and funerals.
- Might have a wedding next week.
- Is thankful to the entire staff, who has been working through the transitions together.
- Worship planning continues to improve, with attention on timing. Preparing for Christmas.
- In January, the staff will need to do more work on how to shift around responsibilities.
- January 11 is likely to be the installation Sunday for Pastor Dan as Senior Pastor. It is likely the installation will be celebrated at both services.

Pastor Steve

- Helping with staffing recommendations and planning.
- Assisting with membership review.
- Registration last week went well.
- Will discuss his interim pastor role going forward with the executive team.
- The constitution is in the hands of the synod, with more work to be done in 2026.
- An update of the by-laws will follow the constitution. By-laws are easier to change than the constitution.

Deacon Savannah

- The Thomas worship went very well.
- Thanksgiving and the Deck the Halls event were both fun.
- We also had a good retreat, reflecting on the God With Us theme.
- The Care Team will be working on advent gifts for homebound members.
- Christmas giving is wrapping up, and it is great to see the generosity of the congregation.

Kelly M.

- Sending out pledge confirmations.
- Helping people adjust online recurring gifts.
- Working on staff handbook details so it is ready by January 1.
- Tom G. indicated that getting congregational rolls in order prior to the vote was very valuable.
- A process will be developed to reach out to people identified as "inactive" members.