

FCC Mukwonago Council Minutes

January 14, 2026

Present: Moderator Kay Rowntree, Moderator-Elect Ryan Venema, Treasurer Jean Bocker, Secretary Joanne Himebauch, Pastor Mark Hensley. Brad Charles, Karla Pennington, Jamie Pennington, Rae-Ellen Preuss, Sue Roberts, Jennifer Schmitz

Call to Order at 6:30

Opening Prayer & Devotions - Pastor Mark. The Good Samaritan. Jesus says that the Lost & Least should be the ones to give us our 5-star rating. How do our "neighbors" view our church? Are we loving our neighbors?

Expectations for Council Members - Moderator Kay Rowntree reiterated that confidentiality on the Council is important.

Approval of December 10, 2025 - Jean moved and Sue seconded to approve the minutes of the December Council meeting. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report - 2025 Budget. We went way over on Church Maintenance & Repairs, mostly due to the elevator & the AVA toilet. But other than that, we did well staying within our budget. We ended the year with a surplus of \$5,600.20. Jean was still processing the offerings from those who are still honoring their pledges from 2025. So the surplus for 2025 was actually \$6031.20!

Finance Director Report - Jamie sent out a report, but he feels that he doesn't need to be on the agenda each month. We need to let people know about the on-line giving option. Rae-Ellen asked Jamie to talk about engaging in a contract with Jim Filicetti. Jamie wants to wait until February to talk about that. Joanne suggested promoting Maxwell St. Days sign-up earlier and using a sign-up sheet AS WELL as the on-line option to sign up to work. Brad asked questions about the endowment that Jamie talked about in his report. We would not need that for operating funds. Jim F suggested that we make sure to use some of our money to support missions within the community.

Small Church Leadership Structure - Pastor Mark. Mark thinks our organizational system is overloaded. People are spread too thin. He gave us a suggestion paper. It would use Core Ministry Teams with Directors as the head. He thinks that it would streamline the process. He checked to make sure that the new structure doesn't violate the FCC Constitution. Instead of all these Ministry teams, there would be one group to combine ALL the Ministry teams. We will get more people involved, we will get new ideas, and it fights fatigue. Jean asked about the directors. Mark said that the directors would set the agenda and then steer the groups. So it is still similar, but more streamlined. It would stop the burnout.

What do we do with the Committees? They are as stand-alone groups, instead of a part of the bigger picture. We determined that we should put them under the Directors. Memorials - (we are not spending the money & honoring the families who donated to it), auditing committee, nominating committee. Rae-Ellen mentioned that furnishings used to be connected to Memorials. Now, due to a prior Moderator's wishes, they were split apart.

Mark suggests we implement this immediately for one year and then re-evaluate. Joanne moved and Brad seconded to implement the new Core Ministry approach immediately, including adding the Auditing & Memorial committees under the Budget & Finance director and the Nominating Committee would report to the Moderator-Elect. Motion carried.

Mark met with Janine about the **SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures)**. Mark thinks that SOPs should be for safety and financial liability only. It shouldn't be just for how we function. Procedures need to be fluid. So we looked at the list to see which ones are critical. Kay asked if there were Council members who would be interested in reviewing the SOPs. Ryan, Rae-Ellen, Jennifer, & Sue will take a look at summarizing the SOPs and then review which ones need to be kept.

Kay will make sure that the most recent Constitution is sent to all members.

Narthex Refreshment Bar Proposal. Joanne talked about the proposal, and then Pastor Mark addressed the issues that people had with the proposal. This ministry lowers anxiety for first time visitors and welcomes them in, it provides connection outside of the sanctuary, it allows people to carry comfort into church, and it signals that FCC values people over appearances. We had a big discussion. Jean moved and Karla seconded to approve the coffee bar proposal in the Narthex to only include one Keurig pot to start as a trial with covered cups that are biodegradable. Motion carried with 2 abstentions and one no vote.

Parsonage Sale Update - Joanne. Joanne explained what has happened thus far. We have met as a group and have met with two different realtors to get their input about what the property is worth and how best to sell it. Mark mentioned that Jess is interested in buying the property and potentially turning it into a group home.

Lightning Strike Insurance Update - Pastor Mark gave us info on where we are and what has happened. We need to make a few decisions. We can get a new computer to put Zoom & screens on one computer. \$29,750 had already come in from insurance. \$36,472.69 came in this week for the furnace and organ. We got \$680.67 for the cables for a total of \$66,913.27 received from insurance so far. Jamie asked where we can get the extra money to fix the Carillon. We need to buy a new laptop and a new screen with a side screen. Both the computers we have now are too old and slow. Brad moved and Jennifer seconded to buy a new laptop & a new screen. It should cost around \$800. (We need speed, not hard drive space.). Motion carried.

March Council Meeting. Kay suggests another date due to Lent. Rae-Ellen suggests March 13th. Kay suggests we order pizza, instead of going out for fish. We will decide that next month.

We approved Lily Buchmann's request to do a bake sale fundraiser for her mission trip.

Rae-Ellen updated us on the elevator. It will be installed at the end of March.

Jennifer will put out a sign-up for cookies for fellowship after the March 4th Lenten service.

Sue volunteered to do the opening prayer for the February meeting.

Sue moved and Jean seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Himebauch
Council Secretary

Directors' Reports January 2026

Budget & Finance – Jamie Pennington

I generally do not have a report as I do not have any committees under me and so much of what I do is done in conjunction with the treasurer.

However, we are getting the capital long range planning committee back together and we did meet last month.

Jim Fillicetti a lay minister from our sister church in Rochester joined us to give some input on our finances. Jim is a CPA and has done some financial advising in the past with the NACCC.

First, although our giving is down overall our financial condition is better than many area churches. We have no debt which is good.

We talked about our investment portfolio and what to do with assets from the future sale of the parsonage. Jim strongly recommended establishing an endowment. This could be done through the NACCC or several other programs.

A \$350,000 initial deposit with a return of 9.46% interest would in 5 years grow to \$550,000.

Or he also talked about if we wanted to just leave the principal and use the interest accrued, we could potentially have \$30,000 to \$40,000 annually to work with.

Jim also suggested that we work with our bank to establish a swipe account so that we could obtain a higher interest off our existing accounts. Jean was going to look into that.

It seems like now is the time to determine whether the council would be interested in pursuing an endowment with the sale of the parsonage? First. Then second which would not need to be right away but do we draw down interest on endowment annually (and if so for what?) or do we just allow interest to accumulate?

Jim also suggested that as a church we would need to ethically evaluate internal spending verses external spending to the community and broader Kingdom building interests. He notes that he has seen portfolios of several churches that are extremely endowed internally but do very little externally within the community that they are located.

From a long-range capital planning viewpoint there are, as always, many things that need to be done. Several are cosmetic as the building is aging. From flooring in the basement, kitchen cabinets and countertops, dishwasher, carpeting in sanctuary and pews.

We could undoubtedly spend the entire amount of funds from the sale of the parsonage to do these things. Or, do we establish an endowment and more broadly spend interest yearly on a priority list?

These are decisions we need to make as a council.

On another topic Maxwell Street days. Last year was a struggle coming up with volunteers to staff the parking lot. Several people volunteered for multiple shifts and we frequently only had one person working.

Do we want to continue doing this? If so we need to come up with a better plan. It is unfair to rely on the same people to work multiple shifts. The funds from this event have also been decreasing every year as we simply have fewer cars and people attending the event.

The dates for Maxwell Street this year are as follows:

June 13-14

July 18-19

August 16-16

September 12-13.

Christian Ed – Sue Roberts

Nothing to report.

Congregational Care – Jennifer Schmitz

Nothing to report.

Missions – Brad Charles

Nothing to report.

Property & Grounds – Rae-Ellen Preuss

Matthew Carini Electrical company will be starting the repair work on Tuesday 1/13/26. I do not have a timeline as to how long it will take to complete the work

After Matt Carini is finished, then Nick Beilfuss from Johnson Controls will come in to repair our auxiliary furnaces in the sanctuary and in the Triskill area.

We will be asking Nick Beilfuss to give us estimates to repair the AC units. Pastor Mark was unable to get the AC to turn on.

I will also be contacting 2 concrete masons regarding the repair of the carillion base. We will need 2 estimates for this project. I have 2 companies to ask.

Marten's Plumbing was called to repair the urinal in the upstairs men's room.

The parsonage sale committee has met and we are beginning our work. Bob Brandemuehl has done some drywall repair work. Jennifer is contacting 2-3 realtors for a "walk through" to give us an idea of the value of the house. We need some minor electrical work done to make the house safe. We will also need to have the fireplace cleaned and damper repaired. The doors are also broken.

The "long range planning " committee met with Jim Filicetti about investing our funds. Jim is willing to prepare a contract with us for future plans.

Worship – Karla Pennington

Nothing to report.