

Council Minutes- October 8, 2025

Present: Moderator Bob Brandemuehl, Moderator-Elect Kay Rowntree, Treasurer Jean Brocker, Secretary Joanne Himebauch, Pastor Mark Hensley, Janine Coley, Jamie Pennington, Karla Pennington, Rae-Ellen Preuss, Sue Roberts

Call to Order by Bob Brandemuehl

Prayer by Janine Coley

Devotional Time - Pastor Mark. Mark referenced 2 Corinthians, 2nd Chapter, using the Frog analogy. There have been lots of wounds & division in our church. It has been a vulnerable time. We hooked onto our WHY! But we are struggling with change right now. We need to recognize that we are made to change. We cannot ignore change in order to grow. We need to embrace it. We need to open our hearts to God's love and embrace new ideas, kindness, and forgiveness. We need to be vessels who are open to change.

Jamie moved and Jean seconded to approve the September 10th Council minutes. Motion carried.

(Note: change minutes from 21st.) What do I mean by this? Can anyone enlighten me? I cannot change the September minutes until I get clarity, for I do not remember what I am supposed to change.) Janine moved and Sue seconded to approve the minutes from September with the change mentioned.) Motion carried.

Next Meeting on Sunday, October 26th to approve the budget.

New Business:

Planning for Church Growth - Pastor Mark. We have had some loss of membership during the last 3 months.

People who have left are still gossiping and complaining that the church didn't fall apart when they left. Mark is upset by the blame, and others are, too. We all need to own the loss.

Pastor Mark handed out a paper entitled, "how to keep us balanced and rooted in Christ."

Giving Sunday - We plan to hold a Circle of Giving over 3 Sundays in October. We will celebrate our 168th birthday on October 12 with Front Porch provided by Council. Our Circle of Giving Potluck will be on October 19th.

Nominating Committee - Suggestion: We currently have 6 directors, but the committee talked about possibly combining a couple. We could combine Congregational Care & Worship, for example. Is it worth going down to 4 directors? The Council represents the congregation. The congregation would need to vote. This could be a one-year experiment.

Food for Families - We didn't request a budget this past year. Now we are almost out of money to last through December. Joanne moved and Kay seconded to take \$1,200 from Missions to fund FfF through the rest of the year (through December). Motion carried.

We also discussed **removing the 10% given to Missions out of our budget and giving it to Capital Improvements this year.** Jean & Jamie will explore possibilities when they gather after Giving Sunday.

Parsonage - Judi compiled the 7 responses. 71.4% wish to sell. 28.6% want to use it for ministry. Should Council make a recommendation to the congregation? Jamie moved and Rae-Ellen seconded to let the Congregation know that Council recommends we sell the parsonage. Motion carried.

Parking Lot Handicap Signs- The parking lot is done with resealing and striping. We should add a sign in the middle 2 handicapped parking places. Rae-ellen said that it would cost \$1300. They would roll away for snow plowing. Kay researched them and we could get them for under \$600. Kay moved and Rae-Ellen seconded to put the handicapped lines in the lot not to exceed \$600. Motion carried.

Sanctuary Sound System- An electrician came out to check. The front speakers need to be grounded. The sound for Zoom is still a problem. When one person is running both posts, they can't always change the picture for Zoom. People who call in on the phone can't hear well. Karla mentioned that it is all their individual phone equipment that is not making the volume work, not the church's system.

What to do with the \$100,000 gift? The Ad hoc committee got together. The NA used to have a financial person, but no longer. Jim Fillicetti, a lay minister in Rochester, is a financial planner, though. The Ad hoc committee will contact him. They also discussed an endowment. Kay strongly feels that some of the money needs to be used for Missions. Pastor Mark explained that the original gift amount from his former church was \$200,000. They already used \$100,000 towards Missions. The gift of \$100,000 is currently in a 7- month CD.

Long-Range Planning Committee resurrection - The 4 who were meeting would also like to resurrect and be on the long-range planning committee: Jamie, Rae-Ellen, Jean, and Janine.

Anything from the floor?

Old Business:

Memorials. - We need to find a way to make the process go smoother. We also need to look at our SOPs and stream-line some that might no longer be needed.

Next Council Meeting: Sunday, October 26 after church to set the budget and then our normal Council meeting on Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 6:30.

Closing Prayer - Pastor Mark. Adjournment by Bob.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Himebauch
Council Secretary

Director's Reports for October 2025

Christian Ed – Sue Roberts

Youth Sunday School – nothing to report. Joanne Himebauch

Nursery – Tom, Sue, and Janine have been covering in the Nursery when Carter Albrecht attends church.

Property & Grounds – Rae-Ellen Preuss

The parking lot has been resealed and new striping was done. All that's left to do to be compliant with WI law is to purchase handicapped signage. We only need it at the stalls in the middle of the lot for designated stalls. The stalls in the corner of the lot against the lot line do not need signage, according to Randy from Merit. He was very knowledgeable about WI law. I was quoted \$1366 by Merit Asphalt. These signs would be in bases that can be rolled away for snowplowing and then returned to their place again.

There was some concern about a "master relay" in the boiler room that was buzzing. I contacted a Master electrician, Matthew Carini. He came out to look at our situation. We actually don't need that unit any longer and that these relays do make noise. There are also several abandoned electrical units that could be removed and our system could be "cleaned up". Matthew also inspected the sanctuary and found several areas that have no ground wire (probably installed by a layman). This is what is causing our sound system to have interruptions. I do not have a quote yet. He said it would probably be November before he could get at the work here.

The elevator is working again. We had a "safety" mechanism that was tripped. That has now been repaired.

Pastor Mark and I cleaned and re-organized the boiler room. Our paper products and cleaning supplies are much more visible to our custodian and anyone else who needs to find extra supplies.