

First Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes for January 20th, 2026

Joyce Thode called the meeting to order on January 20th at 07:02pm

Present: Rev. Tor Berg (p), Joyce Thode (p), Paul Flatness (p), Sandy Flying Cloud (v), Kristi Pyne (v), Christy Freriks (p), David Berg (v), Rob Baker (v), Ho Brown (v), Jacky Schnarre (v), Emily Curcio (v)

Guests: Intern Liz Colver (p), Ryan Stute (p)

Absent: Noah Berg, Dave Shogren, Kendahl Adjorlolo, Kae Peterson

Quorum was met.

Devotion

Pastor Tor lead the Council in an opening prayer, asking God for His presence as the Council works together

Agenda Amendment

1. Joyce requested an amendment to the agenda, adding an item for Marilyn Iverson for another one-year term on the Personnel Committee. Christy Freriks motioned and was seconded by Paul Flatness. All voted to amend the agenda.

Approve the minutes from the December 21st, 2025 Council meeting minutes.

- 1 Rob Baker will remove once instance of Noah Berg's name as it appears twice on the absent list.
- 2 Paul Flatness motioned, Christy Freriks seconded.
- 3 Approved.

Pastor Berg's Report

- 1 Noting a busy time with Advent and Christmas.
- 2 Member Support
 - 2.1 120 people last year, now ~160 in attendance.
 - 2.2 Parking is becoming an issue. A request may be sent out asking for those able-bodied to park off campus.
- 3 Memorial
 - 3.1 Sue Cook, memorial pending.
- 4 Intern
 - 4.1 Liz Colver is now an intern for First Lutheran Church.
- 5 New Responsibilities
 - 5.1 Starting a "New Generosity Team" delving into our sense of how our resources are utilized.
 - 5.2 Pastor Berg has been asked to serve on the Bishop's Convocations Team.
 - 5.3 Asked to be the chairman on the Biber Preaching Workshop, noting heavy work to plan an event next week.
- 6 Worship
 - 6.1 Noting research states music and the power of singing, including communal singing, has a positive effect on health.

Continuing Resolution, Endowment Fund (Ryan Stute)

- 1 Ryan Stute present to speak about a new version of the resolution that initiated First Lutheran's Endowment Fund.
- 2 The new version is condensed and modernized, highlighting the following:
 - 2.1 Targeting to be consistent stating the purpose.
 - 2.2 Allowing for committee growth to six people.
 - 2.3 Adding a rolloff process for committee members at end of term.
 - 2.4 Clarification for situations where Endowment Fund members become Council Meetings.
- 3 Quarterly meeting are occurring, going well.
- 4 Pending work:
 - 4.1 Development of an investment policy, noting the growth and size of the fund.
 - 4.2 Re-balancing plan, targeting by the end of May or June, to meet original investment plan goals.
 - 4.3 Add Endowment Fund meetings to the Congregation Calendar.

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- 4.4 Move all records from 1998 to the cloud, pending an review from the Audit Committee.
- 5 Two Noted Changes:
 - 5.1 Gifts, including stock and property, documented language moves from "in a reasonable amount of time" to "within one year." Documented and acceptable exceptions will be allowed.
 - 5.2 Need to develop a provision to determine which First Lutheran Group Committees require engagement.
- 6 Codification that Capital Gains from investments will remain in corpus.
- 7 Adding a signature page following Congregation approval.
- 8 Ho Brown asked, in context to number 5, the work with the committee, the word "separate" be changed to "specific." Ryan Stute will make the change.
- 9 Pastor Berg asked for people to make the motion in future meetings, ensuring the document will be read and the changes are understood.
- 10 Christy Freriks made a motion to bring the Endowment Committee bylaws at the congregation meeting. Ho Brown seconded the motion.
- 11 The motion passed.

Committee Reports, Building and Property (Christy Freriks)

- 1 Noting significant future expenditures expected over the next five years.
- 2 Known costs, 300K projected for a new roof. In addition, heating will need to be fixed and the elevator replaced.
- 3 Original ask to set aside 5K a year for air conditioning in the choir loft, every four years, now suspended to review the entire heating system. Cost analysis for these items are pending.
- 4 Liaison will need to ensure successful communication between the Building and Property Committee and Council. Finance and Endowment may also be brought into future discussions.
- 5 Nothing urgent now, rigorous analysis to determine actual costs and projected income is ongoing.
- 6 Ryan Stute left the meeting.

Old Business

- 1 Audit Committee Members (Pastor Tor)
 - 1.1 No update, but still in progress.
- 2 Heritage Fair Update (Joyce Thode)
 - 2.1 In progress, Joyce Thode asked if the Council could provide greater support.
 - 2.2 More people are needed to facilitate the event.
- 3 Safe Community Booklets Created (Pastor Berg)
 - 3.1 Staff signatures are complete. Roger Steinke is working to have volunteers also sign the booklet.
 - 3.2 Washington State is no longer providing free background checks. Request to add \$300 to \$400 to the budget for basic background checks.
 - 3.3 Liz Colver noted insurance companies may provide free background checks, but there may be conditions.
 - 3.4 Kristin Smith's immediate analysis provides two potential solutions: "Ministry Defending Solutions" and "Protect My Ministry."
 - 3.5 Pastor Berg will bring this topic up at the Budget Meeting.
- 4 Followup: Kristin Smith's Letter to Council RE Compensation (Pastor Berg)
 - 4.1 Personnel Committee asked for an inquiry, based on discrimination claims.
 - 4.2 Members of Council are tasked and working to investigate the situation, document their findings, and provide a report to Council.
 - 4.3 Any suggested pay increase increase is on hold until inquiry is complete and the findings are released.

New Business

- 1 Revisit RIC Welcome Statement (Pastor Berg)
 - 1.1 The welcome statement should be updated to include the following:

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- 1.1.1 Gender expression language.
 - 1.1.2 Anti-racism commitment. This should also be made public.
 - 1.2 Assign two or three people with statement update recommendations.
 - 1.3 Intern Liz will work with Jacky Schnare.
 - 1.4 Pastor Berg will send an update to the director, describing the process and target date of February.
 - 1.5 Pastor Berg prefers a separate meeting to discuss and focus upon the meaning of First Lutheran Church's statement.
- 2 Personnel Committee, Marilyn Iverson Second Three-Year Term (Joyce Thode, Ho Brown)
 - 2.1 Current term is allowed two three-year terms.
 - 2.2 Joyce Thode, on behalf of the Personnel Committee, made a motion requesting Marilyn Iverson to enter a second three-year term.
 - 2.3 The Personnel Committee brought the motion.
 - 2.4 Sandy Flying Cloud seconded.
 - 2.5 The motion passed.
- 3 Annual Meeting (Pastor Berg)
 - 3.1 Pastor Berg shared and presented the agenda for the January 6th, 2026 annual meeting.
 - 3.2 The following changes were made to a draft of the agenda:
 - 3.2.1 Following "Devotions", two items, "Introduction of Council members" and "Call for a quorum", were added.
 - 3.2.2 Following "Approval of Standing Rules of Order" the item "Adoption of Committee Reports" was added.
 - 3.2.3 The item "Pastor's Report" was moved after "President's Report."
 - 3.2.4 "and Adoption of New Bylaws" was added to "Endowment Report."
 - 3.2.5 Under "Nomination and Voting" the "Synod Assembly Voting Members" item was not needed and removed.
 - 3.2.6 Following "Nomination and Voting, "Constitution Amendments" was added.
 - 3.3 Roger Steinke will announce his retirement at this meeting.
 - 3.4 David Berg will lead the meeting.
 - 3.5 Jacky Schnarre will send the updated slide deck to David Berg, Joyce Thode, Pastor Berg, and Rob Baker.
- 4 Set Council Installation Date, February 1st, 2026, following service (Pastor Berg)
- 5 Set Council Retreat date.
 - 5.1 Proposed February 7th, 2026, from 9:00AM to noon.
 - 5.2 Sandra Flying-Cloud will be unable to attend.

Walk-On Topics

- 1 Emily requested another Council person assume responsibility over the Instagram account.

Action Items

- 1 RIC Welcome Statement, Pastor Berg.
- 2 Jacky Schnarre will send the updated slide deck to David Berg, Joyce Thode, Pastor Berg, and Rob Baker.
- 3 Not defined, but someone should assume responsibility over the Instagram account.

In Closing

- 1 With no additional action items the meeting was adjourned at 8:13PM.
- 2 The next Council meeting is scheduled for February 17th, 2026 at 7:00PM.