

SAINT LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Minutes of the Church Council Regular Meeting
August 25, 2025

The Church Council gathered for the public August Regular Meeting on Monday, August 25, 2025, in Room 19 and via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Barbara Smith, President of the Council.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Amanda Boyer, Melinda Borman, Kirk Dalgaard, Phil Denton, Katy Forand, Wanda Gillman, Tracy Mulderig, Marty Schmidt, and Barbara Smith. || Nine members.

STAFF PRESENT: Rev. George Miller, Senior Minister

VISITORS PRESENT: *Bill Brinkhorst/Zoom, Joan Dalgaard/Zoom, Joy Dressel/Zoom, Marsha Fey/Zoom, Pat Fribis/Zoom, Ken Hamilton/Zoom, Dan Herron/Zoom, Kathy Herron/Zoom, Ellen Littleton/Zoom, Linda Taylor, and Kim Witbrodt/Zoom.* || Eleven Visitors.

OPENING PRAYER: Phil Denton opened the meeting with a prayer.

2025 SUCCESSES: The Council recognized successes from the past month including choir being back in session, the Hymn Sing worship, receiving three new church members, baptisms, home blessings, and the first backpack meal delivery.

ONE WORD "THANKS": Every Council member shared one aspect of their lives for which they were thankful.

CONSENT AGENDA: Barbara Smith reminded everyone that reports are due to Dennee Bowers by the Wednesday or Thursday before regularly scheduled Council meetings to ensure that she has sufficient time to upload the materials. A significant number of reports were delayed this month.

It was moved by Marty Schmidt and seconded by Melinda Borman that the following items be approved by consent agenda:

- Cemetery Board Meeting – July 16, 2025, Minutes
- Council Regular Meeting – July 28, 2025, Minutes
- Council Regular Meeting | Executive Session – July 28, 2025, Minutes
- Council Special Meeting | Executive Session – August 3, 2025, Minutes
- Finance Ministry Meeting – July 15, 2025, Minutes
- Membership & Evangelism Ministry Meeting – July 1, 2025, Minutes
- Open & Affirming Task Force Meeting – July 15, 2025, Minutes

The motion carried unanimously (9-0) by show of hands with no abstentions.

MINISTRY REPORTS:

Staff Reports – Two written reports were submitted to the Council prior to the meeting.

- Senior Minister Report – August
- Associate Minister of Pastoral Care and Visitation Report – August

Rev. Miller clarified that the numbers tracked at the bottom of his report will reset to 0 next month.

Finance Ministry Report – Financial Secretary Wanda Gillman submitted two written reports to the Council prior to the meeting.

- Balance Sheet Analysis as of July 31, 2025
- Analysis of Revenue and Expenses as of July 31, 2025

Wanda supplemented the written reports with an oral update that the June 2025 Regular Offering (\$48,518.65) and Total Income (\$51,949.03) were both under budget. Total Expenses for the month (\$91,271.98) were under budget. The actual Total Deficit year-to-date was \$118,592.40, which was over budget by \$34,003.58.

Council members requested clarification about the numbers shared in the Financial Secretary's oral report. Wanda Gillman explained that assets related to the mission trip were incorrectly classified in the old file versions on the Council portal. The revised versions were not uploaded prior to the meeting.

Concerns were raised about the size of the deficit given that other unbudgeted large expenses are anticipated.

- 1) **External Audit Status** – Wanda Gillman reported that St. Lucas UCC has received two external audit quotes. Jeff Wagener is seeking a third quote given the large difference in the proposed costs for similar scopes. A Zoom meeting is anticipated to finalize the decision of which bid to accept.
- 2) **General Endowment Fund Vacancy** – Wanda Gillman reminded Barbara Smith that the Council President is responsible for appointing a member to finish Bob Mandava's term as General Endowment Fund Steward.

Physical Facilities Ministry Report – Kirk Dalgaard provided an update on behalf of the Physical Facilities Ministry.

- 1) **Carpet Cleaning** – The carpets will be cleaned at some point in the coming weeks, potentially by Celebration Sunday.
- 2) **Cooling System** – Problems with the A/C system are ongoing.
- 3) **Camera Update** – Beishir Lock & Security provided a bid for approximately \$27,000 with an annual maintenance fee of \$1,200. Another bid may be requested from ABF to understand if the current external system can be expanded. The Physical Facilities Ministry needs guidance from the Council on whether to continue pursuing bids for expensive solutions.

The Council discussed options for how to pay for a system, such as with a fundraiser or earmarking profits from the Preschool for this expense if a camera for the playground remains a priority. If deterrence is the primary goal (instead of using footage to prosecute offenders), then a light system with a motion-activated sensor may be sufficient for a much lower cost. The Council recommended that the Physical Facilities ministry pursue lower-tech deterrents. The Mayor of Sunset Hills has ordered regular patrols of the parking lot.

- 4) **Roof Leak Repairs** – Contact has been made with Glandt Roofing. They intend to return in fall to determine what is under warranty.
- 5) **External Sign** – The company that previously expressed interest in the installation of a new digital sign on Denny Road withdrew from consideration. New bids are being requested.
- 6) **Sidewalk Repairs** – Donovan Larson is seeking a bid to mudjack the sidewalks.

Perpetual Endowment Trust Report – Marty Schimdt shared the PET requested formal documentation on official letterhead from Theodore Dearing regarding how to amend the bylaws to enact what was approved by the

Congregation at the last Annual Meeting.

Worship Ministry Report – Barbara Smith reported that the first meeting of this ministry is expected to occur sometime in September.

Disaster Response Ministry Report – Rev. Miller shared that this ministry is scheduled to meet on September 15, 2025. Another meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2025, with Mary Blaufuss from Eden Seminary to discuss her book that deals with disaster response.

OLD BUSINESS:

Celebration Sunday – Tracy Mulderig and Melinda Borman volunteered to coordinate the Celebration Sunday event on September 7th. Linda Taylor volunteered to lead the food and kitchen with the assumption that 100-150 people may attend. Council members informally agreed to offset any costs of the event so that it would remain budget neutral. Rev. Miller reported that Michele Ottinger may have up to \$300 available to contribute from her budget.

It was moved by Amanda Boyer and seconded by Marty Schmidt that no more than \$1,000 be allocated toward expenses related to Celebration Sunday. The motion carried unanimously (9-0) by show of hands with no abstentions.

The Council recognized the need to submit a 2026 budget request for Special Events and agreed to discuss what number to request from the Finance Ministry at next month's meeting.

Sexton's House Property Tax Assessment – Barbara Smith confirmed that Jeff Wagener is satisfied with the accuracy of the tax assessment on the Sexton's house property.

Parsonage Property Tax Legal Opinion – Marty Schmidt reported that Theodore Dearing is reviewing the legal statutes regarding whether the Parsonage is tax-exempt and if not, what actions need to be taken to resolve the issue promptly. Marty agreed to follow up with Mr. Dearing.

Donor Recognition Wall – Kirk Dalgaard volunteered to investigate how difficult it would be to generate the list of historical donors. Future discussions are needed to determine whether to pursue a large installation now (versus a more traditional plaque) and to identify a location for the display.

Sports Contracts – Barbara Smith reported that no one replied to the posts seeking a volunteer to manage the sports contracts with the Lindbergh School District. In the interim, Jeff Wagener agreed to shadow Violet Brooks given that the contracts typically cross his desk. One idea was to reach out to a member who was previously at coach for Lindbergh to see if he or she would be interested.

SunCrest Fest – A question was raised about whether St. Lucas UCC would like to participate in this event. Tracy Mulderig recommended delegating this decision and any relevant planning to the Membership & Evangelism Ministry. SunCrest Fest attracts many families, but attendance depends on the weather.

Council Conversations – The Council resumed the topic of where to host Council Conversations on September 21, 2025, and how much technology should be involved. As this will not be an official meeting, the Bylaws requirements do not apply. Dan Herron confirmed the availability of Christ Memorial's camera to enable video-streaming in the Fellowship Hall.

The Council agreed to host the event in the Fellowship Hall without Christ Memorial's camera as an experiment to test whether co-locating with coffee hour increases participation relative to past events in secondary locations. While audio-only would be a subpar experience for virtual participants relative to Room 19 and the

Sanctuary, online members would still be able to listen and ask questions. The goal was to try something different to see how it goes without overcomplicating the technological requirements. The Council agreed to measure how many people attend (in person and online), solicit questions using a variety of methods (e.g., Zoom chat, bulletin tear-offs, open microphone), and reflect on how it went before deciding where to host the next Council Conversations.

Rev. Miller reminded everyone of the importance of ensuring that virtual participants feel valued as members of this Congregation. By emailing questions in advance or writing questions in the Zoom chat, virtual participants will be able to participate actively. Increasing the audio-visual capabilities of the Fellowship Hall was identified as a future area of opportunity so that homebound members do not feel left out from activities hosted in this space (e.g., Polka Worship). Rev. Miller thanked Dan Herron for advocating on behalf of virtual participants.

Sanctuary Accessibility – Marty Schmidt proposed the formation of a small exploratory committee to identify the needs to be addressed by a more accessible space. He offered to donate \$5,000 as seed money to get the process underway. Ideally, this exploratory committee would include former educators and parents of, or people living with, mobility challenges.

It was moved by Marty Schmidt and seconded by Barbara Smith to establish an exploratory committee to investigate the cost and scope of changes to the physical facilities to allow differently abled participants to participate in the activities of the Church. The motion carried unanimously (9-0) by show of hands with no abstentions.

Tracy Mulderig recommended that this topic be discussed during Council Conversations. Rev. Miller encouraged representation from the Worship Ministry; however, the initial scope is narrowly focused on needs identification and cost instead of any immediate impact on the service.

Marty Schmidt agreed to return next month with a list of candidates for this new committee. He expressed a desire to serve as the Council liaison.

NEW BUSINESS:

Installation Housekeeping – The Council discussed ways to improve the appearance of the property for guests prior to Rev. Miller's Installation on November 2, 2025. Solutions included carpet cleaning, painting the Fellowship Hall, and updating the decorations. More discussion is needed.

Rev. Miller clarified that this event is about St. Lucas UCC and the St. Louis Association celebrating the call of a new shepherd. It is about the Church, not the pastor. The goal is to make the ministries of St. Lucas UCC shine and what we want to communicate to the community.

The Fall Workday / Day of Service is planned for October 12, 2025, which will allow members to help complete some of these cleaning and improvement tasks.

2026 Council Positions – Barbara Smith initiated planning for the election of the 2026 Church Council members. New members will serve a 4-year term. One member has expressed interest. According to the Bylaws, a Nominating Committee will need to be formed.

Terms ending in 2025: Phil Denton, Katy Forand, Barbara Smith (3)

Terms ending in 2026: Marty Schmidt and Kirk Dalgaard (2)

Terms ending in 2027: Amanda Boyer, Wanda Gillman (2)

Terms ending in 2028: Melinda Borman, Tracy Mulderig (2)

The public session of the Church Council meeting concluded at 7:30 P.M.

(Minute marker: 1 hour/30 minutes)

Respectfully submitted,
Tracy Mulderig
Recording Secretary

The next regular meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for Monday, September 22nd at 6:00 pm.

Approved by the St. Lucas UCC Church Council on September 22, 2025