

Church Council Minutes
Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church
Monday, March 24, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Bill at 6:36 PM. Attendees were Brenda, Bill, George, Mike, Pastor Fritz, Mark, Ellen, Davida, and David. Ben McCumber attended via Zoom. Absent was Xavier.

Devotional opening was given by Coach Mike based on the scripture from Luke 5: Miracle of the catching of fish (Peter and Jesus). In Summary, the Church is not a host of physical items but of people. Growth comes from the people of the church learning to trust in Jesus and throwing the nets out and hauling them in.

Opening Remarks: Bill offered comments on Christ Our Shepherd going through many challenges and growing pains. It is an exciting time for all of us to embrace new opportunities and challenges. He's been involved in several discussions with the finance team regarding the FY26 budget. Also involved with some meet and greets with the new Associate Pastor and the congregation. Will be going into an executive session later.

Youth report given via text from Xavier to Bill: The youth attended D-Now with the final service being held at New Hope North. The main theme was Revival, with lessons on faith vs belief, repentance, and our duty as Christians. The service activity included a visit to Bloom to sort clothing. Several worship services were held during the weekend. Senior Sunday is upcoming.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Fritz- Conversations regarding Pastor Miriam and the wonderful job she has done during Phase 1 of congregational transition. Bishop requested to take a year off and explore new opportunities and who you are outside of the congregation and let COS do the same. Discussions ensued regarding the continuation of the next two phases for Pastor Miriam, the congregation's participation, and the new Associate Pastor's arrival on May 18.

Regarding personnel, Pastor Fritz reminded the council of Ingrid's departure in her role as Director of Children and Family and will not be available this summer. Pastor Fritz

recommended there be a committee modeled after the Call Committee to search for her replacement.

Pastor expressed joy and thanksgiving for the reception of nine new families who joined COS. He says they are wonderful, neat new people who loved the openness and welcoming ways of the congregation at COS.

Update on Ministry of the Month: Hoops for Haiti. Thrilling to see the impact of COS fund raising in helping to build three new classrooms in Haiti.

Pastor Fritz then opened the floor for three questions: 1. Regarding brackets, too late to fill in brackets but never too late to donate funds. 2. Regarding Pastor Wes and his home church...announcement of Pastor Wes's departure went well. Will be a smooth transition. 3. When will we communicate to the congregation regarding Pastor Miriam? No set date was assigned. Transition Phase one concludes April 15 with Phase two starting thereafter. Discussions ensued.

Finance Report: Mark Bunker: financial summary-we had savings in personnel; the income is below budget with offerings 1% below. Operating expenses are currently 11.6% less than budget. We are still receiving ERTC payments (employee retention tax credit). The estimated proceeds are 130K net with a 20% fee going to the accountant. All but 4K has been received thus far. Finance committee unanimously recommended that the proceeds be reported as income with a 10% benevolence payment to the Synod. Discussions ensued. Council agrees with the Finance committee recommendation.

Budget revisions: move proposed staff bonuses into FY25 and use net ERTC proceeds to fund the property reserve restricted account. Funding maintenance reserve exceeds council authority and recommends a budget revision vote at the budget meeting. This budget revision would match FY25 (r1) and let us be deliberate on where we designate these funds of 117K. Discussions ensued regarding how to present to the congregation. Recommendations to show 500K in maintenance and repair costs needed on buildings with 10% going to Synod with a letter asking Inspiritus Funding.

Fiscal Year 2026 budget (r1) has a proposed budget of \$1,070,000. Budget is based on three years of history with some smoothing. Main expense is staffing with the new Associate Pastor being the main driver. Salary increases per personnel recommendations included performance based increases for the Senior Pastor and Director of Worship & Music and pay rate increase for the Director of Communications (based on market data). There will be a 5% staff bonus recognizing FY25 performances per personnel committee recommendations. The Finance Committee proposes this to

be paid in FY25. The Council concurred. Associate Pastor compensation will be per Synod guidelines and the compensation package as approved by the congregation. COS will be funding Medicare for eligible staff members. Slides and graphs were displayed showing various expenses and projects. Discussions regarding costs and hours per staff position ensued.

Summary: Next year's budget is up but the deficit is less than FY25. Side note that an audit is due and roughly 4K has been allotted for that.

Personnel Report: Ben McCumber; moved to executive session via Bill at 7:53 PM and second by Brenda. Motion to end executive session via Davida and second by George. Executive session ended at 8:14 PM.

FMT Report: Mike, described his frustration regarding reaching agreement on managing finances for the upkeep of the Palmetto Road campus.

Summary: Unanimous decision by council that an independent contractor has no voice in finances of COS nor should he participate in finance meetings.

Fiftieth Anniversary: Posters and promotions are up and coming for the new photo directory. The suncatcher is on display. Eric McDowell created T-shirts. Time capsule will be dug up and revealed at the celebration in September. Committee is seeking funds for a new capsule. Service prep is ongoing with Larry and the Turks. Will ask for RSVP. Activities will include yard games and carnival-like activities. Committee will focus funds on service and fellowship hall afterwards. May 12 is Mother's Day as well as the anniversary of the blessing of Palmetto Road.

Administrative Items:

Brenda is open to thank you note suggestions. Please communicate recommendations to her.

Bill reviewed the council liaison sheet and answered one question on the remaining role of the transition team.

George reviewed the audit committee requirements and COS governing documents. An audit team will be identified and approved by the council.

Next council meeting is April 28. Motion to adjourn by George and second by Davida.
Passed. Council meeting ended at 8:40 PM and closed with the Lord's Prayer.