

Council Meeting
Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church
November 24, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 PM.

Devotional- Ellen: Ellen gave a wonderful and warm devotional regarding prayer and gratitude. She mentioned that there are few things more humbling than being on the receiving end of gratitude. There are many verses in the Bible regarding gratitude and being humble in our hearts. Ellen took the time to thank each person on council. She gave a message of gratitude, mentioning an instance, trait, talent/gift that she has been blessed to receive from that specific council member.

Youth report- Hope Catlett: Hope thanked Pastor Wes for coming to talk to the youth group. They discussed the book of Revelations which always brings good conversations. She mentioned there were also discussions on a personal experience with covid, book serving in missions followed by a wonderful Thanksgiving meal. Youth participation numbers are still good. Great showing at all meetings and gatherings.

President's opening comments- Bill: November was significant for him because steps were finally initiated for master planning our Palmetto Road campus. The Palmetto Road master planning team met twice and will meet once more before the end of the year. He participated in the new members class welcoming them into the COS family. He signed off on two Georgia Interfaith Power and Light grant proposals: energy audit (getting LED lighting) and the purchasing of a new Wi-Fi thermostat. There was a brief discussion of the use of Share Point program with staff and ministry leaders to have a common unified shared source of documents and record keeping.

Pastor's report- Fritz: Pastor Fritz thanked Ellen for her devotional of thanksgiving. He also gave thanks to all the members of council for being here and to the three new members that are incoming next year. He also gave thanks for Marilyn Lehmann, her service as a child of God and her Celebration of Life service.

New staff members are putting in good work and there's good spirit amongst all staff members. We're looking forward to 2026 and the service: Come and See...please invite the community to "come and see".

The Apple Tree Society is growing. We have members saying they want to be a part of that: to be part of Jesus's agenda even after we're gone. Thanks to the "Grow" series and the council member that will donate the 5K et. Leaders lead.

The pastor mentioned that he is looking forward to seeing his family for thanksgiving. Everyone is coming in and it's going to be a great time of gathering and thanksgiving. glad to see his family this year.

Chili supper will be fun, the Hymn sing...will all be good times. Pastor says he is glad COS matters to so many others. Pastor Fritz read from a long list of what member Tina Patrick is grateful for at COS. The end result is a beautiful thing: we all make a difference and God makes

a difference through us. He then listed upcoming activities. He gave thanks for our new Pastor Wes who has been diving right in being very active with the new group Flock of Ages as well as the Young Adult Initiative. Good news of Ethan Miller's engagement. Most grateful for God's grace and goodness to us and this congregation. Pastor Fritz quotes the late President Lincoln from his 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation: "No human council hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy".

Pastor Wes: Pastor Wes mentions a couple of good things: Kaleigh and Family Night. There's going to be lots of fun activities and a hot chocolate bar to start. Logos and Loft are going very well. Numbers of participation are good. Sunday School is going well too. Decent size of classes. Pastor Wes would like to incorporate the youth into Sunday School in a service capacity...possibly children sermons. He says they're still working out some ideas. Background checks for volunteers are still coming in but nothing is showing up which is a good thing. Rebecca Nicholson is exploring a possible Stephen Ministers program.

Future activities include the Palmetto Road Men's retreat and Breakfast with the Bishop which will be catered on January 17. Regarding the new group, Flock of ages, it's neat to see a nearly even split of people from all three services. There are only three meetings total. The group may be ongoing if there is enough desire. The Bible Project group is having fun breaking people's brains. Fun group that meets on Wednesdays at 1:45.

Treasurer's report- Mark bunker: We had another great month with expenses being under budget. Net income is doing well, 4K better than what was budgeted. We're 18K in the black so spending was very good. Really solid month with being right on track. We're on the last item for the Sanctuary Renewal: new speakers. We have 25K left for speakers. There was a CER for the speakers, however, discussions came about regarding labor costs, hanging, scaffolding, staff safety, possible damage to new tile, and terms clarification.

A motion was made to table the CER until questions were answered. David moved, Davida second, **motion passed.**

Audit report- George: Done! The audit did have several recommendations: record retention policy; count team for offering bags - one team for each service. Please look at the security of the offering audit. Hiccup: method of getting letters out to those of 'confirmation of giving'. We had no financial secretary to oversee projects. We asked John Musil to sign off on these letters. There were two files not completed: HR and personnel. We need a liaison to HR and to Personnel which is a recommendation for next year's council. These liaisons would engage the council for future audits. George strongly suggests next year's council follow up on all recommendations that were in this audit and look at the audit report that Bill sent out. There were discussions as to those on the official check signing list. This list needs to be reviewed and updated.

Personnel- Bill and Pr. Fritz gave this report in Ben's absence. There will be a meeting with

personnel and Richard King regarding the use of Share Point. The 2026 Staff evaluations will be done a bit differently. There will be brief conversations or check-ins with individual staff members by members of the Personnel Committee. Pr. Fritz said the staff has spoken about goal setting and retreats. We are checking the boxes: Supervisors evaluating employees. We're heading to a more official type of form instead of conversations. We will still have conversations on goals. We've got work to do in 2026. Ellen asked about the staff Christmas gift letter. It will be sent.

FMT 101: Bill- There is an update for thermostat policy. Primarily administrative and updating the designated staff assigned to adjust the thermostat with Shelly Jakubowski as coordinator. Discussions were had.

Jason moved to **adopt the updated thermostat policy**. Davida seconded.

Motion passed.

There is some great work being done by Wes Saunders and Brad Milburn. There are forms being sent out to update progress of meetings, maintenance items are getting done and are being recorded. We're hitting on all cylinders. Service can now be heard in the nursery. Good shout out to Brad for that!

FMT PR: Bill- The most recent Speed Bumps meeting was a bonfire gathering at Palmetto Road. Master Planning for the property has started . Voted on a mission/policy statement for team members. Bill moved to accept the mission statement and team members for the Palmetto Road Planning Team, Davida seconded. Discussions ensued.

Mission Statement for the Palmetto Road Master Planning Team:

The Palmetto Road Master Planning Team will develop a master plan and present it to the church council & congregation for approval. The master plan will be developed with congregation & stakeholder input and will guide ministry focus and site development for the Palmetto Rd. campus in support of the values and objectives of COS Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. Planning expenses will be covered by the Palmetto Rd. Reserve or other accounts as appropriate.

Palmetto Road Master Planning Core Team Members

1. Pr. Wes Smith - Co-Chair
2. Bill Grabill - Co-Chair
3. Gary Pedersen
4. Shelly Jakubowski
5. Tom Rehak
6. Stephen Gundersen

Motion to approve the Mission Statement and Team Members passed

Other Business:

Ellen moved to approve minutes of the November meeting. moved, seconded. Motion passed.

Internet security-David: We are targeting February to get moving. The IT team called for documents. What does the church need as for policies and risk of data. David knows of a company called Probono Services Legal Services They provide services on such issues with documents and classifications, access and using Share Point with personnel. Richard is purging old access people. Be sure to always reach out and verify. David urges for people to go passwordless if you can (passkey). More discussions are to be continued.

Preschool-Ellen- We had most questions answered. Good news, April started with 12 kids in preschool. There has been growing interest in younger classes for 2 and 3 year olds. So far we have 28 kids registered for classes. There is a strong word of mouth in advertising for our preschool and we have a great "international" flavor. Our next step is to define a clear relationship between the preschool and COS. There were several discussions: positive things happening with the school, need for continuing support, for the preschool to possibly be self-sustaining, insurance. A list of suggested resources was given as well as possible guidance from other local preschools. It was determined that Pastor Wes will help Ellen with the preschool board and guidance.

Nominating Committee: Ellen- The Nominating Committee recommends: **Kevin Hawkins, Lisa Schultz and Scott Daniel be presented to the congregation for election to the 2026-2029 terms.** We have one or two new people for the preschool committee to be presented to the congregation as well. Ellen moves these three nominees to be presented to the congregation. Benda seconded. and the **motion passed.**

ELCA model constitution: Bill- Every 3 years the Constitution is reviewed and revised by the ELCA churchwide assembly. The congregation will need to vote on incorporating the changes in this **revised Model Constitution** as part of the COS constitution. Changes were primarily for clarity and consistency in language. Davida moved. Pastor Wes second, discussions ensued. **Motion passed.**

Thank you notes: Brenda- Many notes were signed this night. Brenda will get them out. Pr Fritz shows the policy on our website regarding programs for children. Fritz shared several slides on our procedures and strategic planning as well as our values and objectives. Please email Brenda with any recommendations for thank you notes.

Next council meeting: December 15, the Third Monday.

Next devotional: Unknown. Hope was on the schedule but she will be missing our December meeting.

Other updates, discussions:

George- Does COS have a policy or guidelines concerning confidentiality of giving? It was suggested that we need a policy for confidentiality procedures. Circle this back for next month's meeting. George shared a possible list of people needed within certain groups, for example: audit liaison, stewardship members, third party auditor, administrative director, finance chair, etc. Help is needed establishing guidelines. Need to incorporate other people in addition to the finance committee when developing guidelines.

David- Kaleigh has done a good job of refreshing the nursery. Feels intentional.

motion to adjourn -George, seconded and passed.
Closed with the Lord's Prayer in unison.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.