

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

Voting Council members present: John Hodler, Jill Longnecker, Pastor Jen Hackbarth, Pastor Kristine Stedje, Mike Karlsrud, Kirsten Parker, Bryan Barts, Shane Brockshus

Non-voting Council member present: Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman

Absent: Bill Bjorum

Guest: Clark Weyrauch

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church office conference room

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President John Hodler.

Pastor Jen opened with Christ Care prayers.

I. Consent Agenda – M/S/P:

- Approval of May 18, 2026 Council meeting minutes, and
- Approval of June 15, 2026 Council meeting agenda

II. Pastoral updates in addition to written reports previously submitted to the Council:

- Council discussed Pastor Kristine’s observations and discernment regarding the church’s expectations of the Pastor of Lifelong Faith Formation, and the roles and needs from the broader Faith Formation team (*Lifelong Faith Formation is a Trinity Core Value*).
 - It was noted that Trinity has approximately 600 youth, from birth to confirmation age, known to have connection to the church from baptisms, confirmation or membership.
 - We are dedicating resources and investment toward this demographic but attracting a small percentage. Meanwhile, certain volunteer-led missions are seeing notable energy.
 - Pastor Kristine will engage with others for continued input and return to Council with recommendations soon.

III. Financials

- Financial and Administrator reports were distributed to the Council for review prior to the meeting and accepted.
- Sarah continues to see a trend of more giving coming as a one-time “annual gift” vs. throughout the year.
- Operating Reserves were borrowed from to cover cash flow needs in May.
- Mike Karlsrud reported a positive first Finance Committee meeting with Mike as Treasurer. Mike’s goal is to have endowment, stewardship and treasury representation on the Finance Committee. The team will continue to honor the pillars of the Comprehensive Campaign.

IV. Unfinished business

- **Security manual** – M/S/P to insert language (per pre-meeting communications via Council emails) to the Alcohol Policy as follows:

- *'All other drugs, such as recreational marijuana, that are not being legally taken for medicinal purposes, are prohibited from use on church property at any time.'*
- Discussion on Council wishes for transparency and to make policies and the Employee Manual accessible via intranet links (needs further investigation).
- **Call Committee update**
 - The committee is meeting weekly
 - Mission Site Profile developed by the Transition Team is being utilized
 - A deadline for nominations for the call has been communicated to the congregation
 - A Synod listening session occurred, with emphasis on ensuring openness to all applicants amongst a potentially diverse pool
 - On July 22, Deacon Lind will present the Committee a group of candidates for review
 - Council envisions the Call Committee taking lead on onboarding the new Pastor
- **Council self-analysis** – Pastor Jen led Council through a review of Council's collective response to a reflective questionnaire on team and leadership effectiveness. Key takeaways:
 - Themes of strong alignment, teamwork, inclusivity, candor, and confidence in leadership of Pastor and Chair
 - Highlighted areas regarding keeping job descriptions current and conducting employee reviews have been focused on recently
 - An area to improve is the Council onboarding process
- **Lead Pastor job description** – M/S/P to approve the current job description, which was submitted and reviewed prior to the meeting.

V. New Business

- **Worship & Music Ministry Team update from Clark Weyrauch**
 - Clark noted the singular theme mentioned by every respondent in the Transition Team report was music excellence. This is a blessing and has become an expectation in the church.
 - Clark shared his vision and ideas for future growth, staffing, and the use of our facilities by the church and the community, as well as the current time commitments and responsibilities for Clark and lay leaders.
- **Employee handbook** – M/S/P to include new language (submitted and reviewed prior to the Council meeting) in the Trinity Employee handbook to comply with the Minnesota Paid Leave law implemented in 2026.
- **Miscellaneous**
 - Council has been invited to take part in a Jeopardy game again this year, as a part of the Sunday Forum kickoff on September 20th, 10:00 AM.
 - Pastor Jen shared with Council the book "Call to Allyship", which the Call Committee is also reading.

Pastor Jen led us in closing with the Lord's Prayer.

M/S/P to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Shane Brockshus
Council Secretary