

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH OF STILLWATER, MINNESOTA
Congregational Council Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2026

Voting Council members present: John Hodler, Jill Longnecker, Bill Bjorum, Pastor Jen Hackbarth, Pastor Kristine Stedje, Shane Brockshus

Non-voting Council member present: Parish Administrator Sarah Kinsman, Mike Karlsrud

Absent: Kirsten Parker, Bryan Barts

Guests: Karen Gieske

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church office conference room

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

Pastor Jen opened with a book excerpt about the power of the Spirit and gifts, then led in opening prayer.

I. Consent Agenda – M/S/P:

- Approval of April 20, 2026 Council meeting minutes, and
- Approval of May 18, 2026 Council meeting agenda

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

- Pastor Jen confirmed that Pastor Karri Anderson began as Trinity's Visitation Pastor on May 1, currently working 5 hours/week.
- Pastor Kristine elaborated on her report topic of feedback regarding Dinner Church, which will be monitored and followed up on.

III. Financials

- Financial and Administrator reports were distributed to the Council for review prior to the meeting.
- Sarah reported a trend of more "annual gift" type giving.
- Property/casualty insurance will be moving away from Auto Owners and is expected to go down from approximately \$48,000/year to \$30,000/year.
- Health insurance is currently being evaluated.
- Sarah pointed out several projects of need in her Administrator's report requiring a total investment of \$36,000.
- Jill reported the Finance Team is currently working to recruit members.

IV. Unfinished business

- **Ministry Site Profile (MSP)** – M/S/P to approve the MSP as developed and submitted by the Transition Team.
 - The MSP will be submitted online for approval by the Synod
- **Security Manual** – M/S/P to approve the Manual as written, with follow-up to ensue with the Security Task Force regarding the topic of marijuana on church property.

- **Pride Justice June event update** – Karen Gieske gave an update on progress, organization, and support for the Trinity-sponsored Stillwater Pride ice cream social, to be held on the greenspace June 16, 5:30-8:00 PM.
 - Karen shared there has been great feedback and enthusiasm for the event
 - Several other area churches will participate
 - Family Means, Hudson Pride and Transforming Families are among organizations that will be present
 - Volunteers are still needed
 - Much preparation has gone into the event; communication is ensuing via multiple channels

V. New Business

- **Jill Lognecker resignation** – M/S/P to accept the resignation of Jill from the position of Treasurer and Council member. Jill was thanked for her years of great service. She will continue to serve on the Finance Team.
- **Mike Karlsrud appointment** – M/S/P to appoint Mike Karlsrud as Congregational Treasurer and Council member for Trinity Lutheran.
- **2026/27 Budget process** – Council discussed approach to the upcoming fiscal year budgeting process and priorities, including:
 - Transparency and feedback to the process
 - Timelines
 - Impact of \$172,000 mortgage expense elimination from the next budget (<10% of the annual budget)
 - Reserve funds goals, including for Capital expenditures
 - Ensuring competitive market rates for staff
 - Pending facilities/maintenance requests
- **2025/26 non-budget spending** – M/S/P to approve \$36,000 in spending requests from Parish Administrator as laid out in her previously submitted report to Council. Cost will be covered by room in the budget from freed up funds from mortgage elimination – funds are not from Comprehensive Campaign. Projects include:
 - HVAC repair
 - New dishwasher (cost share with LADC)
 - Hardwire installation of smoke/carbon monoxide detectors (cost share with LADC)
 - 2 new AED units
- **Investment Committee** – M/S/P to establish an investment committee to include the Parish Administrator, Treasurer, Lead Pastor, and a member of the Finance Team to assess and make recommendations regarding Trinity investments.
- **Drive In update** – Bill updated regarding 2 separate offers to buy portions of the Drive In property. A committee was assembled to analyze these offers and do due diligence, and determined there should be no interest in one of the proposals. Final recommendations will be brought to Council in July.

VI. Book study

- Pastor Jen led Council in continued discussion of “How to Lead When You Don’t Know Where You Are Going” (Chapter #4).

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