Roseau Evangelical Covenant Church

Leadership Council Meeting Minutes

October 7, 2026

(This was the rescheduled meeting from September)

Members Present:

Randy Prachar, Tony Fichter, Chris Shortreed, Scott Billingsley, Rachel Krahn, Sonya Peterson, Todd Peterson, and Steve Huglen

---

Call To Order – Tony Fichter, Leadership Council Chair

- Tony called the meeting to order and affirmed a quorum.

Devotional & Opening Prayer – Randy Prachar, Deacon Board Chair

- Scripture reading from Genesis 32:22-30
    - Randy highlighted that the passage is about Jacob wrestling all night but eventually giving in to God and receiving a blessing.
    - Passage is about being persistent and receiving God's blessing.
    - Opening Prayer

Minutes Review - Steve Huglen, Leadership Council Secretary

- Leadership Council Meeting Minutes – June 2026 (drafted by Rachel Krahn in Steve's absence)
    - Changes made and Minutes passed unanimously.

Items For Prayer & Discussion

- <u>2026 Fall Fest Planning (Discussion of Date, Fund Distribution, Meal)</u>
    - Date is October 25th (Sonya said this was suggested by Pastor Nate).
    - Possible speaker is Galen Nordeen but not confirmed.
    - Distribution of funds raised at Fall Fest will go towards:
        - Mission Fund with the objective of maintaining a balance of $1,800.
        - Kitchen Remodel Loan Reduction which has a balance of approximately $43,000.
    - The purpose of the Mission Fund is to:
        - Support teams and individuals serving in mission and ministry.
        - Short-term and Long-term mission trips.
        - Other ministry opportunities.

DRAFT

- There is an application for Mission/Ministry Support that may be submitted for review and approval by the Missions and Outreach Board.
- Motion by Sonya to use Fall Fest funds to create a mission's fund that has a maximum amount in it of $1,800 per year or less to support teams and individuals serving in mission and ministry.
- Todd seconded the motion.
    - Discussion ensued regarding the $1,800 and how it fits in the budget.
    - Question regarding where additional funds go that come in when we have more than $1800? Answer was that additional funds will go into the general mission's fund.
    - Further discussion about whether using funds from Fall Fest to pay off the existing kitchen debt is appropriate. Tony noted that the kitchen is "missions oriented" with the various ways it is and can be utilized.
    - Randy brought up the positive benefits of reducing the loan for future projects that need to be done.
    - Motion passed unanimously.
- Sonya noted that a meal will be served to the congregation on Fall Fest Day.

- <u>2027 Budget Draft</u>
    - Tony asked Trustee Board Chair Scott Billingsley to put together the draft to be ready in time for the upcoming October 27th, 2026 quarterly congregational meeting. Tony indicated that this should be an operational and capital draft.
- <u>Building and Grounds</u>
    - Tony said the building committee is doing a good job. He said the current focus has been to optimize the space we have right now. He noted that growth is great but as a result we need to accelerate our thinking on more space for the future.
    - The building committee has not yet turned its focus on the sanctuary and fellowship hall but that will be coming.
    - Short discussion that there is some sentiment to replace the sanctuary pews with chairs. Tony noted that such an undertaking would also entail substantial work on the flooring as the pews are bolted into the floor.
- <u>Congregational Growth Considerations</u>
    - Tony highlighted a recent meeting at Pastor Nate and Val's home and that there was a large turnout of people who were invited to explore more about our church and potential membership.
    - Church Staffing:
        - In Pastor Nate's absence, he provided the LC board with some written thoughts for purposes of discussion and consideration.

DRAFT

        - Tony said Pastor Nate has been persistent about bringing in a Children's Pastor (children's worker) on board. No action was taken on this and there was only general discussion.
            - Tony recalled that when we previously hired a children's pastor our attendance was imploding and especially at the Sunday school level. At that time, we hired someone with the idea of reigniting the "numbers." But ultimately that position was terminated.
            - There was some discussion about how such a potential position would be most effectively supervised and Tony indicated that it would need to be done by the senior pastor
        - At this point, the youth numbers are greatly expanding.
    - There was some discussion about the structure of Sam Grey's administrative position. The position is half-time technically, but she works by the hour. The general discussion involved how to most effectively utilize that position and Sam's skillset, and it was emphasized that she does a great job for the church.

RECC Youth Ministry Report – Chris Shortreed, Youth Ministry Director

- Youth group started in early September.
- They have gone through the book of Joel.
- Chris noted that at tonight's gathering they will be going through a topical lesson about walking in the light.
- The UNITE youth conference will be held in Lincoln, NE on July 18-23, 2027. The youth group has currently raised $5,411 toward that event.
- Just 1 student has signed up so far however there are a number of students who have shown interest.
- UNITE early registration ends in January 2027 but Chris would like to know by November. UNITE can take registrations in until May 2027.
- Chris is hoping to get up to 15 kids to the conference.
- Youth leaders that will be going are Chris, Josh Tangen, and Sonya.
- There is a Fall retreat on October 15-17 at Bluewater Bible Camp.
- Chris has started working with Release Time again.
- Last week 267 students from among all the churches showed up for the Corn Maze event.
- In Sunday school the younger students are going through book of Ruth. They are utilizing the "Not your average Bible Study" curriculum.
- The older kids are using the book "Created who you are in light of who God is." This was recommended by Tom and Heather Enright.

DRAFT

- Chris did adult Sunday school last week and discussed the question of "what is proof and why it matters."
- Rachel brought up a question about the Covenant affirmation document that each volunteer signed. Copies of those signed documents are held by Chris right now. General discussion about where there they should be held and if the church should be retaining copies. There was agreement that the church should indeed keep copies.
- General discussion of volunteers and whether they are currently getting burned out. and whether a new staff paid staff member may be able to alleviate that issue.
- The question was raised about whether we would simply be delegating what volunteers are now doing to a new paid staff member. No action taken.
- Previous children's pastor reported to senior pastor. Tony believes the lead pastor would need to be hands on with supervision in the event such a position is ever added.
- Lengthy further general discussion about what volunteers do at our church.
- Additional discussion about what is the best way to get things done. Is it expanding staff? Rachel said that one issue is that there is a lot of reliance on the same volunteers.
- Randy stated that the discussion of a new staff member is probably better served when Pastor Nate is here in person.
- Todd discussed the financial aspect of hiring a new staff member and he noted that we are currently trending exactly on budget. Thinks there would need to be a specific giving "pledge" for it to work rather than a general agreement by givers to increase their offering.
- Todd indicated that there are 7 giving units that account for 1/3 of our budget at this time.

RECC Ministry Report

- Pastor Nate was not present for this meeting (see above where he submitted topics for discussion/consideration).

Trustee Board and Trustee Report – Scott Billingsley, Trustee Board Chair

- We are in some renewal(license/certificate) times. For example, there are DOT issues like random drug testing and a new portal for transportation safety council website that we need to sign up for which includes a $247 fee.
- Todd asked whether churches/nonprofits are exempt from this requirement. That is not something that was known one way or the other at this point.
- Questions about church van use. There have been various requests that are not church related. Scott will put together a draft for a policy for usage.
- A budget draft will be in process, and Scott will be working with Tony on this.

DRAFT

- Tony said we need a new tent as our existing one is no longer usable.

Christian Formation Board – Rachel Krahn, Chair

- September 6th was Labor Day weekend and there were purposely no children's church and no nursery. She noted that some apparently the volunteers did not get that message and showed up. She pointed out that it is noticeable when these are not offered.
- Activity bags are all being used every Sunday. Kelsey Didrikson has added 6 new bags.
- Rachel suggested the idea of adding a station for adding bags in the fellowship hall and making them visible.
- Sam Grey has started doing scheduling on "planning center" for the nursery so people know it is staffed.
- Kickoff Sunday was Sept 14th. Had training involving 30+ people.
- They did a "This is what I believe" document which is a statement of faith. This was done in conjunction with Pastor Nate, and Chris did a good job of putting the document together. Each volunteer signed it and Chris collected them.
- Great attendance on kickoff Sunday with a lot of people registering for Sunday school.

Deacon Board – Randy Prachar, Chair

- Randy brought up the book "Celebrate Recovery." The book deals with addictions to substance use, hurts, habits, hangups.
- Randy said that CJ Otto is willing to start up a Celebrate Recovery group. Everyone gets into a big group but splits into gender specific groups. So, we need both men and women leaders.
- Randy and CJ Otto went to the Freedom church in Grand Forks. He noted that is wide-ranging in terms of recovery.
- There is not a beginning and end to the program. It is year-round and it is faith based.
- Training of the leaders costs $50-$100 per person.
- Sessions last 1-2 hours and it is very much of a support group.
- As for the budget component of the program, the deacons can absorb the cost at this time.
- Tony said we don't need a motion for this but that the deacons can simply get this started.
- Other things – new membership. Not sure how many applicants we will have on Oct 27th.
- Grief Share has a fall and winter offering at our church.
- Not many requests for benevolence or crisis funds lately.
- The flower ministry has also been quiet.

DRAFT

- Deacons are now sending out sympathy cards to church members and regular attenders.
- Apologetics classes are ongoing in adult Sunday school led by Chris and Darrin Smedsmo.
- December 6th is practice and December 13th is the Christmas program so no adult Sunday school those days.
- Small groups. Randy discussed that there are not requests to fund bible study material now days but there are a lot of small groups going on.
- Tony asked the question about why we walk to front now rather passing the plates down the aisles for communion. Randy explained that there is feedback that it is a meaningful thing for people to walk to the front of the church.
- Tony mused as to whether people are put in an awkward spot if they don't go up to take communion.
- Certain other ministries are under the deacon's purview, and they will continue checking in with those ministries at least once a year.
- Deacon board could use a couple of more deacons. They would like to be a little bit more active in visitation. Discussion of gender balance on deacon board. Randy believes it's important to keep a balance and especially when going over to someone's home.

Financial Report – Todd, Church Treasurer

- Everything is on balance at this point and trending that way for the end of the year.
- See financial handout distributed by Todd.

New Business Topics

- Rachel Krahn brought up that the Hruby family would like to make a memorial for a financial donation in memory of Mary Beth Hruby that is children related. Preference would be something "physical and permanent." She encouraged the LC board to think of some ideas.
- Tony noted that the workday at All Nations church in Warroad has been postponed a couple of times and a new date and time will be scheduled.

NEXT MEETING – QUARTERLY CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27th @ 7 PM

Motion To Adjourn and Closing Prayer – Tony Fichter, LC Board Chair

- Motion by Randy to adjourn.
- Second by Rachel to adjourn.
- Passed unanimously.

DRAFT