St. Paul Lutheran Church

**CONGREGATION MEETING MINUTES • June 17, 2025**

**Call to Order**: President Tom Splittgerber called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Opening Prayer**: Pastor Kyle Backhaus

**Secretary’s Report - Minutes of April 22, 2025 Congregation Meeting**: *A motion was made by Fay Risse and seconded by Dave DePagter to approve the Secretary’s Report from the April 22, 2025 Congregation Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.*

**May 2025 Treasurer’s Report**: Stefanie Trakel presented the financial reports. Eleven months into the year we have a deficit of $51,436. Earlier this year giving to the general operating budget had fallen below last year. Notices were published in weekly news and a letter was sent to all members in early May, sharing the concern. Since then, we have seen an increase in giving, thanks to the support of all our members. As of the close of May, giving is still below budget but it is now ahead of last year. Expenses continue to be controlled and are underbudget. Dedicated accounts were reviewed and are strong, as a reminder these are earmarked for specific things and cannot be used for the operating budget. *A motion was made by Margaret Hand and seconded by Fay Risse to approve the May 2025 Treasurer’s Report. Motion carried unanimously.*

**2025-26 Budget**: Stefanie Trakel presented the upcoming budget. It is estimated we will end the year with a deficit of $36,471. This will be funded by the Ministry Development Dedicated Account, which was initially established with prior year surpluses and is used for the years we have deficits. The upcoming budget has a 12.2% increase over this fiscal year, which amounts to $151,284. Almost a quarter of this increase is to cover the expenses that were not covered this year (our deficit). The remaining $114,813 is new expenses primarily comes from:

* wages
* benefits, which is set by Concordia Plan Services
* discontinuation of the State Covid Grant for the ECC
* full year Pastor as we had a 6-month vacancy
* full year Children’s Director, who was paid through disability this year while on maternity leave. She will also be graduating shortly, at which time the congregation will extend a Call to her, as was approved over a year ago.

Discussion was held. The Council will continue to communicate the importance of members continuing to maintain tor even continuing to increase giving, now that we have seen improvement. The Ministry Development Fund loaned $195k to the Columbarium Fund. Once the units have been sold, this loan will be repaid, increasing the Ministry Development Fund by $195k, bringing the balance to around half a million dollars.

*A motion was made by Margaret Hand and seconded by Fay Risse to approve the May 2025 Treasurer’s Report. Motion carried unanimously.*

The 5-year Capital Improvement Plan was shared. This is not a budgeted item, but we do try to plan out the spending for this account, as expenses tend to be significant. Parking lot maintenance is on the schedule for Spring of 2027 per the recommendation of Northeast Asphalt but it may fall as an operating expense depending on the cost.

**Worship Center Condenser:** The Worship Center Condenser showed signs of damage over 8 years ago but does continue to function. The cost of replacement continues to rise, the cost has risen almost 50% from when it was quoted 18 months ago.The Council feels we should not wait any longer. Three quotes were sought and Schaus Mechanical in Manitowoc was selected. This is a reputable company for commercial work. The project will likely take place in fall.

*A motion was made by Mike Holden and seconded by Jake Baus to approve $70,000 for the Worship Center Condenser replacement to be paid from the Capital Improvement Fund. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Congregation Concerns**:

***Best of Sheboygan County:*** The Early Childhood Center was nominated for the Best of Sheboygan County. After voting, we are in the top 3. The winner will be announced in the Sheboygan Press in late July. Congratulations to the staff!

**Adjournment:** *A motion was made by Fay Risse and seconded by Deb Hand to adjourn the Congregation Meeting at 7:08 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.*

**Closing Prayer**: Pastor Adam Wolfe

Attendance: 43