

Epiphany Evangelical Lutheran Church

Church Congregation Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 28, 2025 – 8:00 PM

Attendees

Present (via video conference): Mike Dunavant (President), Rob Boyle (Vice-President), Markus Groener (Secretary), Missy Hill, Jim Huddle, Phillip Martin, Gwen Newman, David Schiller

Absent: Jennifer Edwards (Treasurer), Joseph Bollick, Sarah Lang, Cindy McClintock, Leigh Pickels

1. Call to Order

Council President **Mike Dunavant** called the emergency meeting to order at 8:00 PM and confirmed a quorum. He stated that the meeting had been convened to address concerns regarding the **Endowment Fund resolution** originally slated for a congregational vote on **November 9, 2025**. The meeting's focus was to determine whether the proposal should proceed in light of new opposition expressed by **Bill Seidel**, President of the Endowment Board.

2. Discussion - Endowment Fund Resolution

Background

Council members reviewed correspondence from Endowment President Bill Seidel, who expressed formal opposition to the proposed changes to the Endowment resolution. The letter prompted significant concern and disagreement between the Council and the Endowment Board. Members acknowledged that the Endowment Board may not have fully reviewed the proposed changes before the Council's prior approval. The primary concern centered on maintaining unity and transparency within the congregation and avoiding division at the upcoming congregational meeting.

Key Discussion Points

- **Jim Huddle** and **Rob Boyle** recounted earlier discussions with the Endowment Board, stating they believed there had been prior consensus on the proposed changes. Both expressed surprise at the opposition letter.
- **Dave Schiller** emphasized the need to clarify the respective authorities of the Council and the Endowment Board, noting that the Council holds financial decision-making authority under the congregation's governing documents.
- **Phillip Martin** and **Markus Gröner** agreed that proceeding to a congregational vote without alignment would risk confusion and conflict. Both advocated for a postponement to allow time for dialogue.
- **Missy Hill** highlighted the importance of documenting future discussions and ensuring clear records to prevent future misunderstandings.
- **Gwen Newman** raised questions regarding tax receipts and donation processes for the Endowment and suggested that improved education and communication would help address misconceptions.
- **Rob Boyle** voiced his opposition to delaying the resolution, arguing that the proposal had been well-vetted and should proceed to the congregation.

Motion – Postpone Congregational Vote on Endowment Resolution

Motion: To remove the proposed Endowment Fund resolution from the **November 9, 2025** congregational meeting agenda and to engage the Endowment Board in further discussion toward a unified position before resubmitting the proposal.

- **Made by:** Mike Dunavant
- **Seconded by:** Markus Gröner
- **Vote:** 8 in favor, 1 opposed (Rob Boyle) – Motion carried.

Proposal – Commit to Ongoing Work Toward Resolution

Following the vote, Gwen Newman proposed ensuring that the Council commits to continued work on the Endowment resolution to prevent delays or stagnation. After discussion, members agreed to target renewed discussions in early 2026, in coordination with the **Finance Committee** and **Endowment Board**, without setting a fixed deadline. No formal motion was recorded.

3. Agree Next Steps

- Mike Dunavant will contact Bill Seidel to communicate the Council's decision and open the door for renewed dialogue between Council, Finance, and the Endowment Board.
- Jim Huddle will assist with establishing consistent reporting from the Endowment to the Council and congregation.
- Council will look into and collaborate on educational materials for the congregation (newsletter articles, temple talks) explaining the Endowment's purpose and operations.
- Missy Hill will help coordinate early 2025 meetings to continue the discussion.
- Gwen Newman will review processes related to tax receipts and donations.
- Rob Boyle will provide input from the Council's perspective during future negotiations.

4. Next Meetings

The next regular scheduled council meeting is on Tuesday, November 11th, 2025, at 7:00 pm.

5. Closing Prayer

Pastor Phillip Martin offered a closing prayer, thanking God for the gifts and strengths within the body of Christ, the willingness of council members to engage in challenging discussions, and the Spirit's guidance as the Council seeks unity and wisdom in its stewardship responsibilities.

6. Adjournment

Mike Dunavant adjourned the meeting at 8:41 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Markus K. Groener
Church Council Secretary