



Connecting Hearts, Renewing Lives

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
140 Gathering Place Lane | Iowa City, IA 52246
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St. Andrew Session Meeting Minutes

7:30 p.m. | January 22, 2026

Moderator: Pastor Carl Anderson

Session Members: Becky Benson (via zoom after Presbytery meeting), Helen Bryce (late arrival after Presbytery meeting), Don Burch, Scott Fisher (late arrival after Presbytery meeting), Aaron Gibson, Chloe Goers, Mary Hausler, Paula McCue (via zoom), Virginia Ibrahim-Olin, Austin Kannegieter, Emily Neddermeyer, Josh Schilling, Judy Swafford, Jon Swearingen (via zoom), Gregs Thomopulos (via zoom).

Moderator: Pastor Carl Anderson

Excused Members: Munir Tanas

Scheduled Guests: Walter Sparks and John Benson via zoom for Finance Team, Kent Short (via zoom) for MOS & Personnel (via zoom), Eric Goers for Land Sales team

Motion: To allow guests to have a voice, not vote, at this meeting. MSC

Devotions & Opening Prayer: Meeting called to order at 7:34 p.m. by Pastor Carl Anderson. He shared from Romans chapter regarding celebrating in seasons of suffering. Prayer was offered that God awakens us to God's movements and goodness and that we remain faithful.

Amend/Approve Agenda

Motion: To approve the session agenda. MSC

Approval of Session Minutes:

Motion: To approve the December 2025 session minutes. MSC

Consent Agenda Team Reports:

- Worship Attendance Statistics
- Hospitality & Connection

- Deacons:

Motion: To approve the consent agenda. MSC

Leadership Team Reports

- **Transitional Pastor:** Pastor Carl is working on transition tasks. Elder Mary Hausler Ruhlow is working with Pastor Rob Martin to set up a time for his ministry to be celebrated.
- **Ministry Director Reports:**
 - **Staff Meeting Notes**
 - **Children's & Family Ministries**
 - **Communications**
 - **Music Ministries**

Clerk's Report:

- **Communion Stats:** On Jan. 4, 2026, The Rev. Colette Soultz oversaw the distribution of communion to 176 in-person, with 31 devices logged-in online, for a total estimated real time congregation of 243.
- **Baptism, New Members, and Roll Changes:**
 - **Baptism: E-vote was confirmed Jan. 1, 2026, to approve baptism on Jan. 18, 2026, for Ruby Anne Hebert, daughter of Sarah Moore and Joey Hebert, born in Pittsburgh on Sept. 2, 2025, and Lucas Jason Schuchert, son of Suzanne (Moore) & Nathan Schuchert, born Sept. 15, 2025, in Iowa City. MSC**
 - The infants in the approved baptisms are cousins. Rebecca Schuchert presented the children for baptism as a former elder & grandmother of one of the infants.
 - The baptisms took place on January 18, 2026 with Rev. Carl Anderson officiating.
 - **Request to transfer memberships to St Andrew from other churches:**
 - **Jeff Lindberg**
 - **Wendy Lindberg**
 - **Sue West**
 - **Sarah Outterson-Murphy**
 - **Request to accept as confirmand members:**
 - **Julia Tilley**
 - **Henry Tilley**
 - **Jack Linder**
 - **Viggo Brakke**
 - **Phillip Markfort**
 - **Nyaluit Miak**
 - **Zack Penn**
 - **Emily Vos**

Motion: To accept the people listed above into membership at St. Andrew.

MSC

- **Request to reinstate membership, then transfer:** From Phyllis Kay Weiler, who wishes to reinstate her membership, #4761, which was removed per request in December 2016, and then she would immediately request it be transferred to Fourth Presbyterian Church on Michigan Ave in Chicago, Ill.

Motion: To reinstate Phyllis Kay Weiler, member # 4761 MSC

Motion: Transfer her membership to Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago. MSC

- **Presbytery:** Elder & Commissioner Scott Fisher gave an oral report from tonight's zoom meeting. Routine business was discussed, the Presbytery is financially in good shape as giving is on schedule. Inspiring testimonials were provided from the group who went to the border in El Paso/Juarez. Marta Pomeroy has been nominated to serve as co-moderator of the General Assembly.

Action & Discussion Items From Teams:

- **Pastor Nominating Committee:** no update at this time. Two candidates have visited on site recently.
 - **January Report**
- **Mission, Outreach, and Service:** Kent Short reported for the team. A funding distribution for 2026 has been prepared. Focus this year is food security and medical issues. \$96,145 was spent last year. \$100,000 maximum was allocated for MOS to distribute in the current budget proposal and the team currently has a total of \$94,250 for planned distribution.

- **Monthly Report and 2026 Proposed Funding Distributions**

| Organization | Budget 2026 |
|--|--------------------|
| Women's Coop/ Fariana | \$1,000 |
| MH Special Programming | \$1,000 |
| Agape Café | \$1,000 |
| Bird House Hospice | \$750 |
| St. Andrew Food Distribution | \$5,000 |
| Lunch Bunch | \$5,000 |
| Compeer Mental Health | \$1,500 |
| Camp Bear Creek | \$2,500 |
| Christar (Andy & Nichole Stewart's Ministry) | \$1,000 |
| CommUnity*Crisis/Food | \$5,000 |
| Coralville Food | \$3,000 |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Consultation of Religious Communities (CRC) | \$1,000 |
| MHI Expenses | \$1,400 |
| Free Lunch | \$1,500 |
| Habitat for Humanity | \$2,000 |
| DVIP/RVAP | \$1,500 |
| IC Free Medical | \$10,000 |
| Houses into Homes | \$1,000 |
| Iowa City Compassion | \$1,250 |
| Impacto (general) | \$1,000 |
| Impacto (pastoral) | \$1,000 |
| Kevin Kummer (Graduate Fellowship) | \$1,000 |
| Youth for Christ Chaplaincy | \$2,000 |
| NAMI | \$1,000 |
| Immigrant Welcome House | \$2,500 |
| God's Grace Kenya (Fogelmans) | \$2,000 |
| Kosovo (Frey Family Mission) | \$1,250 |
| North Liberty Food | \$2,500 |
| Open Heartland | \$1,500 |
| MCC Senéad Legacy Project | \$2,500 |
| Salaam Med Center | \$2,000 |
| Amana/Clear Creek Thanksgiving (Marissa Moore) | \$500 |
| IC Sober Living for Women (Beth Ann Pigge) | \$1,200 |
| Neighbors of Iowa City | \$750 |
| Life of Christ (Liberia) | \$1,750 |
| Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County | \$2,500 |
| Guatemala (Annual Mission Trip) | \$4,000 |
| Presbyterian Education Board of Pakistan | \$2,400 |
| Table to Table | \$2,500 |
| The Salvation Army | \$750 |
| Our Daily Bread | \$750 |
| Shelter House | \$2,500 |
| Unfolding Word | \$2,500 |
| United Action for Youth | \$2,000 |
| Act Justly | \$1,000 |
| Inside Out Reentry Community | \$1,500 |
| United Presbyterian Home | \$1,000 |
| Total | \$94,250 |

Motion: To move the vote on approval of the distribution until later in the meeting. MSC

- **Finance:** Elder and Treasurer Emily Neddermeyer reported for the team. Ended the year 2025 \$18,000 short on income but came in \$26,000 under budget on expenses largely due to the vacancy in the building and backgrounds coordinator position vacated by Tim Patrick.

Motion: To move Land Sales discussion up in the agenda prior to budget discussion. MSC

- In regard to the 2026 budget proposal, land, building and utility projected expenses are based off of the 2025 expenses.
- An increase in janitorial services was added.
- Our Per Capita expenses of \$27,000 are now included in the General Budget, and not within MOS budget. *Donations from congregation members to per capita had been going into the MOS budget but will no longer do so.*
- Moving expenses for a new pastor are not included in the budget.
- The 3% cost of living addition for staff salaries was added to the budget, with the exception of 2 newer staff positions that occurred late in 2025 (Amy-building scheduling, and Julia-organist) who did not receive these increases.
- Pastoral benefits (including an increase in the board of pensions percentage) have changed somewhat this year and are incorporated into the proposed budget.
- Projected giving is not fully aligned with our totals. Will need to challenge the congregation to grow our giving and work to balance the budget.
- Staff did a good job of submitting budget requests on time.
- A new head of staff may result in new energy and interest in giving.

Motion: To extend the session meeting to 9:45 p.m. MSC

- Save any use of Kelting Funds for emergency use by MOS for unplanned requests, thus changing the draft budget from 8% to 4% regarding Kelting Fund withdrawal.
- If Session's Discretionary Fund needs to be tapped into to cover expenses, it is hoped it would only be for this one year.
- The budget proposed had Income estimated at \$900,000 and Expenses estimated at \$923,563 for a shortfall of \$23,563, which could be made up using session discretionary funds from Fund 3 (\$8000) and Fund 4 (\$15,563). A couple of changes were suggested for allocation of some expenses.

Motion: To extend the session meeting another 20 minutes. MSC

Motion: To accept the proposed budget for 2026 with the changes discussed tonight. MSC

Motion: To approve the MOS budget as presented. MSC

- **Building and Grounds:** Elder Josh Schilling reported that the team will fix sidewalks to prevent tripping & falls. Proposal to add electrical upgrades to the Pop-Up Ministry Room was presented.

Motion: To approve \$9,000 for electrical upgrades to the Pop-Up Ministry Room. MSC

- **Personnel**

- **Land Sales:**

- Eric Goers reported for the team regarding selling a small portion of church property 1,162 square feet, at a cost of \$4 per sq foot to Western Homes for a total of \$4,648, and St. Andrew would ask them to cover any additional closing costs. The congregation and the Presbytery will also need to approve the sale once session makes a motion to do so.
- Western Home has encroached on St Andrew property while constructing on their property and there is some erosion due to removal of ground cover, plus some grading on our trail. They also deposited rip-rap on our property, though this is not really an issue. Asking Western Homes to replace ground cover to stabilize/prevent erosion seems reasonable. They are obligated to do this legally.
- We are glad to have this community as new neighbors but what happened should have been discussed first for permission from us as there are usually fees paid to the other property owner if grading must occur and we are not asking for this, though we would want assurance that our St Andrew property that was graded be stabilized to prevent erosion.
- Eric will have a conversation with Western Homes addressing church concerns with Steve Long from Western Homes.

Motion: To sell 1,162 square feet of St Andrew property at a cost of \$4 per sq foot for a total of \$4,648 to Western Homes, along with any included fees and closing costs covered by them. MSC

- **Nominating Team**

- Elder Helen Bryce reported that a nominee has been put forth (Marissa Moore) to replace a departing member of the team (Hillary Chapo). The nominee can be voted on at the February 8 Annual Congregational Meeting.

Old Business

- **Mental Health Initiatives | Marcia Murphy**

- Marcia is seeking permission to use the names of real persons in her mental health publications. Session states they should have no role in this and recommends Marcia Murphy obtain written permission from any individuals she wants to list in her publications. The session clerk is designated to communicate this to Marcia.

New Business

- St. Andrew's by-laws state: "The Annual Meeting shall be held in the church building on the second Sunday of February of each year for the purposes stated in the Book of Order."

**Motion: To call an Annual Congregational Meeting for after worship on Sunday February 8, 2026. The meeting will be held in the Sanctuary, with a Zoom option for members to participate remotely.
MSC**

If you have congregational business that needs to be added to the agenda for the meeting, contact Pastor Carl or Patti Benson.

Rocket Docket:

- Reminders of upcoming events
 - Food Market | Jan. 28
 - Women's Retreat | Jan. 30 & 31
 - Iowa City Free Lunch | Feb. 4
 - At the Table | Feb. 5
 - St. Olaf Band Concert | Feb. 6
 - Congregational Meeting | Feb. 8
 - Chili Cookoff & Souper Bowl Lunch | Feb. 8
 - Pie for a Pint Blood Drive | Feb. 15
 - Screening: 'No Other Land' | Feb. 15
 - Ash Wednesday | Feb. 18
 - Presbytery Leadership Meeting | Feb. 24
 - Food Market | Feb. 25
 - Iowa City Free Lunch | March 4
 - At the Table | March 5
 - Night of 1,000 Dinners | March 6
 - Men's Retreat | March 7
 - Food Market | March 25

Recitation of the Lord's Prayer at 10:04 p.m. closed the meeting.

Next Scheduled Meeting: 7 p.m. Thursday February 19, 2026

Patricia Benson
Clerk of Session

The Rev. Dr. Carl Anderson
Moderator