Connecting Hearts, Renewing Lives

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
140 Gathering Place Lane | Iowa City, IA 52246
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Session Meeting Minutes
7 p.m. | September 24, 2026

Moderator: Pastor Jordan Warntjes
Session Clerk: Patricia Benson

Session Members: Becky Benson (via zoom), Austin Kannegieter, Scott Fisher, Emily Neddermeyer, Munir Tanas, Helen Bryce, Jon Swearingen, Margaret Heidger, John Linder, Josh Schilling, Jessica Steele, Adam Wolf, Chloe Goers
Moderator: Pastor Jordan Warntjes

Excused Members: Paula McCue, Don Burch, Judy Swafford
Guests: Jeff Edberg, Carmen Krueger, Eric Goers

Devotions & Opening Prayer: Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm by Pastor Jordan Warntjes. Jordan read a devotion that discussed an interesting concept on the topic of comfort. The church should be challenging rather than comfortable. Learning and transformation require discomfort for engagement to occur. From the book, "What If Jesus Was Serious". Rachel Held Evans has said church should always be safe but not always comfortable, rituals have a place but challenging us is ok., too. Prayer offered, to sit in our discomfort and listen for God's voice.

Amend/Approve Agenda

<u>Consent Agenda</u>

Motion-to approve the consent agenda. **MSC**

Approval of Session Minutes:

- **August 2026 Session Meeting Minutes**

Team Reports:

- **Food Ministries**
  - **Food Market September Report**
- **Act Justly**
  - **September Minutes**
- **Building and Grounds Team**
  - **September Minutes**
- **Deacon Meeting Minutes**
  - *None This Month*
- **Hospitality & Connection Team**
  - **September Meeting Minutes**
  - **Staff Follow Up**

- **Worship Team**
    - **September Minutes**
    - **Summer 2026 Attendance Report**

Staff Reports:

- **Pastor**
    - **Staff Meeting Notes**
- **Pastoral Care**
    - **Messenger Article: "Beyond the Sanctuary: Connected Wherever You Worship**
    - **September Report**
- **Children's and Family Ministries**
    - **August & September 2026 Report**
- **Music Ministries**
    - **September Report**
- **Communication & Media Ministries**
    - **2026-27 Team Roster (updates & feedback requested)**
    - **September Report**
- **Mission & Building Use**
    - **September Report**
    - **Mission & Outreach (See Team Reports)**
- **Student Ministry**
    - **History of At the Table**
- **Finance (see Team Reports)**

Clerk's Report:

- **Communion Stats:**
    - During the Sept. 6, 2026, Sunday worship service, Pastor Jordan Warntjes oversaw the distribution of community to 194 persons in the Sanctuary, with 47 devices logged in online, for an estimated real time congregation of **296**.
    - During the Sept. 3, 2026, At the Table service, Pastor Jordan Warntjes oversaw the distribution of communion to **48** people.

- **Baptism, New Members, and Roll Changes:**
    - **Baptism:** Lydia Hartley, daughter of Thomas and Lauren Hartley, October 25, 2026.

  Motion: To approve the baptism of Lydia Anne Hartley, daughter of Thomas and Lauren Hartley, at the October 25, 2026, worship service.

- **Presbytery:**
    - ***Oral Report*** from the September 19 meeting | Helen Bryce & Scott Fisher-per capita was approved to increase to $49.31 for 2027.
    - Incoming elders can sign up for the Presbytery's **Out & About** Newsletter at https://peia.org (scroll to the bottom of the page)
    - Upcoming Presbytery meetings
        - Nov 14, 2026 | 10 a.m., Ely First Presbyterian (in-person with a Zoom option)
        - Feb 4, 2027 | 6-8 p.m., Zoom only
        - April 24, 2027 (in person and zoom) 10 a.m.
        - Sept 18, 2027 (in person only) 10 a.m.

- Nov 18, 2027 (in person and zoom) 1-3 p.m.

Action & Discussion Items:

- **Elder Resignations to Approve**
- **Don Burch E'28 Letter**
- **Josh Schilling E'29 Letter**

Motion-to approve the resignations of Don Burch and Josh Schilling, with regret. MSC

A motion to consider: Approve Nominating Team to fill vacant elder positions OR Move to wait until 2027 to fill the vacant elder positions. Another option is to consider in December the number of elders desired for the session. Action deferred until the October meeting.

- **Team Assignments for Elders for 26-27**
  - **Personnel (requires a motion and vote)-John Linder**
  - **Nominating Team (requires a motion and a vote)-Paula McCue & Adam Wolf**

Motion to place John Linder on Personnel Team and Adam Wolf on Nominating Team. MSC

New additions to select teams:

- **Finance Team-Adam Wolf**
- **Worship-Margaret Heidger & Becky Benson**
- **Child Protection Policy-Jessica Steele**
- **Gifts and Memorials-Margaret Heidger**
- **Interiors Team-Jessica Steele**
- **MOS-John Linder**

- **Mission Outreach and Service**
  - **September Minutes**

Motion 1: To approve a $5,000 contribution to PARD, a longtime Mennonite Central Committee partner in Lebanon, to provide relief to people affected by the recent war and other ongoing crises in the region. **MSC**

Rationale: *MOS has reviewed and supports this request following consultation with MCC contacts in Lebanon. Because the contribution was not included in the 2026 budget, Session approval is required. MOS currently anticipates approximately $20,000 in unspent funds at the end of 2026, sufficient to cover this contribution.*

Motion 2: To authorize MOS to identify and approve additional mission-related uses for up to $15,000 in remaining 2026 funds, consistent with the mission and priorities of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. MSC

Rationale: *This authorization would allow MOS to respond to needs and opportunities during the remainder of the year without returning to Session for approval of each individual expenditure.*

- **Finance**
  - **August Packet**
  - **September Minutes**

Motion: That all net proceeds from future land sales be deposited into Fund 05, which will hereafter be known as "The Building Fund." The Building Fund (Fund 05) shall first be used only to pay the church mortgage and thereafter to fund approved building and grounds expenses. MSC

- **Personnel**

Motion: To approve updates to the Personnel Policies and Procedure Manual to reflect change from PTO to Flexible PTO, which was approved at June Meeting. **MSC**

- **Land Sales Team Update-moved to beginning of meeting following Consent Agenda items.**

Motion-to grant voice to the Land Sales Team representatives. MSC

Finance Recommendations/Answers from Land Sales Team Questions-Eric Goers, team member spoke about the S Triangle property and asked our realtor Jeff Edberg to speak as well. Jeff stated the seller is selling land, but the purchaser is buying opportunity. The City of Iowa City has been difficult to work with, but recently Mike Welch got the land rezoned to multiple-use. There are 2 interested parties but they are currently developing other property and are not yet able to purchase additional land. There are 8 acres with only half usable, and as the surrounding area is developed the city will require a second access road to Camp Cardinal Blvd which will cut into this usable area. Could ask a potential buyer to place a deposit and the church would hold the land for 2 years; if at that time the buyer can't proceed with development the church keeps the deposit, for example. Could lower the price of the property. Could help a buyer finance the property, which is not a desirable option per finance team. We pay property tax on the S Triangle because it is not currently used for any church purpose. Jeff Edberg proposes 3 considerations:

1. Lower the price to $800,000.
2. Allow Jeff to talk to potential buyers about some options like securing a hold on the sale with a deposit to the church (option to purchase agreement).
3. Consider owner (ie-church) financing for a buyer.

Session does not want to consider owner financing. They would consider lowering the price of the property. The church could hold onto the property and find a use for it such as an additional garden space or youth sports activities; brainstorm the use of the space among different teams—this would eliminate the property tax obligation. Session would also consider the "option to purchase agreement". Will table further discussion until the next meeting.

Rocket Docket comments from teams & List of Upcoming Events:

HVAC System is not functioning properly and may require costly repairs. Thank Amy Schmidt-Rundell for her efforts. Building and Grounds team is nearing the depletion of their budget for this year.

460 families attended the food market yesterday.

- **Building & Grounds Church Work Day** | Saturday
- **Welcoming New Members** | Sunday

- **At the Table** | Oct. 1
- **Big Table** | Oct. 2
- **World Communion Sunday** | Oct. 4
- **Free Lunch** | Oct. 7
- **Fields of Faith Harvest** | Oct. 10
- **Wedding of Nancy Barth & Anthony Koebele** | Oct. 10
- **Dane Farm Hay Ride** | Oct. 10
- **Act Justly Documentary Screening** | Oct. 11
- **Pilot Club Breakfast & Bazaar** | Oct. 17
- **Next Steps** | Oct. 18
- **Senior Moments** | Oct. 20
- **Trunk-or-Treat** | Oct. 25
- **Food Market** | Oct. 28
- **All Saints Sunday** | Nov. 1
- **Free Lunch** | Nov. 4
- **At the Table** | Nov. 5
- **Stronghold Fall Retreat** | Nov. 6-8
- **Craft Fair & Minds Matter** | Nov. 7
- **Senior Moments** | Nov. 17
- **Food Market** | Nov. 18
- **Alternative Gift Market** | Nov. 22
- **Hills Bank: Lights of Remembrance** | Nov. 30
- **Free Lunch** | Dec. 2
- **At the Table** | Dec. 3
- **Lessons & Carols** | Dec. 6
- **Children's Christmas Program** | Dec. 13
- **Senior Moments** | Dec. 15
- **Cocoa & Carols** | Dec. 20
- **Christmas Eve** (5, 7, & 11 p.m.) | Dec. 24
- **Food Market** | Dec. 30
- **Free Lunch** | Jan. 6
- **At the Table** | Jan. 7
- **Sunday School Resumes** | Jan. 10
- **Gifts of the Heart Packing** | Jan. 17

Prayer-offered by Pastor Jordan at 8:53 pm to close the meeting.

Next Meeting: 7 p.m. Thursday October 15, 2026

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Benson
Clerk of session

Rev Jordan Warntjes
Moderator