Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Mission: Knowing Jesus & Making Jesus Known
Vision: To be a beacon of light and hope that impacts the world

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Church Council Minutes: 2026 October 26th

Members in Attendance	*Absent*	Attending
Kathy Ewald, Chair	Jim Bono	Jean Jepson
Kelly Hoke (zoom)	Cindy Hildner	Pr. Brian Wise
Terese Jackway	Pr. Elisabeth Himmelman	
Dave Mevis	Laurie May (Recording Sec.)	
Rachel Petty	Sam Petras	
Matt Pickering		
Kris Reenstjerna		
Teresa Thompson		

I. Opening Prayer Devotion — Dave Mevis

II. Action Items

1. **Approval of August Council Meeting minutes**

A motion to approve the August 2026 minutes was made by Kathy Ewald & Matt Pickering. *The motion was approved.*

2. **Update of New Members** (moved to next month)

III. Discussion Topics

1. **Church Visioning** in Executive Session.
2. Kathy E. made a motion to move next month's council to Nov. 30th, Kris R. seconded. All were in favor.
3. **2027 Meeting / Devotional Schedule**

2027 Council Meeting	Schedule of Devotionals
January 25	Teresa Thompson
February 22	Kelly Hoke
March 22	Cindy Hildner
April 26	Dave Mevis
May 24	Kathy Ewald
June - TBD	Annual Meeting

June 28 - Orientation	Pastor Brian
July 26	Rachel Petty
August 23	Matt Pickering
September 27	Kris Reenstjerna
October 25	Jim Bono
November 22	Terese Jackway
December - TBD	Christmas Party

IV. Generative

1. **None**

V. Committee Reports

Finance Committee: Sam Petras

September 2026 Financial Headlines
Operating cash balance increased $29k during September
FY26 - giving up 21% ($20k) vs. same period last year and up 15% ($15k) vs. budget
FY26 - comp & benefits is $74k (64%) vs. $116k giving
77% of 2026 pledged gifts received through September (75% of calendar year is complete)
Operating Revenue up $17k vs. budget = $15k giving + $4k interest income + ($1k) programs + ($1k) building rent
Operating Net up $29k vs. budget:
$17k operating revenue
$11k compensation & benefits (64% of giving)
$1k admin
($5k) maintenance, grounds care, equipment & property insurance
$1k worship & arts
$2k faith formation
$1k mission allocation
$1k programs
Preschool Revenue down ($1k) vs. budget
Preschool Net up $1k vs. budget
($1k) Preschool revenue

$3k administrative
($1k) repairs & improvements
12 Fiscal Months Year-to-Date 2026 Actual vs. Budget
YTD Operating Revenue down $36k vs. budget = ($35k) giving + ($1k) interest income + ($2k) programs + $2k building rent
YTD Operating Net up $15k vs. budget:
($36k) operating revenue
$36k compensation & benefits (83% of giving)
$2k admin
($3k) maintenance, grounds care, equipment & property insurance
$2k worship & arts
$4k faith formation
$3k utilities
$7k mission allocation
YTD Preschool Revenue up $8k vs. budget
YTD Preschool Net down $10k vs. budget
$8k Preschool revenue
($3k) administrative
($15k) repairs & improvements

Youth & Family Ministry Board - Kelly Hoke

Celebration Children's Center - Terese Jackway

The board voted on next year's tuition with an increase comparable to similar schools. This will ensure the Children's Center can provide teacher raises, continue to commit funds to Our Saviour's and plan for needed updates for the school. Registration for 2027-2028 starts in November.

IDEC (formerly DCFS) license was renewed in April for 3 years.

Fall activities

- 9/1-9/2: Family meet and greet with Donut Truck
- 9/14-9/15: Parent Coffees
- 9/23-9/24: September chapels with tote bag blessings
- 10/1-10/7: Complimentary school pictures
- 10/1-10/19: Loaves and Fishes soup collection
- 10/13: Godly play and music in Pumpkin Patch
- 10/21-10/22: October chapels
- 10/29-10/30: Halloween parties and parade

December Christmas Program Chapel planned for 12/9 and 12/10. They will be collecting baby blankets in the manger for the Baby Care ministry.

HR Committee - Kathy Ewald

- Katee O'Toole has been hired as the Ministry Support Lead.
- Congregants with experience in Human Resources are encouraged to contact Jean Jepson about joining the Human Resources Committee.

Endowment and Stewardship - Dave Mevis

- The Stewardship Bingo event was well attended.
- Many attendees shared that they had a lot of fun.

Attendance provided by **Kathy Clolinger, Accounting Manager**

		In Person Attendance					YouTube Views		
		5:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	Total	9:00 11:00	10:00	Total
10/25/2026	Confirmation at 9:00	57	230	40		327	75	31	106
10/18/2026		65	137	80	38	320	88	53	141
10/11/2026		56	132	68	28	284	73	47	120
10/04/2026	1 service Sunday-pet bless	57		182		239	54	49	103
09/27/2026		52	155	70	61	338	91	17	108
09/20/2026		38	138	90	33	299	102	37	139
09/13/2026		43	159	90	56	348	80	34	114
09/06/2026		44	93	81	33	251	69	44	113

Wellness - Rachel Petty

Rachel was not available to attend the October meeting. Below is what was shared afterwards via email from Alex. The next meeting is on Thursday, November 12th.

November is centered on our material wellness theme, *"Gratitude in Action. Love Made Practical."*

Upcoming events:

Wednesday, November 4: Scam Prevention Workshop led by Naperville Police Department at 5:30 pm in Classroom 1 (previously Advent.)

Saturday, November 7: Sleep in Heavenly Peace build Congregants will meet at Our Saviour's Campus at 7:45 am for coffee and donuts before carpooling to the build site in Tinley Park and return back to the church around 12pm. *Registration is required.*

Sunday, November 8: Start of *Gratitude in Action. Love Made Practical* Speaker Series. OSLC member, Teresa Thompson will lead *Faith, Money, and the Common Good* discussion in connection with Dialogues in Faith

Sunday, November 15: Last of the *Gratitude in Action. Love Made Practical* Speaker Series. Thrivent will present on *Giving with Purpose: Qualified Charitable Distributions.*

Property Committee - Dave Mevis

Mission and Benevolence - Teresa Thompson

Each of the Mission Leads came together to share the following…

I. Groups shared **A) What they are doing** **B) Calendar of Events for 26-27** **C) Fundraising Requests** **D) Fundraising Goals/budget support**

	Fund Name	Rep.	Notes
1	**Baby Care**	**Betty Landorf**	A) Raffles at the assembly event (raised $600) Assembled 500 care packages in September. There is another event in the spring (April/May). B) Luncheon in Feb. to invite new members and thank those who have helped. Workshops to put together the coordinated outfits March through August C) none D) Have been having to buy socks, soap, and receiving blankets. The preschool is getting donations of receiving blankets.
2	Bridge Families	Cathy Cayer	
3	**Educating Africa's Children (Uganda)**	**Jan Dusek**	A) Jim Bono gave a memorial to purchase land adjacent to the school. The school is in the process of building a 3 level school on this land. The people in the area have to make the bricks and cinder blocks that go into the school. No loans are taken out to make the school. The work is done by the people in the area. B) Wanting to be more visible to the congregation. The school started with 25 students, but is now up to over 1,000. So, being more visible, the congregation supports the mission better. C) Partnering with Lutheran World Relief who imports coffee and chocolate from Uganda. When selling products, LWR gives $4 from each pound of coffee and $2 from each chocolate bar. The group also sells jewelry, hoping to sell again in January. D) About $54,000 goes to the school each year.
4	**Feed My Starving Children**	**Ken Voltava**	A) Works with the Feed The Need B) In late January/February, there will be an event for Haiti Scholars. There may also be other events through the church through Scouts, Youth groups, and so on. Will do fundraising at Portillos, Lazy Dog, and Little Pops.
5	**Feed The Need**	**Les May**	A) The mobile pack event is done 1X year at Benedictine. The date for 2027 is April 24-25. B) see A. C) Fundraising is done through the mobile pack event. D) Our support (specifically to OSLC) has been dropping. Even so, we try to give $15,000 per year. Much of these $$ come via the MegaSale.
6	Fuhrer Scholarship		.
7	**Haiti Scholars**	**Nicole Waite**	A) The group made use of an additional $10,000 that came from Feed My Starving Children. Was able to send 50 boxes with health care items, clothes, food, and school supplies. B) At the Sip and Support will be August 26th, 2027 In 2026, the event raised about 56,000 – total need is about $140,000 C) November 21st selling items at the St. Thomas Art Fair. Giving Tuesday December 1st w/ FMSC, April is a Restaurant Fund Raiser. May 6th will sell items at the plant sale, June (Mega Sale) buys items at the sale

			D) Ships to Miami and then on to Haiti. Water filters, food, and school supplies. What is costing more than the past is the shipping cost. We are feeding 450 children and teacher support. Health care had to be dropped for now.
8	**Loaves & Fishes**	**Nancy Couch**	A) Food programs, senior home delivery, mobile pick up areas, market center, warehouse, Lu Koerper is taking a group to help out at the center. Groups of youth from OSLC to work at the center. Job counseling, rent support, legal help, mental wellness. They are adding a 32,000 square ft addition to the HUB. B) During November, the congregation will donate toilet paper and diapers. The preschool does a donation event for L&F. They will look at incorporating other mission partners to benefit other mission partners within our church. C) Endeavor Health contributed 5 million dollars along with staff to focus on nutrition and health needs of people being served at L&F. L&F also has really made a concerted effort to restrict sweets and sugary foods and cereals. D) Making the best use of the people and community resources.
9	Luth. Social Serv. of IL	David Novak	
10	Lutheran Disaster Relief	Pastor Brian Wise	
11	**Mega Garage Sale**	**Debbie Friend**	A) Getting ready for the 2027 sale. B) Wanting to mentor other churches to show them how to do the sale C) Will incorporate 12 good deeds at $250 per place. D) Switching to Salvation Army vs using Goodwill. SA will deliver all of the carts for post pick up like Goodwill did. Switch is because their donations stay in the Chicagoland area.
12	**Mozambique**	**Susan Fergusen**	A) Meet monthly. Recently we had a gratitude dinner for the support from our congregation. B) Annual Dinner Feb. 27th. Hot Wheels event Feb. 6th. Sweetheart Dance in April, Plant Sale May 8th (Pre-Mother's Day). C) At the annual dinner, Pie fundraising (Thanksgiving and Easter) – is wanting to scale back these offerings. Season of Sharing tags on the tree in December. D) Support the teachers and Patient Advocates, e'Pap supplements 2 times a year, and AKA Power school. E) $1,800 / per month and then about $12,000 twice a year. Members of OSLC go about every 3 years to visit and meet everyone involved. It is possible the fundraising would shift to the ELCA who would be able to dispense much more $ through their services.
13	Refugee Ministries	Jim Bono & Lee Thomsen	(report from Jim Bono added on 11/02) A) Most activities have stopped because of current national policies. One was the expenditure of $1,000 along with $500 supporting back-to-school backpack efforts for both World Relief Chicagoland and Refugee One. B) OSLC continues to support refugee families by continuing our relationship with existing refugee families we have assisted in the past: one Afghan family and one Ethiopian family. Cathy Cayer continues to serve as an aid in a Foundations ESL class as well as providing transport for one family to attend the ESL class. C) Given the low probability of policy changes at a national level, the refugee mission is not requesting additional budgeted funds during the 2007/2008 OSLC budget cycle. D) Historically, OSLC has coordinated a coat drive during the winter holidays. Given the status of national immigration policy, it is unclear if we will attempt to do so this upcoming 2026 holiday season.
14	**Slovakia**	**Gail Jernberg**	A) The long-time principal of the school left. There is a new woman. B) May, annual fundraising dinner. Student exchanges during the summer to go to the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN. C) May event plus Season of Sharing tags on the tree in December. D) John Wagner, Mike Dietz, along with Gail and Don Swanson are working on expanding the offerings and fundraising efforts. The past goal has been to give about $50,000.
15	World Hunger	Pastor Brian Wise	
16	MBC Undesignated	Pastor Brian Wise	

	Groups w/out accounts	Point Person	Description and/or information
A	**Bright Stars of Bethlehem**	**Jan Dusek**	A) Gallery presentation and guest speaker and musical presentation. Past donations have gone to tuition support. B) Friday March 5th is the tentative date for the musical presentation and gallery showing. The gallery showing will include works by children in Gaza. They also want to showcase jewelry made by University students. They will also sell the book, Lilies of Gaza. There will also be a speaker to give an update on what is happening in Bethlehem and in Gaza. They will also showcase the course offerings and online offerings available. C) none D) About $1,000 is needed to pay for the event in March.
B	ELCA Synod	Pastor Brian Wise	
C	**Holy Family Ministries**	**Jan Dusek**	A) Communicating with the school. In Arlington Heights, the Lucille Resale shop and a Salvation Army outlet that the sales support the school. B) Read Across America day in March (1st week). December – collecting books and gift cards to be used to purchase more books. Jan wants to take a group down to the school. C) Fall and Spring fundraising Galas at Country Clubs. D) The school is preschool through 8th grade.
D	Lutheran Seminary of Theology at Chicago	Pastor Brian Wise	
F	Samara Care	Pastor Brian Wise	
G.	**Season of Sharing**	**Debbie Montrose**	Debbie will make adjustments to the SoS based upon today's discussion.

Memorials - **Kris Reenstjerna**

The team met on October 14, 2026

1. Columbarium and Memorial Garden funds were combined into one fund. The team will be exploring if we need to revise the amounts charged for the Columbarium as those prices have not been raised.
2. **The Labyrinth is almost complete** and remaining costs are covered. Go check it out!

Caring for Creation - **Terese Jackway**

- Faith in Place Environment and Spirituality Summit Sept. 28
  - 18 participants from 4 different area churches
- Hosting Midweek Meet-up meal on 10/28.
- Collecting old Christmas lights for recycling again this year. Boxes will be set-up at each campus on November 14th and 15th.
- We will be decorating two Greener Christmas trees at each campus for this year's Season of Sharing.
- The congregation signing up for the composting program has benefited the church to receive rebates and thus have to pay $0 🙂

Report to Council | October 26, 2026 Elisabeth Pynn Himmelman, Associate Pastor

Children, Youth & Family Ministry

Sunday School and Youth Programming
Daily Bread Sunday School is off to a strong start, with higher regular attendance at the 10 a.m. service than at 9 a.m. The shorter timeframe, with children joining worship at the beginning and end of the service, is encouraging as we continue strengthening connections between worship, relationships, and faith formation. I am grateful for our volunteers' faithful service in nurturing a vibrant, relational, and Christ-centered ministry.

Eight youth are participating in SALT, our new ministry for 4th and 5th graders, which meets twice monthly on Wednesday evenings. The group participated in its first service project together at the CROP Hunger Walk on October 18. Ignition High School Youth Group (grades 9–12) and Surge Confirmation (grades 6–8) continue to meet on Wednesday evenings. We also have a developing college ministry that meets monthly on Zoom, led by Brittany Sheldon and college freshman Berit Mores.

ELCA Youth Gathering 2027
Ignition is registered for the ELCA Youth Gathering next summer in Minneapolis. Brittany personally contacted our active high school youth and their parents to invite them to participate. Three youths have registered to date. Remaining Eagles Wings funds will support registration fees for adult chaperones Brittany Sheldon and Matthew Felbein, as well as four Slovak youth visiting OSLC during the Gathering. Funds raised by Ignition youth through upcoming fundraisers will also be distributed to support their participation. Ignition hosted their first fundraiser for this trip, the Chili Cook Off, on October 4, raising over $500.

CYFM Leadership and Structure
The Youth & Family Board has faced scheduling challenges this fall, and co-leaders Jon O'Toole and Michele Larson have stepped down due to changing work and personal responsibilities. The board is taking time to reflect on how our ministry structure can best support the current season of Children, Youth & Family Ministry, including the opportunities provided by Brittany's full-time staff position.

Brittany and I continue reaching out weekly to youth in grades 6–12 through individual texts and mailed cards to strengthen relationships and connections with OSLC.

Midweek Meetup
Kevin Andrews concluded his role overseeing Midweek Meetup meals on October 21 as he relocates to Miami. I am grateful for his faithful service and contributions to this ministry.

Vacation Bible School 2027
Jon and Katee O'Toole will serve as VBS Directors for July 26–30, 2027, receiving a modest stipend for their leadership. Brittany and I are also planning a VBS Throwback on December 30, 2026, from 9 a.m. to noon for children ages 3 through 5th grade. The morning will feature games, activities, songs, and crafts from our 2026 VBS, along with a reveal of the 2027 theme.

Slovak Student Visit

The five Slovak students who visited last June—Alex, Andrew, Matthew, Aless, and Luke—will return to Naperville December 15–January 4. A generous member donation covered half their airfare, with the students covering the remainder. Last summer's host families will welcome them again and cover hosting and activity costs, with no additional congregational support needed. The students are excited to help with the VBS Throwback on December 30.

Pastoral Acts

There were 8 high school freshmen and 1 - 8th graders affirmed their baptism through the rite of confirmation in worship on October 25. As part of their confirmation project, they helped plan and lead worship with their mentors: Mandy Wise, Greg Nasman, and Hannah King. The group met together with Brittany on October 4 for a retreat to complete faith interviews, plan worship, eat, and play together.

In October, I baptized Bennet Finke and met with two families inquiring about baptism for their children and officiated the funeral of Nancy Peterson.

Adult Faith Formation and Committees

The six-week Bible study, "God Works in the Word" recently concluded. We had six small groups studying the lectionary texts from Matthew. I received encouraging feedback from several small group leaders, whose members shared that the study structure, videos, and discussion questions fostered meaningful conversation and deepened their connection to Scripture.

In October, I met with the Care for Creation, Dialogues in Faith, Wellness Board, and the Mozambique Mission Teams for their regular planning meetings as well as led the West Conference Meeting for the Metro Chicago Synod.

Continuing Education

This month, I had the opportunity to participate in several opportunities:

- **Metro Chicago Synod Rostered Ministers Gathering:** An opportunity for connection, learning, and shared reflection with rostered leaders across the synod.
- **TENx10 Summit:** I attended in my capacity as Region 5 Representative for the 2027 ELCA Youth Gathering. This event was in Chicago and focused on expanding our imagination for a church that prioritizes the next generation and makes relational discipleship central to its ministry.
- **PREACH 2026:** A preaching conference in Minneapolis focused on strengthening preaching and leadership in a time of significant social and cultural division. I was able to participate thanks to the funds in the "Love Your Pastor" campaign from last Christmas.

Wellness Handoff

I met with Alex Colaianni and Pastor Anna to hand off wellness ministry responsibilities. Thank you to Rachel Petty for saying yes to being council representative for the Wellness Board!

Pastoral Collaboration

In this season of transition from three full-time pastors to two full-time and one part-time pastor, we are working on strengthening our working relationship.

In hope,
Pastor Elisabeth

VI. Unfinished Business:

VII. Next Meeting

Monday, November 30, 2026 — Opening Devotion –

- Bring scissors and tape in order to wrap gifts for the staff.

Rachel Petty has the devotional

VIII. Closing Prayer: Dave Mevis

The meeting adjourned at 8:26