

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Mission: Knowing Jesus & Making Jesus Known

Vision: To be a beacon of light and hope that impacts the world

Church Council Minutes: July 27, 2026

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

Opening Prayer Devotion—Jim Bono

Action Items

- New meeting place for monthly Council meetings - The Contemporary Worship Leader is instituting weeknight practice on Mondays, so beginning in September, Council will be meeting at the Our Saviour's Campus.
- Approval of July Council Meeting minutes

A motion to approve the May 2026 minutes was made by Kathy Ewald and seconded by Jim Bono. The motion was approved.

- Update of New Members (Quarterly) - Next time

Discussion Topics

1. 2026-2027 Church Theme Orientation

Pr. Brian's goal is to have a Council orientation of the yearly theme God Works. PB led a devotion based on the theme based on Matthew

God Works in the Word

God Works in Us

God Works in the World

This is an invitation for us to participate; God works in the world through us. Invitation is not the same as recruitment, but rather to be in relationship. When you meet with someone, the goal is not to gather information as much to just have met with them. Go

listen, love, and connect with them. PB would like you to meet with three people sometime this year who you may not have previously connected with. No need to report back about what you discussed.

An example: Kris Reenstjerna and her team send notes to all the high school seniors in the congregation and mail them to their homes each month.

Brief overview of the OSLC's Constitution, Bylaws, and Mission Statement for Council members:

Constitution: Should match all other ELCA constitutions. There should not be many differences from other congregations. If anything is changed from the norm, it should be for a very good reason.

I.e. Proxy voting is not in the standard ELCA constitution, but we were doing it. We changed our constitution to align with other ELCA churches.

Bylaws: Specific to our particular church.

Continuing Resolution: Suspends a rule in the Bylaws, only until the next congregational voting opportunity. A continuing resolution may never violate the Constitution.

Council duties: Be faithful to Mission Statement and overall mission. Council does not need to be involved in day-to-day operations or specific committee work.

Confidentiality: Council is sometimes privy to confidential information (i.e. personnel, legal issues) until something is voted on, when the result of the vote becomes public. That is the purpose of an Executive Session. The Council is held responsible for keeping discussions confidential.

A Council Member: Should use their voice, participate in service opportunities, be present at church events. The hope is that Council members will continue as an active member of the church after their service on Council, and not burnout. Here are some tips to keeping positive:

If someone comes to you and is upset or has a problem:

- First, thank them for sharing.
- Understand what's going on with them in their life.
- Ask if they are coming to you as a friend or Council Member.
- Don't hurry your response. Get back to them later if necessary.
- Realize that what someone is saying is not necessarily accurate
- Anonymous feedback will not be accepted.

What does leadership look like:

- Be present (worship, participate in congregational groups)
- Invite people to meet (have coffee, sit with people you may not know well)

- Participate in stewardship (Council passes the budget, so they should participate)
- Be curious (Read Committee reports ahead of the meeting and be ready to discuss)
- Hope (Council members are here to give people hope, not just taking care of operations and fixing things)

What do you think our Church would be like in a year if the Council members followed the above guidelines?

Council Packet also contains the Welcome Statement, Organizational Chart, and Groups in the church and leaders of those groups.

Generative

1. None

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Sam Petras

Youth & Family Ministry Board - Kelly Hoke

Sunday School will be shorter, with children returning to worship for Communion

Junior High and High school will all meet on Wednesday
4th and 5th Grade ministry every other week

Celebration Children's Center - Terese Jackway

- 5-weeks of summer camp ended with 55-80 kids present each week. Registered preschool children from the past school year were those who participated.
- The following preschool facility updates were completed this summer:
 - New carpet was installed in the preschool wing (halls and classrooms).
 - Windows were cleaned inside and out.
 - Classrooms were cleaned before staff returned for the 2026-2027 school year.
- Teachers were back in action at back-to-school meetings beginning the week of August 14th and classes start on September 8th

HR Committee - Kathy Ewald

- Diane Griesbach retired. We thank her for her service to the church and wish her a happy retirement!
- Pastor Anna Roper has accepted the one year contracted part-time position of Associate Pastor of Care and Wellness and will be starting September 15th
- Christy LaFave Grace is returning to the Our Saviour's staff as the Ministry Support Coordinator.
- Matthew Felbein joins the staff as the Worship Tech Coordinator.
- Kevin Andrews joins the staff as the Midweek Meet-Up Coordinator.

Welcome to all the new staff members!

Endowment and Stewardship - Dave Mevis

Worship and Arts - Cindy Hildner

Nicholas Davis reported:

Sanctuary Choir (SC) and Women's Chorale (WC) Retreats will be this Saturday, August 29th, at the Our Saviour's Campus. The Sanctuary Choir retreat is from 9:30 AM to noon. The Women's Chorale retreat is from 2-4 PM. The retreats are open to both current members, and also anyone interested in learning more information about OSLC Choirs.

Regular Choir rehearsals begin on Sept 2 (SC) and Sept 3 (WC). Bach Ringers begin rehearsal on Sept 8, and Children's Choir begins Sept 9.

More information is coming about the Planning Center. If you are having trouble putting in dates, contact Nicholas, and he will put it in for you.

We have 3 different groups signed up to give concerts at OSLC over the next year, and I am in contact with a 4th and possibly a 5th group. There will be additional information to follow.

The Worship & Arts Board met on August 5th and discussed updates from Celebration, Altar Guild, Visual Arts, Volunteer recruitment, and Planning Center training, with assistance for volunteer sign-ups provided through Nicholas.

The topic was raised to request an additional lift for use when decorating high areas in the Sanctuary. The current lift is housed at Celebration.

Attendance provided by Kathy Clolinger, Accounting Manager

	In Person Attendance		YouTube Views
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	<u>5:00</u>	<u>9:00</u>	<u>10:00</u>	<u>11:00</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>9:00/11:00</u>	<u>10:00</u>	<u>Total</u>
8/16/2026	67	152	68	54	341		45	28	73
8/9/2026	48	111	77	41	277		144	44	188
8/2/2026	49	89	79	46	263		74	26	100
7/26/2026	41	90	74	33	238		62	30	92
7/19/2026	43	113	64	37	257		83	23	106

Wellness - Jim Bono

Property Committee - Dave Mevis

Mission and Benevolence - Teresa Thompson

In Attendance: Marcus Ewald (finance), Julie Michael (co-chair), Greg Jepson (co-chair), Warren McKinney,

Cindy Novak, Teresa Thompson (council liaison and recording secretary), Pastor Brian Wise

Not present: Cathy Cayer, B.J. Okel, Mark Tucker

Devotion: Pastor Brian Wise (at 6:30 pm)

AGENDA

I. FINANCE: Update amounts budgeted for FY 2027.

	Fund Name	Point Person	Allocation	Notes
1	Baby Care	Betty Landorf	\$1,500	
2	Bridge Families	Cathy Cayer	\$13,000	Disbursements continuing pending final expense report for family(s) being supported.
3	Educating Africa's Children (Uganda)	Jan and Tom Dusek	\$1,000	
4	Feed My Starving Children	Les May	\$2,500	
5	Feed The Need	Les May	\$0,000	Raises its own monies
6	Fuhrer Scholarship		\$0,000	Removed from the budget this year given outside funding from the family.
7	Haiti Scholars	Nicole Waite	\$2,000	
8	Loaves & Fishes	Nancy Couch	\$9,500	
9	Lutheran Social Services of IL	David Novak	\$4,000	
10	Lutheran Disaster Relief	Pastor Brian Wise	\$0,000	No current requests
11	Mega Garage Sale	Debbie Friend	\$0,000	Raises its own monies
12	Mozambique	Susan Fergusen	\$9,000	
13	Refugee Ministries	Jim Bono, Lee Thomsen	\$0,000	No current refugees
14	Slovakia	Gail Jernberg	\$4,000	
15	World Hunger	Pastor Brian Wise	\$6,000	
16	MBC Undesignated	Pastor Brian Wise	\$1,000	

1. It was moved by Julie M. and Warren M. seconded to adjust the LSSI and World Hunger allocations to \$5,000 each.

	Groups w/out accounts	Point Person	Allocation	Description and/or information
A	Bright Stars of Bethlehem	David Achcraft	\$1,500	

B	ELCA Synod	Pastor Brian Wise		Monthly, the church gives 5% to the synod.
C	Holy Family Ministries	Jan Dusek	\$3,000	The church collects donations of books, school supplies, and gift cards.
D	Lutheran Seminary of Theology at Chicago (LSTC)	Pastor Brian Wise		There are currently no funds to allocate at this time.
E	Riverwalk Adult Day Services	Pastor Brian Wise		They will be removed from the budget due to lack of contact.
F	Samara Care	Pastor Brian Wise	\$4,500	See note below

Note the 5-step process for becoming a mission partner.

1. Pray for them
2. Invite church members to attend sessions they offer.
3. *Host - Allow them to offer sessions at or through our church.*
4. *Allow fundraising*
5. *Allocate budgeted money for part of their funding.*

II. Discussion

1. Haiti

1. The group (through Nicole Waite) is requesting additional funds as the program is experiencing a shortfall this year. It was moved by Julie M. and seconded by Greg J. to give a one-time additional donation of \$10,000. This is being funded through surplus in the MBC undesignated account.

2. Mega Garage Sale: included below is the distributions for 2026

Total raised \$61,426. Distributed \$59,426.00 + holding \$2k for 2027 (rentals needed next year).

Ministry	
Internal	
General Fund – 10%	

Feed My Starving Children	
Loaves & Fishes	
Slovakia	
Good Samaritan Fund	
Baby Care	

Bridge Communities	
Refugee Ministry	
Mozambique Ministry	
Internal Total	
External	
USA (2026 Good Deeds – 12 @ \$250)	
Haiti Scholars	

Grow Wellness Group	
World Hunger	
Educating Africa (Dusek School)	
Bright Stars of Bethlehem	
Holy Family School	

LSSI Mental Health Program	
External Total	
Total Dispersed	

III. CALENDAR

A. Meet at OSLC on Thursday, October 15, 2026 at 7pm with all mission partners to discuss the following:

- a. Share what each group is doing.
- b. Calendar scheduling of each group's events for the 2026-2027 year.
- c. Calendar scheduling of fundraising requests for the coming 2026-2027 year.
- d. Expectations (by each group) for budget support and fundraising goals.

Memorials - Kris Reenstjerna

Meet in October

Just Love - Rachel Petty

We will be reimagining Just Love going forward.

Caring for Creation - Terese Jackway

Urban Canopy Composting Program:

We have contracted with Urban Canopy for composting at both campuses. We are targeting late August/early September to roll-out the program. Trainings are being held with key members and staff that manage food/kitchen activities regularly. Signs will be posted in both kitchens to provide directions. Communications will be sent to the congregation to inform them as well as share the codes they can use to sign-up for composting at their own homes. Our Saviour's will receive \$50 for each household that signs up..

Solar Energy:

Research and discussions continue to determine if we should take the step to invest in solar energy.

Faith in Place Environmental and Spirituality Summit:

This annual 2-day summit is taking place on September 28th and 29th. We are a host site again this year to watch the Keynote Address on the evening of September 29th.

Unfinished Business: None

Next Meeting:

Monday, September 28, 2026 — Opening Devotion - Dave Mevis (At 815 S. Washington)

Closing Prayer: Jim Bono

Notes respectfully submitted by Laurie May, Recording Secretary