

ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
COUNCIL MINUTES FROM MEETING OF
Tuesday, November 11, 2025

Council Members Present: Pam Lange, Jane Dykowski, Michael Isaacs, Toni Hill, Wendy Warner, Dan Case, Tim Ruffner, and Rev. Linda Anderson.

Excused: Mark Ennis, Jeannette Wackro, and Conrad Heidt

Guests: Pastoral Ministries: Senior Pastor, Visiting Elders Representative, and Council Elders. Kathy Williams, representing the visiting elders, was out of town. Rev. Anderson and Elders were present and reported at their respective time in the meeting.

Meeting was called to order by President, Tim Ruffner, at 6:33 p.m. followed by opening prayer led by Wendy Warner.

Approval of the Minutes: After Dan Case suggested the deletion of several lines in Old Business regarding money issues, motion by Toni Hill, seconded by Dan Case, to approve the October 13, 2025 Council minutes. Motion carried.

Agenda Additions/Deletions: There were none.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Treasurer's Report: Written report. Dan Case expanded on his written report. October was one of the worst months this year. Expenses were approximately \$6,000 over the month's income. The Banko donations have dropped drastically. At this rate, we will be in our reserves early in 2026. Staff raises planned for the 2026 Budget may need re-consideration. One bit of good news is that DTE made an error in calculating our 2026 budget payment—about \$1600 less than thought. In spite of financial concerns, the consensus was that we should not stop anything that enhances worship, programs, and operation. Rev. Anderson suggested we just ask the congregation (Suggested date is Thanksgiving Service on November 23, 2025) if they could give \$5 more per week. Tim Ruffner said he would make such an announcement at that time. Motion by Wendy Warner, seconded by Michael Isaacs, to approve the Treasurer's report. Motion carried.

Ministry Department: Rev. Anderson gave an oral report. She continues to be pleased with Bible Study. More chairs were needed at the last meeting. Their trip to Mr. Carmel Catholic Church was well received. She noted that Rev. Richardson had a positive impression of our church. Dan Case noted that all Search Team members were not able to meet him because of other obligations. Jane Dykowski noted that the Confirmation Class will be participating in the Thanksgiving Worship service. Rev. Anderson suggested we plan a casual fun event to get to know each other better.

Trustees/Building and Grounds: Michael Isaacs reported (and we could all see) there was a leak in the baseboard heater in the west room. It is being repaired. The steeple repair is underway. (Later in the meeting Dan Case read a response from steeple repair team that this week they are hopeful to complete the work.) With the unexpected snowfall on Sunday, Eric Poet did the salting. Additional salt will be needed. Gary Staffeld is working with Norm at Ace Hardware in an attempt to "make" a new grate for the west drive drain.

Deacons: Dan Case reported for the deacons that attendance was 233 for October. That is down from 240 the previous year. Membership is down by 100 after drops, status changes, etc.

Elders: Pam Lange reported that there was a good turnout for Totenfest. Eighty participated in communion.

Search Team Update: Michael Isaacs reported that the compensation package has been received by Rev. Branham. There is still some question about the parsonage use and the housing allowance. This is being addressed and clarification is being sent. Rev. Anderson questioned if a moving allowance is being considered. There would be consideration for this. If acceptance is received this week, Jane Dykowski suggested we could plan a candidate weekend before Christmas. The candidate weekend is a meet and greet (parlor and west lobby would be available), the candidate performance at worship, and voting. She expressed concern that waiting until January is having the candidate wait over 2 ½ months after the call to have the congregation vote.

Rev. Anderson noted we would not want to give up Advent by Candlelight, Gift sale, and Family Christmas program. Tim Ruffner read correspondence indicating that candidate was amenable to the time frame. After further discussion, January 11, 2026 would be a possible candidate weekend. The following week would be the annual Congregational meeting. The possibility of having absentee voting was discussed. Our by-laws allow for such voting as noted by Michael Isaacs. It would be appropriate to announce at the Thanksgiving service.

OLD BUSINESS

1. 2026 Budget Update: Dan Case reported that the 2026 Budget is in progress. A raise for staff may need to be revisited depending on income at year's end.

2. New Council Candidates: No new candidates have been identified. Jane Dykowski noted that if we have a secured candidate list soon, we should be promoting our new beginnings and time for new leadership and participation. We need to step forward for an excited and energized future under a settled pastor.

3. Church Security: Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill to approve the Updated Door policy. Motion carried. Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to approve the updated Solicitation and Homeless Policy. Motion carried.

Details are available in the policies. However, generally our security requires tightening and awareness. The East sanctuary door will be locked during worship. The homeless activity around the church has increased with the colder weather. We are to report to safety and security suspicious behavior. Police are to be called if there is evidence of an encampment.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Annual reports for annual Meeting notice to organizations and Ministries: These will be to all groups. They will have time to be returned to Cindy Romas to print for the meeting. .

2. Active Shooter Training – November 23, 2025: Dan Case reported that this meeting will be at 11:30 am after Coffee Hour.

ROUNDTABLE

There was no discussion.

Motion by Dan Case, seconded by Toni Hill, to adjourn. Motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m. followed by the Lord's Prayer recited in unison.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane L. Dykowski
Recording Secretary.