First Methodist Church Morehead City
Church Council Minutes
October 28, 2026

The Church Council of the First Methodist Church met on October 28, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. Members in attendance were: Fletcher Poulk, Joe Kirk, Mitch Gay, Larry Hughes, Linwood Brown, Loretta Baily, Jennifer Hill, Alan Leary, Harry Smith, Kim McCoury, Shanna du Mont, Abbey Townsend, Austin Arnder, Pastor Earl Bradshaw, Pastor Sarah, Pastor Patrick, and Laura Sullivan.

Pastor Earl opened the meeting in prayer and Fletcher Poulk presented a devotion. The Council recited the Mission Statement of Global Methodist Church and First Methodist Church. The September 2026 Minutes were reviewed. Mitch Gay made a motion to approve the minutes and Loretta Baily seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Finance Report: Mitch Gay

Mitch Gay reviewed the Finance Report with the Council. Things will financially pick up with the three remaining months of the year. Our church has been blessed to have a surplus this year. The property on Arendell Street has been rented and we will have rental going forward. Mitch reported the Finance Committee had met October 27, 2026, and will be bringing their Budget for final approval in November. He mentioned it is a good time do an insurance review per the Finance Committee. They will also be working on Endowment Funds and Restricted Funds next year. The Council approved the September financials from the Finance Committee.

Trustees:

Fletcher Poulk reported for Dykeman Baily on updates from the Trustees. The elevator failed again but Otis has determined a new circuit board is the cause. A new circuit board has been ordered and it will be installed once Otis receives it.

The parking lot design is completed and has the Town's approval. Four companies have been solicited for bids but two of those have declined to provide quotes. A bid of $122,675 was provided by Thomas Simpson Construction and an additional quote of $60,050 for the Arendell parking lot with a total of $189,725. Able Construction is also interested and will be providing a quote for the two parking lots.

Sabrina Juarez is waiting on a quote for a "stair chair" to be used as a backup in the event of elevator failure. The Fellowship Hall floor will be scheduled for repair after Sabrina returns from vacation. Sabrina has not received a response from the security system company. The

Sanctuary door closers have been approved but the date to schedule from Southern Architecture has yet to be determined. The fire shutter fusible link has been replaced and is now in operation. Trustees still need to follow up with the elevator back up power system and replace the elevator lighting. The building's fire alarm system has received the annual inspection along with the fire sprinkler system. Both systems passed inspection. The backflow preventor was inspected and tested.

Fletcher reported a driver pulling a trailer accidentally hooked the rear bumper on the large bus while driving past. The bumper was severely bent and will require a new bumper. One of the trustees, Jay Smith, can replace the bumper once a new one is ordered.

Ministry Teams:

Jennifer Hill reported the Missions Committee had a productive meeting. They made changes to their Budget especially with Missional giving and the projects they participate in and work on. She reported $8423 was raised at the Seafood Festival parking. We had to stop earlier than was hoping due to rain. This money raised will go towards Project MHC and Costa Rica Missions. Jennifer advised that Family Promise is pulling away from the Family Promise organization. They will still continue to do what they have been doing but are changing the name to the Harbor. They will be allowed to stay at their current location for 5 years. Jennifer said she has been adding Mission Moments through the Steeple Call.

Larry Hughes reported the Worship Committee had met. They approved replacing the wafers in the traditional service with real bread. The congregation will still come forward to kneel and receive the bread; the cups will remain the same. On November 22, 2026, the Church will decorate for Advent. Pastor Sarah reported a new tree had been ordered for the Atrium and we were able to do this when the trees were on sale.

Abbey Townsend reported the Trunk or Treat on October 25, 2026, was very successful. She appreciated all those who helped with this. Shanna du Mont reported Children's Ministry will be sponsoring a tree for the Gingerbread Festival in December. The theme will be the 2027 VBS theme and the kids will start making ornaments November 1 to decorate the tree. On November 22, the kids K-5 will be participating in an Operation Christmas Child preparation. Family Night will be November 29 and the families will make story stones; it will be a different way to tell the story of Christmas and each stone will tell a part of the story. Pastor Sarah reported 20 kids had signed up for the Youth Ministry Retreat. She also reminded the Council of the many discipleship opportunities for adults.

Words from our Lay Leaders:

Alan Leary said the RISE attendance continues to stay steady, more people are coming to the earlier service. The ushers have been a good addition to the services.

Loretta Baily reported 4 people had joined in the traditional service. She reported Staff Parish Relations Committee has welcomed Austin Arnder, our new Director of Youth Ministry. Staff Parish worked on their Budget and has submitted to Finance.

Fletcher welcomed Austin Arnder to First Methodist. Austin thanked everyone for the opportunity to be here and serve; he really appreciates how loving and caring everyone has been to him and his family.

Staff Updates:

Pastor Sarah advised Staff Parish had discussed and approved for her to take a sabbatical starting December 25, 2026 until February 8, 2027 to spend time with her family. Pastor Sarah said she will be taking on a new Conference position. She will be the Chair/President of the Board of Ministry effective January 1, 2027. She is very humbled to be asked to do this and very excited. Pastor Earl commented this is one of the top five positions and it will be great to have her leadership within the Conference.

Pastor Earl reviewed the Leadership Roster with the Council. It was a blessing to get all the positions filled. The Council approved the Leadership Roster that was presented. He mentioned he would like to start thinking through Master Planning for our facility the first of the year. Pastor Earl said there would be four services on Christmas Eve: 4:00PM, 5:00PM, 7:00PM, and 11:00PM. On November 17, 2026, at 6:00PM, there will be a Charge Conference at FMC. Pastor Earl reiterated about the Discipleship opportunities at our church. He said he and Kim love being here and he is really enjoying working with the staff.

Loretta Baily advised there will be a Meet and Greet for the parents of the Youth to come and meet Austin. This will be November 15 at 5:30.

Austin Arnder closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Sullivan