

# Church Council Minutes for September 18 2025

Attendance: Warren Livingston, Roger Chalk, Mike Webb, Phyllis Stauffer, Pastor Brennan, Avaree Norman (zoom) Cindy Gentry, Vickie Hammons (zoom), Eric de la Pena (zoom), Harry Moyer, Julie Italiano, Marianne d'Amato, Steve d'Amato (zoom), Doris Yantis (zoom), Ophelia Behee, Bob Behe, Mary McCoy

## Quick recap

The church council meeting began with a prayer and informal sharing before addressing financial matters, including August giving numbers and plans for the 2026 budget and upcoming stewardship campaign. Various maintenance projects and facility improvements were discussed, including parking lot resurfacing and potential Fellowship Hall enhancements. The group reviewed mission and vision planning initiatives, including website updates and new worship services, while also covering community events and discussing how to inform the congregation about a former member's passing.

## Next steps

- Steve to provide August financial numbers to the Council after the Finance Committee meeting next week.
- Finance Committee to decide if they need to address the congregation about lower giving in July and August.
- Finance Committee to complete the 2026 budget preparation.
- Finance Committee to prepare for the stewardship campaign starting October 26th and ending November 16th.
- Finance Committee to send out third quarter giving statements with a letter from the finance chair.
- Phyllis to call the asphalt company about resurfacing the annex parking lot before September 27th .
- Pastor Brennan to form a 5-8 person team for mission, vision, and branding work.
- Pastor Brennan to work with Nominations Committee to find people for the branding team.
- Nominations Committee to meet next Monday to begin their work for the year, with focus on SPRC turnover.
- Pastor Brennan to prepare for Bishop David Wilson's visit as guest preacher on February 15th, 2026.
- Church Council to prepare for Charge Conference on Tuesday, December 9th at 6:00 PM at Grace.

## **Summary**

### **Church Council Vision Discussion**

The meeting began with a prayer led by Julie Italiano asking for wisdom and discernment as the church council discussed their vision.

### **2026 Budget and Stewardship Planning**

Steve reported that August financial numbers were not yet available, but giving has been lower than usual for both July and August. The Finance Committee is working on the 2026 budget, which will include new initiatives mentioned by Pastor Brennan, and aims to have it completed by the church conference in December. A stewardship campaign is planned for October 26th to November 16th, coinciding with Pastor Brennan's sermons, with the goal of distributing third quarter giving statements and a letter from the finance chair.

### **2026 Budget and Maintenance Plans**

The Finance Committee will meet next Tuesday to review budget numbers, with Steve planning to inform the Council about the outcome. Marianne reported that trustees have been working on various maintenance tasks, including resurfacing the main parking lot and annex parking lot, with the latter expected to be completed before September 27th. Phyllis will call for an update.

Marianne discussed a significant budget increase request for 2026, of about \$30,000, which will cover drainage issues diagnosis, potential Fellowship Hall improvements, and the possibility of hosting contemporary worship services. Foundation work will likely be in 2027 or possibly a special fundraising if needed sooner. Cleaning costs were \$8,000 lower than last year.

Mike Webb has if the Trustees had a Capital Plan list of projects. Marianne advised no.

Julie Italiano asked about handicapped parking. Churches are exempt from having spots, but if we have spots, signs are required.

Roger Chalk advised that all drop ceiling tiles with stains had been fixed. Kevin Metcalf assisted in the project.

Ophelia Behee of SPRC reported that they had completed their budget and turned it in.

### **Church Vision and Project Planning**

The meeting covered several key topics, including budget updates, upcoming projects, and vision planning for the church. Marianne reported on maintenance needs and a brainstorming session for future projects.

Pastor Brennan outlined plans for mission, vision, and branding work, including website updates and a potential new logo, with an estimated budget of \$5-6,000 and a target rollout around Easter. He also mentioned plans for a second contemporary worship service and a guest preacher, Bishop David Wilson, in February 2026. The group discussed scheduling for Charge Conference and potential changes to worship service times. Additionally, they shared updates on community events, including a visit from canine officers at the Pumpkin Patch Bark n Boo event as well as a birthday celebration for a church member. Warren Livingston mentioned the upcoming blood drive at the church.

Finally, they addressed the passing of a former member, Don Sutton, and discussed how to inform the congregation.

Pastor Brennan closed with prayer.

Submitted by Cynthia Gentry