

Palm Valley Lutheran Church

Church Council Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

August 19, 2026 — 6:30 p.m.

Attendance

Present: Susan Ames, Jayne Baxter, Vince Brunssen, Kathy Erwin, JB Getz, Anita Hulsman, Carolyn Koehn, Pastor Dave Koppel, Linda Reed, Sue Rue, Rick Salvo, Dave Smith, Mary Wallin

Staff: Jen Kendrick, Executive Administrator

Guest: Joy Kovar

Excused Absences: David Beck, Scot Donovan, Barry Hamilton

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

At 6:30 p.m. the presence of a quorum was confirmed, then the meeting was called to order by Dave Smith. Pastor Dave Koppel led the Council in opening prayer, giving thanks for the opportunity to serve the congregation and community and asking for wisdom and discernment.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Sue Rue moved and JB Getz seconded to approve the meeting agenda. **The motion carried.**

Devotion

Anita Hulsman presented the evening devotion centered on the theme of living one's faith through actions and leading by example. The devotion emphasized kindness, integrity, humility, service to others, and allowing Christian actions to serve as a "living sermon." The devotion concluded with prayer.

Consent Agenda

Motion: Mary Wallin moved and Sue Rue seconded to approve the consent agenda. **The motion carried.**

Executive Administrator and Financial Reports

Jen Kendrick reviewed the Executive Administrator and financial reports, highlighting July attendance, income and expenses, investment activity, endowment and benevolence distributions, staffing-related expenses, technology updates, and preparations for the 2027 budget.

- **Attendance and Giving:** July reflected a typical summer attendance decline, but overall giving remained stable due in part to online contributions.

- **July Income:** Member contributions were above budget for the month, largely due to a **\$17,000 one-time gift received** at the beginning of July.
- **Expenses:** July expenses appeared significantly over budget because of payments related to the sanctuary HVAC project. These funds had already been set aside, so the higher expense total did not represent an unexpected operating deficit.
- **Endowment and Benevolence Distributions:** The first portion of approved endowment grants was distributed, primarily to outside organizations. Reimbursements were also made to Palm Valley for previously approved ministry expenses. Approved benevolence checks were sent, with one payment requiring reissuance to the correct recipient.
- **2027 Budget Preparation:** Ministry leaders have received their 2027 budget information and have begun preparing requests. The budget process is beginning earlier than in the prior year.
- **Investment Reporting:** Council reviewed the investment funds managed by Davidson Capital.
 - In response to discussion at the July Council meeting, additional visual cues and account details were added to the Davidson report.
 - Council discussed the Unrestricted investment account and requested an update on project-related withdrawals plus a reminder of the future expenditure items that have been committed (i.e. Associate Pastor).
 - Vince Brunssen requested that additional reporting be considered to clarify fund changes, suggesting a single-line item format to show beginning balance, investment growth, additional contributions, expenditures, and the purpose of those expenditures.
- **Use of Unrestricted Funds:** Council discussed concerns about the amount of money drawn from investment and designated funds during the year. It was noted that many of the larger expenditures were one-time capital or renovation expenses and are not expected to recur.
- **Overtime:** The additional overtime allocation previously approved by Council was reported to be sufficient at this time, with funds remaining for the rest of the year.
- **Technology:** Recent IT work has resolved several trouble issues. Remaining open items were described as project-related rather than system problems.

Council expressed appreciation for the continued improvement and clarity of the financial reporting.

Motion: JB Getz moved and Sue Rue seconded to accept the financial report as presented. **The motion carried.**

Celebrations and Associate Pastor Call Process

Pastor Dave shared several celebrations, including participation in the Global Leadership Summit, a handwritten thank-you note from the bishop regarding mission support, and three adult confirmation candidates.

The Associate Pastor Call Committee provided the following update:

- The search has been narrowed to **two candidates**.
- After the Call Committee selects its preferred candidate, that candidate will be presented to the Council.
- Council members will have an opportunity to ask questions and vote on the candidate.
- If approved by Council, the candidate will be introduced to the congregation.
- The candidate is expected to participate in a congregational gathering and preach during worship.

- The congregation will then vote on extending the call.
- A **specially called Council meeting** may be needed before the next regularly scheduled meeting to continue the call process.

Addressing Staff Concerns

Council discussed the appropriate process for addressing staff concerns brought to Council members:

- Staff concerns should first be directed to their immediate supervisor.
- When appropriate, concerns should then be brought to the next level of supervision.
- Individual Council members should not attempt to independently investigate or resolve staff-related concerns.
- Council members should redirect staff members to the appropriate supervisory process when concerns are brought directly to them.
- Following the established process will help ensure staff matters are handled consistently, appropriately, and with respect for confidentiality.

CLC LED Panel Protection

Council reviewed the Property Team's recommendation to install retractable protective coverings for the LED panels in the CLC. The recommended proposal from **Hill Country Awning & Shades of Texas** totaled **\$10,010** and included a five-year motor warranty.

Motion: Rick Salvo moved and Linda Reed seconded to accept the Property Team's recommendation and proceed with the \$10,010 project to protect the LED panels. **The motion carried.**

Motion: Following discussion of funding, Mary Wallin moved and Linda Reed seconded to fund the \$10,010 project from interest available in the **Isador and Pauline Wallin Fund**. **The motion carried.**

Generosity Month

September will be Generosity Month. The Generosity Team plans to use an approach similar to previous years. Jen will prepare a draft letter for review and editing by Council leadership and Pastor Dave. The communication will include a mailed letter, with email and text communications also planned.

Kickoff Sunday

Kickoff Sunday is scheduled for **September 13 at 10:00 a.m.** The day will include worship, confirmation activities, the beginning of the small-group sermon series focus, and a congregational lunch.

Council discussed volunteers for food preparation, serving, cleanup, room setup, table coverings, supplies, and decorations. A football/kickoff theme was suggested for decorations. Council agreed to keep the meal arrangements simple and recruit volunteers from the congregation as needed.

Council Minutes Process

Council discussed the procedure for reviewing and approving Council minutes. It was noted that previous minutes had been approved electronically; however, Council discussed the need for a revised process because approval by asynchronous email does not meet the requirements for a Council vote.

Council reviewed a streamlined procedure for preparing and distributing Council minutes. The goal is to make draft minutes available to the congregation promptly while maintaining a clear distinction between draft and formally approved minutes. The revised process is also intended to provide a consistent procedure for future Council secretaries.

The revised process will include:

- Draft minutes will be distributed to Council members for review and corrections.
- Corrections will be limited to factual items such as names, dates, amounts, and other errors rather than changing the substance of the recorded discussion.
- Council members will use the shared SharePoint document to make edits or comments so that all members can see the proposed corrections.
- The Council Secretary will incorporate appropriate corrections into the draft.
- Corrected minutes may be shared with the congregation as **Draft Minutes** before formal approval.
- Draft minutes will be formally presented for approval at the next Council meeting.
- Once approved by Council, the final minutes will replace the draft version.

Security Team Proposal

Council reviewed the Security Team's proposal for improvements to campus security, including expanded camera coverage and improved door access and control. Council discussed the ability of authorized individuals to lock down or unlock campus doors through the access-control system and the future development of a broader security team.

Motion: Vince Brunssen moved and Anita Hulsman seconded to approve the proposed security system in the amount of **\$43,861.23**. **The motion carried.**

Council discussed an additional camera for the tractor barn and determined that more information was needed.

Motion: Kathy Erwin moved and Vince Brunssen seconded to table the additional camera pending additional information from the Property Team. **The motion carried.**

Motion: Sue Rue moved and JB Getz seconded to fund the approved security system from **unrestricted funds**. The recurring licensing expense will be incorporated into the 2027 operating budget. **The motion carried.**

Council also discussed the need to continue exploring emergency monitoring/alarm capabilities, as the proposed camera system records activity but does not itself provide live emergency monitoring.

Other Business

- **Service Project Wish List:** Council discussed maintaining a list of potential projects for Eagle Scout Projects, Girl Scouts, and other service organizations seeking opportunities. Members may submit project ideas to Jen Kendrick, who will maintain the list.
- **Next Council Meeting:** The next regular Council meeting will be **September 16, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.**
- **Special Council Meeting:** A specially called meeting may be scheduled before the next regular meeting in connection with the Associate Pastor call process.
- **Fall Fair:** Fall Fair is scheduled for **September 26, 2026**. Council discussed the need for volunteers to assist with security during the event.
- **Annual Meeting Preparation:** Council members were encouraged to attend upcoming congregational forums and be available to help answer questions, particularly regarding the budget.

Adjournment

Motion: JB Getz moved and Linda Reed seconded to adjourn the meeting. **The motion carried.** The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ames

Council Secretary