

Executive Summary

Trinity Lutheran Church Council Meeting

August 11, 2026

The Trinity Lutheran Church Council met on August 11, 2026, with a quorum present. The meeting opened with prayer, followed by approval of the July meeting minutes and consent agenda. The meeting reflected a positive financial position and continued attention to ministry development, while also highlighting important longer-term challenges related to pastoral staffing and organizational structure. Immediate priorities include advancing the hearing assistance project, supporting youth and preschool ministries, preparing for stewardship efforts, and moving forward with the Pastor of Congregational Care position. The Council also continues to consider how Trinity should respond strategically to the broader shortage of pastors.

Financial Highlights

Trinity's financial position was reported as favorable:

- Summer donations are ahead of expectations.
- Expenses have declined seasonally.
- The final payment on the church roof has been completed.
- Trinity received a significant **\$25,000 donation** during the month.
- Major facility projects are in progress, including:
 - Phase 3 roof replacement
 - Kitchen refrigerator & stove replacements (funded with a designated donation)
 - Appliance replacements at the St. Andrews parsonage (funded with a designated donation)
- Budget Updates through July 2026:

July 2026 (*Unified Fund Only – aligned to budgeted income & expenses*):

○ Income:	\$80,195
○ Expenses:	<u>\$88,016</u>
○ Difference:	(\$7,821)

YTD thru July 2026 (*Unified Fund & YTD Investment Return**):

○ Income:	\$569,337
○ Investment Return thru July 2026*:	\$306,380
○ Expenses:	<u>\$700,052¹</u>
○ Difference:	\$175,665

* Not Included: Dedicated Fund and Trinity Trust Fund Balances

¹ Includes partial payment of \$50,000 for the Phase 3 Roofing Project

General Updates

Minutes and Consent Decree

- The Council approved the Consent Decree.
- A correction was made to the July meeting minutes to reflect Carrie's attendance. The motion was seconded by Dawn and approved.

Hearing Assistance Program

- Jonathan Lonsway provided an update on Trinity's current hearing assistance program and presented information regarding potential equipment upgrades.
- The Council approved continued research into available upgrade options.

Youth Ministry

- Joe Johnson reported on youth ministry activities and progress in relation to the church's strategic plan.

Ministry and Committee Updates

Memorial Garden

- A subgroup of the ASMG met to continue discussions regarding an updated policy.

Preschool

- Personnel changes remain in flux.
- Current enrollment is **30 students**.
- Chapel continues to be part of the preschool curriculum.

New Member Ministry

- A new member picnic was scheduled for August 18 at the Gramza home, with Council members invited to attend.

Stewardship

- The stewardship team met with Pastor Mike Reinhart.
- A congregational stewardship kickoff is planned for late October 2026.

Strategic and Pastoral Planning

“Anchor” Church Model

- Pr. Jeff discussed the changing role of pastors in response to the shortage of pastors.
- The emerging “Anchor” church model would involve lead pastors overseeing multiple congregations with support from synodical and/or congregation lay leaders in a team ministry arrangement.
- Pr. Jeff is exploring options for Trinity’s possible longer-term implementation of this approach.

Pastor of Congregational Care

- Trinity is moving forward with establishing a Pastor of Congregational Care position.
- A letter was sent to the congregation explaining the position. In addition, updates continue to be provided within the weekly announcements.
- Pr. Jeff is working with Sandy and Synod Bishop Julie Schneider-Thomas to post the position and review possible candidates.

Other Operational Matters

- Damage to the church’s digital sign was reported to police.
- Staff are working with the insurance company regarding an insurance claim and with the sign company on quotes for repair or replacement.

Key Follow-Up Items

- Continue researching hearing assistance system upgrade options.
- Monitor preschool personnel changes and enrollment.
- Continue development of the updated Memorial Garden policy.
- Prepare for the late-October stewardship kickoff.
- Continue evaluating the long-term implications of the “Anchor” church model.
- Continue candidate review for the part-time Pastor of Congregational Care position.
- Follow up on the church digital sign damage and insurance claim.