

## Messiah Lutheran Church ELCA/ Council Meeting Minutes

Sunday, February 15, 2026 | 12:00 pm | Conference Room

**Members present:** Cristall Mount, Carolyn Lawhorn, Susan Hamilton, Judy Mennel, Paul Jones, Mark Rice, Clint Baker, Pastor Josh Moss

**Guests present:** Jon Driskill, Dawn Liner

**Members absent:** Martha MacCabe

### **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Reporting Group	Leader	Council Liaison	Action	Notes
<b>MINISTRY TEAMS</b>				
Care	Angela Kronau	Susan Hamilton		
Disciple	Mary Williamson	Carolyn Lawhorn		
Invite (Evangelism)	Kate Spears	Mary Ellen Whitson		
Serve	Connie Cole	Cristall Mount		
Worship	Jane Mason	Paul Jones		
<b>SUPPORT TEAMS</b>				
Badenhop		Martha MacCabe		
Connect	Michele Wilson	Susan Hamilton		
Finance	Doug Mason	Judy Mennel		
Personnel	Connie Cole			
Property	Jon Driskill	Clint Baker		
<b>SPECIAL GROUPS</b>				
BAM (Disciple)	No Leader	Judy Mennel		
DJC (Serve)	L. Wilder, M. Driskill			
Fellowship (Invite)	C. Lawhorn, J. Mennel	Cristall Mount		
Policy (Support)	Mike Driskill			
Stewardship (Finance)	Tom Cole	Martha MacCabe		
WELCA (Disciple)	Anne Tinker	Cristall Mount		
<b>STAFF</b>				
Parish Nurse	Mary Sophia Hawks	n/a		
Interim Senior Pastor	Pastor Josh Moss	n/a		
Director of Music	Mary Phillips	n/a		

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order: Cristall Mount | Meal: Pancake Lunch Fundraiser**  
Cristall M. called the meeting to order at 12:05.

## 2. Approval of January 18, 2026 Council Minutes

After reviewing the Minutes, Dawn Liner moved to approve the January Minutes, Judy M. seconded the motion. There was no discussion about the Minutes, as presented, so the Minutes were then approved by Council unanimously.

## 3. Council Liaison Assignments for 2026: Mark Rice

- Council agreed to the proposal that the current list of teams and groups should be restructured so this project will be placed on Council's agenda for review at March or April's Council meeting.
- The Invite team met last week and has determined that some major restructuring of that team needs to be done. It is recommended that its name should now be the Evangelism team, more members are needed and its goals and objectives need to be rewritten because of its name change.
- The Care team will be meeting next week and will look at a "reboot" of its structure and goals.

## 4. Finance Update: Dawn Liner

You'll remember that in December we passed the 2026 budget. That budget anticipates **\$347,142** in income and **\$386,746** in expenses. As you may have noticed, even without a calculator or a spiritual gift of discernment, that is not a balanced budget. If we receive everything we've budgeted for and spend exactly what we've planned, we will end the year **\$39,604 in the red**.

Now for January:

- **Giving:** \$35,904
- **Spending:** \$36,804
- **Net change:** Our unrestricted cash balance decreased by \$900 to \$35,176.

The good news: contributions exceeded budget by **\$6,776**. Some of this generosity comes from congregants who fulfill their pledges through Required Minimum Distributions that arrive once a year.

On the spending side, expenses exceeded budget by **\$4,571**.

- \$3,932 in HVAC repairs
- \$3,416 in parking lot and interior lighting repairs

This caused property repairs to exceed budget by \$5,597. Thankfully, this was partially offset by spending \$546 less than budget in contractual maintenance and \$423 less in staff expenses.

Remember, we budgeted to spend **\$3,305 more than giving each month**. Because giving was strong in January, we actually came in **\$2,205 better than budget**, even with the higher repair costs. That's genuinely encouraging.

We have another HVAC unit that has faithfully run its race and finished its course. It needs repair or replacement. The replacement cost could be as much as **\$27,665**, likely payable in February or March. We currently have **\$21,690** in the Building Maintenance fund to apply toward this expense.

Using those funds would leave that account at \$0 for the remainder of 2026.

The good news is this: January giving was strong, we performed better than budget overall for the month, and we are paying attention.

As a result of Dawn's report, Council expressed some concerns and suggestions:

- The \$27,665 quoted for the HCAC repair comes from Archer HCAC Co., but the quote from Comfort Systems USA, which has some expertise in working with the installation requirements of our building systems, has not been received. Once we receive that quote, we should be able to make recommendations as to how to proceed.
- The HELOC funding that Messiah has applied for and been approved for will not be available until the second year of that loan, which will be in 2027.
- There are several line items in the 2026 budget which seem somewhat dated in allotments, as well as their budgetary function. Council agreed that the Finance committee should identify any "red-flag" line items that need to be reassessed.

#### **5. Correspondence, updates, building use requests, etc.**

- A BUR was submitted by Martha M., on behalf of the ELCA Southeastern Synod, requesting the use of Messiah's facilities for their Guatemala Gathering event on September 23, 2026. Martha is also requesting that the usage fees for that event be waived. After discussion, Mark R. moved to approve the request, as outlined above, Angela K. seconded that motion and the Executive Council Committee approved unanimously.
- (Addendum, 2/17/2026) A BUR was submitted by Larry Moeller, on behalf of the Come to the Water organization, requesting use of the Fellowship Hall at Messiah for several dates in April, May, June and July for meetings and camp send-offs for the CTTW camps this summer. Cristall M. requested a motion and second, via email. Mark R. made a motion to approve the BUR, as outlined above, Angela K. seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by the Executive Council Committee.

#### **6. Monthly Committee Reports**

No reports were presented today.

#### **7. Other Business**

- Pastor Josh announced that the Leadership Retreat, which was scheduled for February 21, has now been postponed. In place of that, the Churchwide Revival Day, hosted by the Southeastern Synod, will be held on Saturday, March 14, from 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. at Messiah. All are invited to register and attend.
- Messiah's Congregational Meeting, Part 2 will be held next Sunday, February 22, after church service, in the Fellowship Hall. We will need at least 22 members present for a voting quorum and Rick Christian will be present to answer questions about the Church Constitution updates that will be presented to the congregation at the meeting.

- A proposal from the Worship Team was presented to Council for consideration. They are proposing the creation of a commemorative garden on our church grounds, which will be named the Katy Luther Garden, in memory of Katharina von Bora, the wife of Martin Luther. After discussion, this proposal will be tabled until Council's March meeting.

#### **8. Adjourn**

Cristall M. requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:35 pm. Mark R. made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Judy M. seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. Pastor Josh closed the meeting with prayer.

Submitted by: Carolyn Lawhorn, Secretary

Date submitted: February 20, 2026

**Cristall Mount, President**

**Mark Rice, Vice President**

**Carolyn Lawhorn, Secretary**

**Dawn Liner, Treasurer**

***NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Sunday, March 15 at 12 noon, Fellowship Hall***

***Devotion:***

***Lunch: Mary Ellen Whitson***

***UPCOMING DATES:***

***Committee Reports Due to Carrie: Wednesday, March 11 to Carrie***

***Executive Committee Meeting: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 6:30 PM via Zoom***