

These notes are in draft form until approved by the Council at their meeting in March.

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Congregation Council
Meeting Notes – v1.0

17 February 2026

Members present: Allyn Christensen, Ken Holmes, Lora Houska, Roy Lawrenz, Pastor Beth Macha, Erika Schindel, Greg Stabbe, Lowell Suring, and Moira Wirtz.

Agenda items:

- A. President Ken Holmes convened the meeting at 6:03 pm.
- B. Opening devotions/prayer.
 - 1. Devotions and prayer were led by Ken Holmes on 1st Peter 1 – 4; Instructions to leaders in the ministry.
 - 2. March devotions/prayer will be led by Lora Houska.
- C. Review of monthly Council calendar.
 - 1. Council retreat – 21 February 2026
- D. Agenda review and repair. Items added to the agenda were computer software and review of the 2025 financial audit.
 - 1. Roy Lawrenz made a motion to accept the agenda, as amended. Lora Houska seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.
- E. Review, (revise), and accept meeting notes from previous meetings (15 January 2026, 25 January 2026 A, 25 January 2026 B).
 - 1. A motion was made by Roy Lawrenz and seconded by Ken Holmes to accept the notes from the Council meetings on 15 January 2026, 25 January 2026 A, and 25 January 2026 B. The motion was passed unanimously.
- F. Approval of the financial reports (until audited).
 - 1. General fund.
 - 2. Improvement fund (in annual report).
 - 3. Memorial fund.
 - 4. Blessing Basket fund.
 - 5. A motion was made by Roy Lawrenz and seconded by Erika Schindel to accept the financial reports, until audited, of the General, Memorial, and Blessing Basket funds, as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.
- G. Monthly benevolence donations.
 - 1. ELCA World Hunger \$500
 - 2. Lutheran Social Services \$300

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- H. President's report – Ken Holmes provided insight on how he intended to fulfill the office of President, including what he expected from our meetings.
- I. Pastor's report – Pastor Beth Macha.
 - 1. A written report was provided.
 - 2. Parochial and Pastoral reports were prepared and filed with the ELCA and the Synod, respectively.
 - 3. The potential problem with pick up and distribution of mail from the Congregation's mail box discussed at the last meeting was resolved. Most of the mail delivered by the Postal Service in January came in one large delivery because the snow was not adequately cleaned away from the mail box.
 - 4. The Word of the Week during Lent will be shared on Facebook.
- J. Reports of Committees That Have Met Recently.
 - 1. Blessing Basket.
 - i. The financial report was received and accepted.
 - 2. Decorating.
 - i. The seats on the chairs in the Library are being recovered with financial support from the Memorial Fund.
 - 3. Evangelism/Stewardship
 - i. The Valentine's supper at Romy's Holiday Inn on 12 February 2026 was attended by 80 people, including 34 choir members and guests from the Christmas Cantata Concert.
 - 4. Memorial
 - i. The financial report was received and accepted.
 - 5. Men's Group.
 - i. The Men's Group will be meeting to discuss up-coming outing events for the Congregation and Community. They are also continuing to work on the fence on the west side of the property in cooperation with the adjacent land owner.
 - 5. Women of Our Redeemer's.
 - i. A written report was received.
 - ii. A used refrigerator was purchased and placed in the pantry.
- J. Old Business.
 - 1. Job descriptions.

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- i. The draft of the job description for the Treasurer will reviewed by the current Treasurer and discussed at the March meeting.
2. Danish (Abelskiver) Festival.
 - i. As pointed out at the Annual Meeting, a chair person is needed to coordinate this event. Otherwise, it will not be held.
 - ii. Ken Holmes will explain this during an announcement at the worship service on 22 February.
3. Password Database
 - i. To ensure operational continuity of technological devices owned by the Congregation, usernames and passwords for these devices need to be available when the principal user is not available. This may include the following devices:
 - a. Church Office computer,
 - b. Church Office printer/copier,
 - c. Streaming equipment,
 - d. Financial computers,
 - i. Treasurer,
 - ii. Financial Secretary.
 - ii. Access to financial accounts would not be included because all Congregation accounts currently have two or three members with access.
 - iii. The website is secured by Packerland Websites and is monitored by them. If, for some reason, the Webmaster is not able to manage the site, all that is needed is to call Packerland Websites and inform them that the current Webmaster is not able to manage the site and a replacement is needed.
 - iv. To address operational continuity, the Council proposed an operating procedure whereby usernames and passwords will be compiled. This compiled list will be maintained in the Pastor's Office. In the event that the Pastor is not available when access is needed, two officers of the Council will also have copies of the list.
 - v. Roy Lawrenz made a motion to proceed with this operating procedure; the motion was seconded by Greg Stabbe and was passed unanimously.

K. New Business

1. Strong Bones Class.
 - i. Jill Wendt and Renee Fabry have requested the use of our facility for conducting the Strong Bone Class.

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- ii. The classes will be conducted Mondays and Fridays (building cleaning usually occurs on Tuesdays).
- iii. Classes will begin on 30 March and will run through 5 June.
- iv. Building opening and closing will be covered by a member of the Congregation.
- v. Erika Schindel made a motion to grant permission for this activity to occur in our building which was seconded by Moira Wirtz. The motion passed unanimously.

L. Monthly opening devotions/prayer for Council meetings.

1. A sign-up sheet has been created so that Council members can select the month(s) they will provide opening devotions/prayer during 2026.

M. Memorial Fund.

1. Money is available in the Memorial Fund from donations made in memory of or in honor of individuals. The Council needs to take the lead to help the Congregation to identify specific needs in our community, building, or grounds that may be met, fully or partially, with money from the Memorial Fund.
2. Proposals need to be submitted to Memorial Committee members, who are trustees of the Fund, chaired by Erika Schindel.

N. Thrivent Choice Dollars.

1. The Thrivent Choice charitable grant program engages Thrivent clients by providing grants to support their favorite churches, nonprofit organizations, and causes.
2. Our Redeemer's Lutheran Congregation, Suring, Wisconsin is an eligible recipient of Choice Dollars from Thrivent.
3. To be eligible to direct Choice Dollars as part of Thrivent Choice, a Thrivent member must be a client with a benefit membership. Individual eligibility is also based on at least one of the following: having \$750 or more in annual billed premiums of qualifying life and health insurance products or having \$20,000, or more, in contract value of qualifying life insurance and annuity products.
4. Choice Dollars can be directed to Our Redeemer's on the Thrivent website. Once received by Our Redeemer's, the Thrivent member can direct their contribution to a specific use by notifying the Financial Secretary.

O. Items added to the agenda

1. Use of computer software.
 - i. The Council President requested use of one of the site licenses held by the Congregation for Microsoft 365. Microsoft 365 is a subscription service that offers a suite of productivity tools and cloud-based services from Microsoft. It

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combines Word, Excel, and PowerPoint with services OneDrive, Teams, and Outlook.

- ii. The Council President was granted use of one of the Congregation's site licenses.

2. Financial audits

- i. The 2025 Audit Committee recommended that the General Fund be audited twice a year (July and January) because of its scope and complexity.
- ii. A motion was made by Lora Houska and seconded by Moira Wirtz to establish a biannual audit of the General Fund to be conducted in July and January. The motion passed unanimously.
- iii. Lora Houska made a motion to provide Jill Wendt a stipend in appreciation of her exceptional work on the 2025 financial audit. The motion was seconded by Moira Wirtz. The motion passed unanimously.
- iv. The Audit Committee would benefit from having an appointed Chair to schedule and manage the auditing process. Karen Hemken was suggested for the position. Lora Houska will ask her to take on this role.

P. The next meeting will be held on 17 March at 6:00 pm.

Q. Greg Stabbe made a motion to adjourn the meeting that was seconded by Erika Schindel. The motion passed unanimously.

R. The meeting then ended with recital of the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted:
Lowell Suring
Council Secretary