

## **Ministry Leadership Council – Meeting Minutes**

Date: Feb 17, 2026

Meeting Called to Order: 6:35 PM

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### **Devotion**

Matthew 17 – The Transfiguration

Pastor Frick led the devotion focusing on three themes drawn from the Transfiguration story:

- Disappointment – recognizing that disappointments are part of life and ministry.
  - Discovery – asking where God is leading us in those moments and how He reveals His purpose.
  - Delight – remembering that Christ has already laid out the path that leads us back to Him and invites us to trust Him fully.
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### **Attendance**

Present: Pastor Frick, Matt Noel, Jeff Gray, Jeff Martin, Mitch Garcia,

Tamara Harris, Suzanne DeRossett

Absent: Jana Rieland

Invited Guests: Craig Olson

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### **Approval of Prior Minutes**

The Council agreed to approve the January meeting minutes. Jeff will send the finalized minutes to Zach for posting on the church website.

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## Business Manager Report – Presented by Craig Olson

### Church Financial Update

- Overall giving continues to be stronger than last year, and expenses have stabilized.
- Giving currently splits approximately 50% online and 50% in-service.
- The second quarter finished roughly breakeven, approximately \$16,000 favorable, representing an improvement over the previous year.
- Cash position has improved and is now approaching breakeven.
- General revenue year-to-date is approximately \$15,000 favorable.

#### Expense highlights:

- Administration expenses (the largest category) are about \$5,300 favorable.
- Worship service expenses are slightly unfavorable due to operating both Saturday and Sunday services.
- Guest musician expenses were approximately \$3,000 higher due to Christmas services.
- Technology expenses are somewhat unfavorable due to additional IT support for traditional services.
- The Women's Boutique event included a paid speaker, resulting in a small negative variance from budget \$2000.

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### School Financial Update

- The school income is currently behind projections due to lower K–8 enrollment, with approximately 13 fewer students than budgeted (\$94,903).
- Registration season begins in February, which may improve enrollment numbers.
- Some expenses appear higher due to seasonal timing in the second quarter.
- Tuition assistance and after-school care revenue are slightly unfavorable, possibly reflecting fewer families using those services.
- Salem Family T-shirt sales have generated strong revenue and are performing well.

Additional observations:

- The preschool program remains financially favorable, with most families enrolled in the five-day full-time option.
- The preschool also received a \$7,000 gift.
- Preschool salary costs are higher due to staffing related to the new preschool facility (physical move and set up of new classrooms).
- Student activities expenses appear lower due to seasonal timing.
- The SEEDS program contract was negotiated more favorably than expected.

Financial summary:

- Total school expenses are currently about \$20,000 unfavorable.
  - School Leadership is targeting a breakeven position by the second half of the fiscal year.
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## Capital Expense Update

### First Quarter:

- Installation of a new emergency communication system, including speakers, microphones, and digital clock displays.
- Burglar alarm system upgrade.

### Second Quarter:

- Capital spending exceeded budget by approximately \$20,000 related to the preschool building, including emergency devices, furniture, and technical hardware.
  - An additional storage building was installed to support school operations.
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## Missions Budget Discussion

The Council discussed potential topics for the upcoming Town Hall budget conversation, particularly regarding the church's missions giving.

- Historically, Salem has targeted 10% of the General Fund for Missions.
- Current giving is closer to 6%.
- In recent years, reductions were made in several areas including:
  - Missions support
  - Partner high schools (OLU and Crean)
  - District contributions

- With the church currently approximately \$16,000 favorable for the semester, the Council discussed whether it may be possible to increase missions funding closer to the 10% target in Q3 and Q4.

However, the Council noted that unrestricted cash remains negative, so careful financial management will be required before restoring the full allocation.

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### **Church Update – Pastor Frick**

- Synod nominations were submitted and co-signed by the MLC officers.
  - Sunday School: The church will pursue a “patchwork” model of volunteer teachers to support the ministry.
  - Vacation Bible School:  
Susan Haight and Tamara Harris will lead planning and organization for VBS.
  - New Member Growth:  
New families continue to join the congregation through the New Member Class.
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### **Town Hall Preparation – Matt Noel and Pastor Frick**

Preparation is underway for the February 22 Town Hall meeting.

Key highlights to present to the congregation:

- Financial update: The church is currently 5.7% favorable compared to the previous update.
- Attendance trends: Overall attendance continues to increase compared with the same period in 2025.

- Congregational growth:
  - 19 new members (5 families) have joined recently.
  - 10 individuals are currently participating in the New Member Class.
- Baptisms:
  - 17 baptisms have occurred since the previous reporting period.

The Church Growth Plan will also be reviewed during the Town Hall presentation.

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### **2026 Election – Nominating Committee Formation**

The Council began discussion on forming the 2026 Nominating Committee.

- Potential candidates and representation across the congregation will be considered.
  - Additional planning will continue at future meetings.
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### **Closing**

Pastor Frick offered the closing prayer.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:10 PM