

King of Kings Lutheran Church
Church Council Minutes
October 21, 2025

Attendance

Members in Person:

Jason Livingston, Executive Council
Chris Gandhi, Executive Council
Meisha Berg, Member-at-Large
Rebecca Kurtz Schwanke, Member at Large
Jen Krumrie, Treasurer
Kevin Schwartz, Finance
Tami Olson, Secretary
Pastor Jon Larson, Lead Pastor
Pastor Amelia Houdek, Associate Pastor-7:17pm
Dianne Johnson, Executive Director

Members Absent/Excused:

Jen McKinnon, Executive Council

Call to Order – Jason

Guests: None

The meeting was called to order at **6:30** ish by Jason Livingston, presiding.

Opening Prayer – Pastor Jon

Approval of Prior months Meeting Minutes

Jason moved to accept the meeting minutes.

Kevin seconded the motion.

Motion passed (CC.25.10.21)

Approval of Agenda

Jason moved to accept the meeting agenda.

Rebecca seconded the motion.

Motion passed (CC.25.10.22)

Role of Council: - Jason reviewed.

We empower staff, committees and volunteers to make the necessary day-to-day operational ministry decisions. The role of Church Council therefore is to focus on more strategic visioning that will seek to further enhance and move the ministry forward.

Guest Presentation: None

Old Business:**1. Financial Report – Jen Krumrie**

- a. Jen, first report operations compared to budget 1,594,000 in con 1,545.000 almost 50,000 over budget.
- b. Jason, I am wondering if you have any comments.
- c. Dianne, in the month of September, received 2 large doners' gifts which sometimes hits in December. Sometimes when stock markets higher they want to give them.
- d. Jen, building & property exp over budget over due to parking lot project, other revenue and expenses we are under budget.
- e. Going into non-operating expenses, 3rd quarter benevolence will be paid in October.
- f. Chris, do we need to replenish the savings.
- g. Dianne replied great questions, the organ also came out of that fund. Pastor Jon and I believe the more you take out, you need to replenish.
- h. Dianne, we budget King of King as line item to replenish the savings, 10 10 80 rule, we need to budget it so we don't lose our cash reserve.
- i. Looking at our budget for 2026 we are looking at a higher percentage for parking lot costs, yet we still need additional funds through fundraising.
- j. Projections, this is again a reminder takes 10 months on historical giving trends we have a favorable 81,000 it will be interesting to look at last year to see what it was.
- k. Pastor Jon, what is our strategy to ask the Finance committee, what is your game plan.
- l. Pastor Jon, what is a plan, strategy to replenish the fund.
- m. Kevin, is this a campaign?
- n. Pastor Jon if not strategy around this to keep that a forefront thought for this project. This was not a capital campaign, how are we pre-planning to get back where we were. To have something solid, out of this resource is there a 10 10 80 in supporting ministry.
- o. Rebecca, is there a policy of what should be there.
- p. Dianne, 9 months of operating should be available in reserves.
- q. Jason, If we are taking out money for organ and parking lot that we are replenishing to a reasonable level, what is the plan to replenish funds prior to doing other stuff as a project.
- r. Pastor Jon, we would not ask congregation if we have the money, how often can you go into the coffers, the led screen is more exciting.

2. Organ Update (See Executive Director's Report)

- a. Jason, in Dianne's report, Scarfone will be wrapping up in next two weeks, antiphonal speakers will be installed in the back, and some speakers will be moved to the new platform area.
- b. Jason, when do we get pipes,
- c. Dianne, sometimes in February and March.
- d. Chris any though using big MPR for overflow Letten services.
- e. Dianne could be done yet the sound in there is horrible and brown chairs are not comfortable.

Strategic Planning Updates: (If Applicable):

1. Engagement
2. Growth
3. Giving
 - a. Pastor Jon, we have a solid baseline for growth and how we set each demographic.
 - b. Dianne, 880 households would be included in giving.

New Business:

Monthly Staff Updates: See appendix A

“On our Radar”**1. Columbarium Phase # 2**

- a. Dianne reached out to Eickhof Columbarium; looking at the final number for the final phase and we will start construction next spring, no money out of King of Kings accounts as this is solely funded through the selling of niches. 154 niches will be part of this final phase. If we outgrow that we have land to expend in that area.

2. Church Survey on Worship – Meisha

- a. Jason, it sounds like we started process.
- b. Meshia, I have a rough draft started, I emailed. I need to sit down with Pastor Jon for about an hour, and talk about strategies, Do we have security requirements.
- c. Dianne, we would have a few that would be noted in our distribution we would not send them one.
- d. Meshia, is like with the size of our church, I think it is diverse
- e. Kevin, do you want to put age brackets.

3. Parking Lot Phase # 2

- a. For next spring/summer 2026 - Dianne

4. Security (In Discussion)

- a. Jason, anything we need to share with group or updates.
- b. Dianne, not at this point.
- c. Chris, I know we talked about it, has a congregation of members talked about it.
- d. Dianne, anytime a church shooting, just having people be aware., I see you is what these people don't like, reaching out greeting people, Looking at doors and cameras.
- e. We do have law enforcement present in services.
- f. Jason, Staff has a process.
- g. Kevin, kids at school have a lock down drill, maybe we should have that here.
- h. Jason Ushers and welcome team are aware of process, maybe it is worth a short paragraph in bulletin.
- i. Dianne, worship coordinators, are aware of what to do, where the exits are, what to do. What we would rely on is the pastors in the front.
- j. Jason, maybe just a statement with stuff going on in the world we thought you would want to know our staff is aware.
- k. Chris, FBI Run hide and fight is all you can do.

Upcoming Council Meetings

1. November 11 – 5:30 PM - Exec Team Meeting (As needed)
2. November 18 – 6:30 PM - Council Meeting

Council In Action

1. Sunday Morning Presence – Communication with Congregation (Who's there)
 - a. Chris asked with confirmations is there any need for more people.
 - b. Pastor Jon, yes
 - c. Pastor Amelia, 4:00 on Saturday.
 - d. Pastor Ameilia, its going to be a good night.

The meeting was adjourned at **7:19 pm** by Jason Livingston.

Closing Prayer and prayer request – Pastor Jon

Appendix A: Staff Reports

October 2025 Staff Reports**Pastor Jon**

Leadership:

- The four weeks of revised worship pamphlets have been completed and a big word of thanks to Kathy Becher for putting those together. This was a lot of work, content writing, review and vetting through information that is provided on the website. This project really highlighted the need to communicate, “Why we do what we do and why it’s important.” I greatly appreciated the work of our ministry team leads who sent along information and quotes. The next steps will be to put this information into a handout to give to potential visitors (need identified by the Welcome Desk). As part of this Connection Weekend process, we spent time during Leadership reviewing what went well and what needs work. Once again, this was a necessary pivot for this year and I look forward to deeper Ministry Team and Congregational Engagement in 2026.
- (Reported September) On the Radar: Determining the best timing for a Staff Planning Day/Retreat. My hope however is that we can leverage planning documents and staff meetings and simply have a fun connection event. Beginning to set vision for 2026 programmatic year.
- As part of my ongoing one-on-one’s, I am revisiting goals for 2025.

Stewardship:

- Work continues on revising the Stewardship and Legacy Campaign - “Faith Forward: Building Today, Investing in Tomorrow.” Dianne Johnson and I have been meeting to review outline and make revisions. We are currently on schedule for November in home distribution.

Worship:

- The student blessing for the kindergarten and 3rd grade Bible blessing was re-written to make it more engaging for the congregation. The review and revision of Faith Milestones continue to be a focus area from an education and worship perspective. I am currently working with Laurel Bornholtz who oversees CSF Ministry as we seek to better engage our students, families and congregation. In addition Pastor Amelia and I are seeking ways to make them impactful from an overall worship perspective. Rather than something that simply happens in worship, how do we make them an intentional part of worship?
- Seeking additional time to work on the Lenten Series and devotional book, “Self-Sabotage – From Ruin to Redemption.”

General:

- Funerals are scheduled for October 6, October 18 and October 21.
- Officiating a wedding on October 25 in Wisconsin.

Pastor Amelia

Celebrating: The first Equipping Event is prepped and ready to go! Now just need to create interest! Watch your email with ways you can help make our Equipping Events successful for our entire congregation! My creative flow and energy is back after the summer break. Yay!

Working on:

Benevolence Budget for 2026; Prayer ministry guidelines, purpose, and onboarding information. Advent and XMAS Eve Worship planning. We are excited to offer a 'hushed' XMAS EVE worship service for the 9pm service. Think flute, strings, small choral ensemble. The tone is to help us to feel like we are walking in a silent night, snow gently falling, and all we hear in the silence is God's whisper of "Here I Am." I am also working on a Blue Christmas worship service to be held on Sunday Dec. 13 at 3:00pm in the sanctuary. This is a worship service for those who are grieving this time of year, or are having a difficult time with depression/anxiety. This is for King of Kings and the greater Woodbury area.

Isabelle Hammond

- Met with Leadership Team and Jake to discuss the future of the "Your Gifts In Action" videos for 2026, ultimately deciding that October would be the last one for now and that we would circle back in January for additional brainstorming.
- Helped rethink the announcements/bulletin to be more intentional with announcements being shared during worship time.
- Assisted in preparing and printing materials for multiple Faith Milestones, Explore King of Kings, and several other fall events.
- Took down past registrations and put up new ones on the website.
- Current/Upcoming Projects: Submitting the collage directory pages, designing the Q3 Newsletter, assembling the Advent Devotional, and sending out Christmas advertising.

Jake Pickett

Michael Carmack

- **Prepping for 43 students participating in confirmation services this fall**
- **Confirmation program continues to grow in students...we are now up to the 125-130 range for registered students**
- **Sunday confirmation has had 10-15 students participating each week**
- **Helping to prep for fall festival/after party**
- **COnfirmation is up and running and going super well!**
- **Planning and about to announce senior high trip for summer 2026 - focus this year will be on service**

Laurel Bornholtz

- Meeting weekly with Tami Olson and Dawn Swenson for Fall Festival planning
- We continue to receive many Holiday Boutique vendor applications each week which the team reviews every 2-3 weeks. De Granstrom is doing a great job as our vendor liaison. At our next meeting on October 20 we will be redesigning the layout for the portion of MPR that was opened up after the stage was removed - looking for better traffic flow.
- All of our adult Bible studies are thriving as are our PreK-Confirmation education classes. Our adult leaders are excellent.
- Paula and Michael continue with their stellar work in CSF, finalizing teacher assignments and milestones as well as planning for the Fall Party and After Party - and investing in relationships with our families. They have been extremely busy this fall.
- Drop In Play began their fall sessions on October 2. Unexpected benefits result in many of our programs. In this case, a mom came with her young son who will require early intervention. A supportive space with experienced teachers is a gift for this mom.

- Meisha Berg hosted the first meeting of her new book club for moms with kids at home. She is starting with a group of 4, which is excellent! It continues to be a priority of mine to find places of engagement for our parents - and it's encouraging to see progress being made.
- Our October "Fill Your Cup" Women's Ministry event was attended by 21 women who learned about the history of prayer beads and made a bracelet to take home. Our next event is December 9.

Paula Arland

- Kids of the Kingdom is thriving! Grateful to all the volunteers who have stepped in to lend a hand this year. At this time, just 2 classes need a team teacher. Had 2-3 new families register so far in October with more visitors popping in to try a class. Children's Ministry workroom is hopping on Sunday mornings!
 - Offering this fall is supporting a livestock program in Tanzania. The hope is to help purchase a couple of farm animals for a family. Our goal is \$500. And if we meet it, 5 kids from each hour will be picked to throw a pie at Ms. Paula in January.
 - 5th grade class is under construction as the teachers work hard to create community for the students. At 9:30 with 35+ 5th Graders, it is a flex class in that students will have their game/activity all together at the start of class then split into half for their Bible learning.
- Faith Milestones
 - 3rd Grade Bible workshop was well received by students and parents who explored how to use their new study Bible.
 - 2nd Grade Kids and Money will be on 10/12.
 - 5th Grade Ten Commandments Michael and I are working on together.
- Working with Laurel and Isabelle on finalizing the Children's Christmas Program.
- Fall Festival Children's Party planning is well underway. Donation tree is up for people to select a leaf (donation item) to bring in (hint, hint).
- Part of the leadership team for the MPLS/ST. Paul Children/Youth Welcome to Fall event and led discussion on VBS for children's ministry leaders

Pam Hoeffel

PIT STOP was Oct. 9th at the Cottage Grove Armory. There were over 600 guests receiving essential items from gas cards, clothes, vaccines, housing information, help with taxes, diapers and more! The community filled an elementary school gym and hallway with resources. (The armory is an old elementary school. King of Kings provided the hot meal. We served around 300 people sloppy joes, mac and cheese, coffee, lemonade. The Men's ministry put in over 100 hours of volunteer time, loading and unloading, setting up, cooking, and serving.

School Food Rescue to Basic Needs - in September King of Kings delivered more than 3,049 pounds of food. There are 4 - 5 routes. We are looking for more volunteers for this opportunity.

Every Meal - we have Grey Cloud Elementary and we just added a school in St. Paul. The Grey Cloud opportunity has been well received by those looking to serve. We are excited to try a school in St. Paul, the Academy of Peace. We have volunteers eager to serve here. Always looking for additional.

Community Dinner - still hearing how it is a blessing to many in our community. A teenager commented it was the best part of her week. We served around 60 people in October. We added tie blankets for Project Linus as some people like to work on a project with others.

Loaves and Fishes continues to serve around 300 people each month. The team is collecting winter clothing for their November meal.

Operation Warm - Tuesday, Oct. 21 - A community event with Basic Needs and SoWashCo CARES. Marathon Oil helped fund this project. Operation Warm is a national organization providing coats to children. Any child that needs a coat will receive a coat at this event. King of Kings is serving at the event. Helping children find the perfect coat.

We are preparing for our Advent Tree Holiday of Hope for Nov. 2nd - Nov. 30th. The donations will be given to Community Thread in Stillwater. They have families start to shop on Dec. 2nd.

Still working on Tanzania reports - In communication with our partner Parish in Kilolo.

Hosted Pastor Karen from ILAG the Lutheran Church of Guatemala for an afternoon at King of Kings. She made a video for us to share with the congregation on the struggles and accomplishments of ILAG.

Andrea Villanueva

Dianne Johnson

- Working on the 2026 budget; asking for a dream budget from staff members with an explanation of how this would bring ministry to a new level, an actual budget (can do ministry) and a cut budget amount.
- In 2026, employers will pay a premium rate of up to .88% of an employee's wages to cover the new Family and Medical Leave Act. This premium amount can be split between the employer and the employee, with the employee's share not exceeding .44%. As much as I struggle with having employee's paychecks smaller, King of Kings is at a point where we cannot pick up the entire cost of this, which is estimated to be about \$12,500.
- Negotiated the cost of dental insurance coverage where there will be no increase in premium costs yet still waiting on health insurance premium costs for 2026 and how this will affect the budget.
- Working on the details of the Stewardship brochure that will be mailed out to households (hoping the first week of November). We are hoping to be able to increase the budget by \$215,000 to cover increasing costs and additional staffing. Although, it seems like a large amount- it would equal each household to increase their giving by \$240/year, roughly \$20/month. While for some households this may not be doable yet for other households, they may be able to increase more.
- Scarfone is wrapping up the construction and should be completed in the next two weeks. At that time, the speakers that are currently located above the choir area will be moved to the new platform along with the antiphonal speakers in the back.
- Much appreciation to the custodial staff who has diligently worked to create the space needed for construction and then has worked to organize the area behind the altar.
- All halogen lighting in the building is being replaced with LED bulbs (hallways and classrooms) . Through Voss Lighting, we were able to purchase all the necessary bulbs and apply for the energy efficient lighting refund so the entire out of pocket costs will be around \$700.

- In order to plan for the future more efficiently; Voss Lighting will be providing us the quotes for new lighting and acoustic panels in the Multi-Purpose Room and the Fellowship Hall area. This is probably not an initiative in 2026 yet a baseline cost is always good to have.
- We have received a donation to move forward with LED screens in the Sanctuary. We are currently acquiring quotes to nail down the cost of the project.
- Received a donation to begin Phase 2 of the Columbarium; working on the set cost and contract with plans to begin in the spring of 2026.
- Sold 2 niches this month.
- Final edits to the directory and all files will be sent this week. Special shout out to Kathy and Isabelle on all their work in this project.