

# Synod Council Minutes

January 31, 2026 | Zoom

## 1. Welcome and Devotions

**Call to Order – Time:** 9:01 AM

**Devotion & Prayer** - led by: Bishop Daniel Beaudoin

**Notes:**

### Roll Call: (check those in attendance)

- ✓ Bishop Daniel Beaudoin
- ✓ Nancy Yunker
- ✓ Michelle Schaffer
- ✓ Shea McGrew
- ✓ Wendy Bauer
- Caitlin Brink
- ✓ Rev. Tucker O'Leary
- ✓ Rev. Melanie Haack
- ✓ Christine Reasoner
- ✓ Kathy Jurrus
- ✓ Rev. Melodi Hagen
- ✓ Clark Price
- ✓ Rev. Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri
- ✓ Beth Kieffer
- ✓ Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt
- Kevin Swagler
- ✓ Jerusha Walker
- ✓ Kelly Weber
- ✓ Rodney West Estell
- ✓ Josh Billnitzer
- ✓ Rev. Tanyce Addison
- Rev. Aaron Baughman

### Staff: (check those in attendance)

- ✓ Deacon Sherry Krieger
- Rev. Sarah Schaaf
- ✓ Cassie Mugler
- Calla Gilson Burns
- Cheryl Sondergeld
- Jillian Russell
- ✓ Linda Henschen
- Dave Seitz
- Jacob Henry

**Guests:**

---

---

**Quorum Established:**

- ✓ **Yes**
- No**

**Approval of the Agenda:**

**Motion:** Josh Billnitzer

**Second:** Kathy Jurrus

✓ **Approved**

✓ **Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

Amended SC26.04 – Removed from the agenda.

Amended SC26.06 – To include disbursement amount and percentages.

**2. Approval of Synod Council Minutes: December 31, 2025:**

**Motion:** Kelly Weber

**Second:** Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt

✓ **Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

**3. Review of Executive Committee Decisions:**

a. December 13, 2025

b. January 26, 2026

**Notes:** Cassie Mugler reviewed the decisions. No questions.

**4. Bishop Daniel Teaching Time and Update:**

**Notes:**

- 2026 theme “*The Way of Love*”
  - *Call to Love comes from” God”*. God always comes down.
  - *Resources are available on the Synod website.*
- Refer to page 8 of the synod packet. 5-Fold Focus for 2026.
  - 1. Form and Coordinate a Synod Generosity Team
  - 2. Align and Increase the Capacity of Synod Staff
  - 3. Invest in Lay Theological Education
    - We have 29 SAMs, 10 in the apprentice model
  - 4. Offer Immersive Learning Experiences and Spiritual Pilgrimages
    - 2027- Foot Steps of St. Paul
  - 5. Engage the Community: The Missional and the Margins

- Fresh Expressions
- Ordination and Installation of Pastor Ian Boden January 10 and 14.
- St. John, Deshler, 1<sup>st</sup> Vote to disaffiliate with the ELCA passes (76 yes and 24 no)
- Pastor Mike Hanck on a 2-month sabbatical, 10 years serving.

## 5. Staff Updates:

- a. Pastor Sarah Schaaf
- b. Deacon Sherry Krieger

### Notes:

- Deacon Sherry Krieger:
  - Introduced the Year of Love and its resources.
  - Summary of the NWOS New Ministry Journeys per conference. Pgs. 13-16

## 6. Synod Council Roster and Parish Actions:

### Action SC26.01 Approval of Retirement

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the retirement status of Rev. Mary Beth Smith-Gunn (1/1/26), Rev. Will Haggis (2/1/26), and Rev. Pete Bowmer (2/1/26).

**Motion:** Pastor Melanie Haack

**Second:** Pastor Tanyce Addison

**Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

### Action SC26.02 Approval of Synod Council Call

“At the recommendation of the Bishop, Synod Council approves the Synod Council call to Deacon Kayla Peterson to serve as the Chaplain at Ohio Health at Home Hospice.”

**Motion:** Shea McGrew

**Second:** Pastor Ashley Rosa-Ruggieri

**Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

**Action SC26.03 Appointment of Synod Assembly-Related Committees: Reference and Counsel and Parliamentarian**

“Synod Council appoints the following individuals to serve on 2026 Synod Assembly Reference and Counsel Committee: Rev. Adam Sornchai, Rev. Rebecca West-Estell, Norm Shade, and Jacob Henry. Synod Council appoints Paul Brooks to serve as Parliamentarian for the Assembly”.

**Motion:** Kathy Jurus

**Second:** Pastor Melanie Haack

**Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

**Action SC26.04 Constitution Updates**

“Synod Council approves the constitutional updates for Grace, Elmore.”

**Motion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Second:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

Removed from the agenda due to delayed congregational vote due to weather. We will vote on this in April.

**Action SC26.05 Approval of the 2026/27 Mission Spending Plan**

“Synod Council approves the updated 2025/26 Mission Spending Plan.”

**Motion:** Beth Kieffer

**Second:** Clark Price

**Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

**Action SC26.06 Approval of the Annual Disbursement Limit from Endowment Fund**

“At the recommendation of the Finance Team the Annual Disbursement Limit from the Endowment Fund shall be set at\$65,000 which is around 5.1%.”

**Motion:** Shea McGrew

**Second:** Deacon Rodney West-Estell

**Approved**

**Amended**

**Notes if amended:**

**7. Vice President’s Report**

**Notes:**

---

Nancy Yunker:

- advocated for the book “Love is the Way”.
- Thank you to all that serve in your church.
- You’re all appreciated for what you do every day.
- Training:” small churches”, “Small and Mighty Churches”
  - Kindling Faith.com *United Lutheran*
- Churchwide Vice Presidents are working on creating Mission and Purpose statements.

**8. Financial Reports**

**Notes:**

Second Reading of the 2026-27 Mission Spending Plan. Second reading of the proposed revised spending plan.

- Financial Team: Bishop Daniel Beaudoin, Shea McGrew, Pastor Sarah Schaaf, Linda Henschen, Clark Price and Dave Seitz.
  - Trends are looking good.
  - Summary of Crum Financial Review. (Report will be sent separately).
- Administrative Updates

**9. Administrative Updates**

**Notes:**

Pages 20-22 of council packet.

Roster update.

The deaths of retired Pastor, Rev. K. Bernell “Bernie” Boehm December 25,2025, and SAM Jon Micheal Rhoades December 31, 2025.

## 10. For the Good of the Order/Announcements

### Notes:

- Pastor Aaron, Thanksgiving, welcomed 10 new members.
- Pastor Tanyce, Good Hope Youth co-op expanded in the community.
- Pastor Sarah and Kelly Weber at St. Peter, welcomed into service.
- Cassie reminded everyone that the Synod Assembly registration is open until the end of April.
- Pastor Tucker, 1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran, Lenten program shared with Trinity & St. John Findlay and Trinity, Arcadia.
- Hope a New Family welcomed, and 4 gentlemen to be confirmed Easter.
- Pastor Melanie received a grant for sleeping bags for one of their ministries.
- Christine, Blessings and Blooms Spring Event for all at the end of February.
- Prayers for Springfield.
- Clark, Sunday evening service seeing growth.
- Beth, Grace and St. John to combine mid-week Lent services.

## 11. Closing/Sending Blessing

**Adjournment – time:** 10:47 AM

**Motion:** Shea McGrew

**Second:** Wendy Bauer

✓ **Approved**

## 12. Future Meetings

- ~~a. January 31, 2026, Zoom~~
- b. April 25, 2026, St. Mark's, BG
- c. May 30, 2026, Synod Assembly at St. Mark's, BG
- d. September 19, 2026, Good Hope, Arlington
- e. December 12, 2026, St. Paul, Jenera