

ADVENT COUNCIL MINUTES

December 9, 2025

<i>FINAL – Accepted at the 1/13/2026 Council Meeting</i>	
1. Call to Order & Determination of Quorum	<p>The meeting was held at the Advent Fireside Room and on Zoom. Pres. Mark Moyer called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.</p> <p>Present were Council members Pr. Alena Lamirato, Mark Moyer, Karen Trinidad, Paul Cook, Al Muniz, Sandi Bordner (Zoom), Tom LaRose, Ann Hibbs, and Cindy Anderson.</p> <p>Member George Baldini was excused.</p> <p>No visitors were present.</p> <p><i>Note: quorum is 6 members, with a 10-member Council</i></p>
2. Monthly Devotions	Ann Hibbs led the monthly devotional
3. Reading of Minutes	The minutes of the November 11 Council meeting were accepted with no changes.
4. Community Concerns & Prayers	<p>Ann H. led prayers for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Michele Moyer's friend Noelia who has cancer ❖ Students having mental health issues as the end of semester approaches ❖ Ted Hibbs' successful recovery from carpal tunnel surgery ❖ Al's son Gentry's successful recovery from shoulder surgery ❖ Jan Bordner's upcoming cataract surgery
5. Approval of Agenda	No changes to the agenda were made.
6. Reports of Officers & Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Pastor's Report – Pastor Alena (See written report attached) <i>Additional note:</i> Council decided that the Dec. 28 carols and lessons service will be held with no pastor presiding and no communion since Pr. Alena will be on vacation. b. Treasurer's Report – Cindy (separate written report submitted) c. Other committee reports (See written reports attached)
7. Old/Unfinished Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Call process — Pastor Alena's official installation is set for Thursday, Jan 29th @ 6 PM. EEET will work on details for a reception to accompany it. b. Real Estate Assets: Mark recommend making a consulting engagement with Kate Aronow, who worked extensively with Our Savior's Lutheran Church on their project. She is local and accessible. 2026 Budget will include estimate 20 hours of consulting time @ \$150 per hour to move ahead with land development. An adult forum will be scheduled to discuss/develop options. c. Sanctuary Care/Refresh: An adult forum will be scheduled in January to discuss potential projects, priorities and who is willing to further develop these projects. Some funding from Memorials is available. d. Accessibility —No further concerns have surfaced. This may be removed from the agenda. e. Acronyms and other mysteries — Pr. Alena suggested that we set up adult forums to present short topics that would be pertinent to new members. f. Stewardship Team reported on highly successful fall pledge campaign (See attachment).

	g. Longest night service (Blue Christmas) on Dec 21 @ 4PM. Christmas Eve Service will be @ 8:00 PM Dec 24. Christmas Day Service @ 10:00 AM.
8. New Business	<p>a. Draft budget discussion — The present gap is \$20K to \$25K. The income side remains difficult to forecast. Some increase in pledges came from consistent givers who had not typically pledged. Building sharers contribution still needs to be reviewed. Finance Committee will evaluate budgeted vs. targeted giving campaign funding, property maintenance one-time charges in 2025 need to be reviewed to make sure they can be deleted for 2026, and December actual expenses vs. 1/12 of annual estimation.</p> <p>b. Staff raises: None have been given for several years. Other considerations/options were discussed.</p> <p>c. New voting members: Ilene and Marvin Korab returned a Statement of Intent card and are interested in becoming voting members. The Korabs were members at St. Andrew. Are there any others we should consider (David Tobias)? Council will schedule a “New Member” class on Jan 11 after worship and a Council Vote at the Jan 13th council mtg. Also, see 7.e. above.</p> <p>d. No council members are term-limited this year, but there are some who are completing a first term and need to stand for election again should they be willing to serve a second term: Paul Cook, Sandi Bordner, and Al Muniz. All three affirmed that they are willing to stand for reelection. Paul has announced that council nominations from the congregation are open, but has had no responses.</p> <p>e. Web page updating was also discussed. Evaluation of alternatives to Wix are in process, mostly looking for ease of changes and lower subscription fee. Scott A. is interested in getting more involved. This is ongoing.</p> <p>f. Pr. Alena noticed a woman struggling through the snow on the sidewalk on Meade St. last week. Since the parking lot will not be plowed until over 6” of snow accumulates, we need to make sure the sidewalk along Meade is cleared. Council approved ~\$600 for the purchase of a snow blower from unrestricted Memorial funds for this.</p>
9. Adjourn with Lord’s Prayer	The meeting adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer at 8:36 PM
10. Next Meeting Date/Time	Tuesday, Jan 13, 2026 @ 7 PM in the Advent Fireside Room; Hybrid (in person and on Zoom). Devotions by Mark M.

❖ Meetings for the 2026 Term: Feb. 10, Mar. 10, Apr. 14, May 12, Jun 9, Jul. 14 (if needed), Aug. 11, Sep. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8, 2026, and Jan. 12, 2027

These are the minutes of the meeting according to my recollection and the notes taken by me during the meeting.

Tom LaRose, Council Secretary

Pastor Report December 2025

Matthew 6 Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear...³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Personal

- Close on condo next Wednesday, 12/17. Hope to be moved by January 1

Membership

- I'm updating the big red book
 - Found records until 2001
 - Piecing bits together for 2001-2025
 - Will put current members in new book and start adding new people after

Teach

- Would like to start a Bible Study – have no idea when, but we should really look at Genesis.
 - Perhaps Thursday Night?
- Spiritual Exercises – Lent – perhaps part of Wednesday night
- Present DMin Research – Adult Forum Jan or Feb
- Confirmation – Hannah, Maddy, Avery, and Huck
 - We will meet after worship 7 or 8 times in Spring and Fall, and Confirmation Camp
 - Jacob has agreed to be my assistant
 - Each student will have a mentor
 - I have ordered the study Bibles I like - \$6/each
- Monthly Newsletter – Advent Advance - is up and running
 - Really would like it to be info in advance, different than Thursday's weekly and more information about the larger ELCA world

Worship - Preach/Sacraments

- Evening Prayer on FaceBook – have had a request
- Blue Christmas – Dec. 21 4pm
- Christmas Eve 8pm, Christmas Day 10am
- Would like to set up a Stations of the Cross during Holy Week
- Dec. 28, I will be on vacation
 - The service will be carols and lessons – no real need for a sermon
 - Lay led or pastor? Lay – no communion

Pastoral Care

- Still meeting those who are unable to come in person
 - For those who watch on FB, we are giving them the little communion sets so they can participate
- Blue Christmas is the Healing Service for the season
 - Another service during Holy Week might be good
- Would like to get a prayer chain going so that things go past the office
 - This could also be used for confidential prayers that are not public

Marriages/Funerals

Creation Care Team - Me, Lin, Joan, and Tom

- Lin and I talked about getting blue recycling cans so people can see we are recycling
- We will meet in January to make more plans
- We will host National Faith and Climate Forum, Saturday, April 25, 10-3:30pm

Lent Soup

- Feb 25 _____
- March 4 _____
- March 11 _____
- March 18 _____
- March 25 _____

Synod

- Installation – Thursday, Jan. 29, 6pm charcutier, 6:30pm worship, cake following

Dates

- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - Jan 18-25
- Ash Wednesday – Feb 18
- Time change - March 8
- Easter – April 5
- Friendship Sunday – first Sunday of August
- Season of Creation – Sept. 1- Oct 4

Time off

- Vacation – 4 weeks/year
 - 1 week for 2025 – Dec. 26-Jan 2
 - 2026
 - Feb 23-Mar 1 – friend coming from MD, may take time off
 - April – after Easter – go to Iceland for 2 weeks.
- CE – 2 weeks/year, \$800, start 2026

Respectfully submitted, Pr. Alena, Dec. 9, 2025

Committee Reports Submitted prior to the December 9 Council Meeting

Triple E Team Minutes 11/18/2025

Attendance –Joan L, Cindy L, Denny T, Paul C., Pastor Alena. Karen T. and Jesse H.
Virginia F absent due to a cell phone problem.

Opening prayer by Denny T.

All shared that family events and food were being looked forward to for the holidays.

Feedback on Past Events –

1. Adult Forum's "Faithful Citizen," concluded on November 9th was highly successful. Increased attendance each Sunday of series. Paul Cook published a concluding summary.
2. Thanksgiving baskets sponsored by Social Outreach are being assembled in the coming week to be delivered.

Upcoming events –

1. Radio Play by the Advent Radio Players on November 23rd. with a Bake Sale in conjunction with the radio play. Bake sale after morning service and at radio play intermission with proceeds from both going to the Food Bank at Growing Home. Advertising RP on Nextdoor. Pam H. and Cindy will take money and help Joan L with the bake sale.
2. Cards and gift cards to college students for final week. Karen and Joan will get the cards and the Starbucks cards.
3. RIC – Joan will check on getting a yard sign and investigate the cost of a banner for the web site and a feather flag after the first of the year. RIC will be "lifted up" on the last Sunday in January, with a special offering. That is also the date of the annual meeting.
4. Pastor Alena's installation is scheduled on Thursday, January 29th at 6 or 6:30 with a charcuterie an hour before the service and a cake after the service hosted by Triple E Team.
5. Christmas Eve service at 8 pm. Cindy and Karen will coordinate getting heated apple cider and Christmas cookies. No coffee.
6. Christmas Day service at 10 a.m. Jesse will do coffee and coordinate cake for after the service with Pastor Alena.
7. Publicity for Christmas services. Cindy and Joan will coordinate a graphic for posting on Nexdoor, Facebook and on the web page.
8. Blue Christmas Service of night prayer for the Winter Solstice will be on Sunday, December 21st at 4 p.m.
9. Pastor A working on doing a monthly newsletter and wants items for the calendar 3 months in advance.
10. Pastor A will be looking at starting a Bible Study after the first of the year.
11. Pastor A will be leading a study on different was of praying and evening prayer during Lent. This will be on Facebook.
12. Spiritual practices such as the Labyrinth could be studied at Adult Forum.
13. Special Christmas invitation to services to be sent to Browns, Cunninghams, Blairs and others. (Beverly ?– check with Cindy and Marti) Paul will compose draft and send to Mark to send. Denny to call Lyle Nelson.

14. Minutes of the Triple E Team meeting to Scott A. and Kristaur Mann? who indicated an interest in joining.
15. Blue Visitor Sheet – Pastor Alena will review and tweak.
16. November 30th Decorating the Sanctuary after service
17. Stump Jump? of Pastor Alena after service December 7th
18. Adult Forum on AI by Paul December 14th.
19. Zip after service on December 28th
20. After 1st of year Pastor Alena will research Jan and early Feb. present?
21. Mardi Gras celebration the Sunday before Ash Wednesday, Feb. 15th

Other items –

1. Pastor Alena stressed elimination of the word “small” from any descriptions of Advent as it has numerous negative connotations. Substitute words like loving, sharing, exciting, etc.
2. Camera during services should not show audience or communion as some don’t want to be on camera. Focus on cross. Karen will let Mark, Scott and Bruce know.
3. Web site revision will not be until after the first of the year. Scott A., Joan and Pastor A will work on to determine what program Square page or Wicks?
4. Advertising Video “Who are we?” Scott and IT team. Cindy L, Julia Singh, Joan, Scott A. and Pastor Alena to determine the conversation and process.

Next Triple E Team Meeting – Tuesday November 16th at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom.

Continuing notes below from September meeting for future discussion and action.

Role and Future of Triple E Team - Discussion about Triple E Team role in promoting opportunities, activities, events and engagement. Need to see what new and different ideas Pastor Alena has. Miss Adventurers, XYZ which had previously etc. when church had a much larger congregation. Quarterly potlucks or other social events needed. Need to bring Fun to Advent Community!

Possibly split Evangelism and Event Team?

Question need for formal agenda. Minutes need to go to council.

Music & Worship Committee Minutes

November 12, 2025

Called to order at 6:05 pm.

1. Matching chalice for flagon for communion

- We'd talked about getting a matching chalice and Mark was going to talk to the artist who made our flagon.
- However, Mark received some feedback from congregation members who feel like the new flagon is a little "casual" and prefer something nicer.
- Newest thought: fill the chalice, don't put out the pouring chalice, ushers only carry up bread.
 - *Lisa: email Cindy to email altar guild and ushers about change.*

2. Worship planning

- Advent
 - Need to order new handheld candles for singing Silent Night
 - Got new ones from from St. Andrew's so don't need to order
 - Plans for setting up a Luminaria on Christmas Eve (like Judy used to?). I think Chris (or Ann?) said she has the supplies to do this.
 - Youth group used to set them up (but they would catch on fire)
 - Chris has battery candles for luminaria
 - Will need sand
 - Will take 15 minutes to set up, give or take.
- Christmas Eve
 - Two services, what times?
 - Last year, had 4 pm at St. Andrew's and 7:30 pm at Advent.
 - Feedback so far:
 - Kevin and Susan and Denny and Cindy want 6 on Christmas Eve
 - Elizabeth is flexible on Christmas Eve
 - Christmas Day - 10 or 10:30 am
 - Elizabeth, Cindy - no for Christmas Day
 - 2025 Decision
 - Christmas Eve - 8 pm
 - Lessons and carols
 - Christmas Day - 10 am
 - Poinsettias - Ask congregation to bring (as we've done this the last two years)
 - Special Music
 - Choir on Christmas Eve
 - Reach out to Hannah to see if she wants to play
- New Year's - healing service in January?
 - Probably not, but maybe a Blue Christmas service that's a healing-type service? Or another time during the year?
 - Pastor Alena will look into when it is. Thinks it might be an evening service.

3. Altar Guild, Worship Servants, etc
 - Worship & Music would like to have a discussion about wider volunteer needs.
 - Need to address this in 2026.
 - Mark can get up and talk to people during announcements.
4. Old piano from Fireside Lounge needs to be given away
 - Other services that pick up for donations are likely to charge anywhere between \$100-\$300 (American Samaritan charges outside a 5-mile radius of their warehouse, for example).
 - Re-Supply pricing starts at \$99
 - 1-800-GOT-JUNK quoted us \$350 to get rid of it.
 - Mark says he will make it go away.
5. Liturgy
 - Nov. 30 is Advent
 - Church will get decorated after church on Nov. 30
 - Advent wreath is probably in the shed

Adjourned 7:02

ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN
FALL 2025

YEARLY RESULTS METRICS COMPARISON

As Of December 7, 2025



ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP COMPARISON	2026 Campaign	2025 Campaign	2024 Campaign	2023 Campaign	2022 Campaign	2021 Campaign
Number of Letters Mailed	68	65	88	92	113	115
Number of Responses	46	36	45	55	60	77
Response Rate	68%	55%	51%	60%	53%	67%
Total \$ Committed	\$156,018	\$121,528	\$143,473	\$170,574 *	\$178,138	\$194,112
Total \$ Difference from previous year	\$34,490	-\$21,465	-\$27,101	-\$7,564	-\$15,974	-\$275
Number who increased	21	31	13	24	23	33
Amount of increase from increased	\$14,806	\$20,860	\$4,464	\$11,333	\$10,870	\$17,631
Number who decreased	2	2	4	9	13	13
Amount of decrease from decreased	-\$1,120	-\$3,120	-\$9,793	-\$4,066	-\$11,724	
Number who stayed the same	12	4	17	20	21	24
New pledging units!	11	3	11	2	3	7
New \$ commitments	\$28,700	\$4,232	\$19,720	\$2,184	\$3,920	\$6,540

- 10 of the new pledging households were contributors in 2025
- 21 pledging households from 2025 increased their commitment!
- 3 pledging households that pledged a total of \$7,480 in 2025 have not yet pledged this year
- 0 2025 pledging households left/died/moved
- Target for 2026 pledges is \$136,500, which is \$15,000 higher than last year

* Suspect wrong value – Should be ~\$142k