

January Council Meeting Minutes
January 19th, 2026 at 6 pm; Hybrid (in person + Zoom)

Present: Pastor Steve, Amy Atkins, James Holden, Lynn Caldwell, Eric Breitenstein, Jennifer Davis, Liz Peter, Kristie Evans, Morgan Wright, Mike Seden, Jonathan Stamey, Kristie Evans, Jesse Lutabingwa, Beth Reavis, & Janice Koppenhaver

Absent: N/A

1. Call to Order – Jennifer @ 6:02PM
2. Devotion – Jesse. MLK today. Topic: justice and peace. Tanzania had issues after the October 29th 2025 elections. After the election there were demonstrations against the government. Thousands of people were killed. The government buried them in mass graves trying to hide the evidence. They are refusing to give the bodies back. There are many grieving Tanzanians - where can they find justice? The government is calling for peace and reconciliation, the Tanzanian citizens want justice (they believe there will be no peace and reconciliation without justice). Jesse was thinking about this with regards to Jesus and him bringing peace in the world. With these events in Tanzania, in Minneapolis, we must continue to work for justice. A chicken and egg question - which comes first, peace or justice? Jesse believes justice comes first. Peace is where justice can flourish. Justice is a foundation on which lasting peace is built. MLK fought for justice with peaceful actions.
3. Ground Rules – Reviewed by Jennifer
 - Please raise your hand to indicate that you would like to speak.
 - Please give your name and state your views on the matter under discussion, including any questions or concerns you may have.
 - In order to allow others ample opportunity to join in the conversation, please keep any subsequent comments by you on the issue/motion succinct and to the point.
 - Please remain quiet when others have the floor so everyone can hear.
 - Please be respectful of those voicing differing opinions.
4. SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Grace Playground Project by Janice Koppenhaver and Beth Reavis
 - Reference January council report, page 29 - 31.
 - This design continues the nursery theme of Noah's Ark. 2 - 5 year old play focus. Lots of activities. Cost is \$30.5K. The other quote was \$60K.
 - Lynn - is the slope of land an issue? Janice - 6 inch high rubber "mulch". Easy to maintain. Will help with slope issue.
 - ½ deposit down to get on schedule for construction.
5. Congregational Input
 - Kristie - picture taker/archivist
 - James - old page on Grace website to non-profit organizations; the links were broken. He suggests updating or creating such a page with links that highlight our non-profit community partners.

- Mike - requested a nametag with “Treasurer” on it so he can be more readily identified.
 - Lynn - noted that new council members need new name tags identifying them as council members
6. Approval of December Council Meeting Minutes -
- Jesse’s name was omitted as present in the December meeting; amended to add his name as present. Jesse made a motion to approve the December council meeting minutes amended per above. Lynn seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
7. Strategic Visioning – Jennifer
- A. Review Organizational Chart and Liaison Assignments
 - B. Council Goal-Setting Process
 - C. “Raising the Roof” book –
 - Straw poll of *Figure 6 on page 60* questions and discussion of.
 - *Figure 10 on page 84* to be discussed next month. Steve to send out our 100-year history document.
8. Policy – James - no update
9. Monitoring and Oversight
- A. Reports:
 - 1) Senior Pastor Report
 - 2) Campus Ministry Coordinator
 - 3) Music Ministry Report
 - 4) Office Manager Report
 - 5) Facilities Report
 - 6) Treasurer Report - Money is in the bank from land sale; cash on hand looks really good
10. Old Business
- 1) Pastor Steve’s Big Property Idea – Extension of the parking lot - no update
 - 2) Wilkes Property Update - sold, project complete
 - 3) Playground Project Update - per above
 - 4) Youth and Family Minister job coverage (Spring). Motion made by Jesse to sign off for Deacon Stacey to cover duties with pay. Eric seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - 5) Full-Time Director of Congregational Life Position
 - a. 5 applications with cover letters and resumes
 - b. Need to form an interview committee
 - 6) Capital Campaign
 - a. Do we want to do a “dollar-to-dollar” match capital campaign?
 - b. Hopefully launch the 2nd week of Feb through til Easter.
 - c. P. Steve made a motion to launch a capital funds drive for up to \$350K for the 6 projects identified (green and yellow colors in the January council report).

Dollar-for-dollar match, up \$250K from the Wilkes fund (total \$600K). Jesse seconded the motion.

- i. Amy - Should we rank the projects? Steve - yes (roof, parking lot, grace place, playground, reserve, council house).
- ii. Lynn - logistics? Do we need a subcommittee to push this? Steve - start small (pitch it with a one-pager), add video later.
- iii. We need a name.
- iv. Do mailings? Lynn - mailings would help our people who live out of state part-time.
- v. The motion passed unanimously.

C. New Business

1) Facility Requests:

- a) Watauga Hunter Skills Team – March 5
 - b) Gamecock Lutheran – February 20-22
 - c) High Country Care Givers – February 5 (FH), April 2, November 10th
 - d) High Country Care Givers, Monthly Recurring
 - e) Mountain Laurel Quilt Group, June 2, Dec 1
 - f) Gen 1 Leadership – February 5 (Chapel)
 - g) Atkins' baby shower - March 14
- Motion made by Jennifer to approve the above slate of facility use requests. Jonathan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
- 2) Wilkes Property Sale Endowment Fund Creation and bylaws - Steve has started the process.
 - 3) Approve a new restrictive capital campaign fund. P. Steve moved to create a new restricted capital campaign fund. James seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
 - 4) Roof Replacement – bidding process underway. 1 bid in, expecting 2 more
 - 5) Grace Place - bidding process underway to repair/update
 - 6) Deacon Stacey requested Jeff Proctor funds for the LSA trip to Germany.
 - 7) Lutheroad Contract Signed for this Summer (VBS @ Grace with Lutheridge staff).

9. Meeting adjourned with prayer – Jesse

Upcoming Devotion List:

Feb - Lynn
Mar - Eric
Apr - Liz
May - Jennifer
June - Jonathan
July - P. Steve
Aug - Morgan