



**Our Savior's Lutheran Church - Leadership Council Monthly Mtg. Minutes**  
**Thursday, March 6 -- 6:00 pm**

**OSLC Leadership Team:**

**Present:** Emily Blain, Dan Jordan, Tim Valen, Sherry Rengstorf, Jon Alleckson, Pastor Ben Loven, Emily Block (Invited), Pastor Emily Carson (invited) and Katie Zahasky

**Absent:** Jessica Grimm

As a welcoming and inclusive congregation, we:

- Affirm and claim our families, however they are defined
- Embrace intergenerational faith formation and innovative ministries
- Nurture, equip, and invite people to share their gifts and talents
- Profess our faith through serving those in need

**Opening prayer**

**Agenda:**

**Pastor Emily Carson continuing discussion from Leadership retreat...**

**Design Thinking** – led by Pastor Emily

Continued discussion from Leadership retreat...

What are the “big questions” we are working to address?

- Are we serving our congregation members?
- Are we serving the wider community of Rochester?
- How do we triage the use of our limited resources? (We don't have enough to do everything on our list)

Pastor Emily introduced and reviewed content from **Embracing Stewardship: How to put stewardship at the HEART of your congregation's LIFE** by Grace Duddy Pomroy and Charles R. Lance.

- **Designed thinking** - DT is a way to face and turn the challenges in today's world into opportunities.
  - We worked through an example using a tool from the Tamarack Institute, using “How Might We...” questions
    - Step 1... Our challenge is to decide if we are going to do a capital campaign (Is this building important to OSLC ministry?)
    - Step 2...
      - What are the root issues causing our challenge?
        - Aging building
        - Recent capital campaign (2022-2023 for HVAC upgrade)
          - Concern about repetitive “asks”
        - Concern for asking the same congregants
        - Declining congregation
        - Financial concerns among congregants, conflicting priorities
      - What assets might we build on?
        - Members are committed to giving

- Awareness of our needs
- For some members, meaningful ministry is happening in this physical space
- What do our stakeholders (congregants) want, more generally?
  - Community, in-person space to be together and have shared experiences
  - Focus on mission, not the finances
- Step 3...
  - How might we...
    - motivate generosity around giving to capital campaign?
    - deepen our relationship to benevolence? (i.e. a capital campaign could be a pathway to ministry outside our walls)
    - run a capital campaign in a different way?
    - ease the uncertainties of the future?
    - run a capital campaign without a specific goal? (i.e. use monies to replenish our assets)
    - recognize congregants for their contributions, in a way (public/private) meaningful to them

Appreciation expressed to Pastor Emily Carson for her guidance.

### Leadership meeting agenda continued...

*January 2025 meeting minutes were approved via email and sent out to congregation.*

### Continuing/New Business

- Staff annual review update- Pastor Ben has completed annual reviews for staff. Personnel will be meeting to share them with the staff members. Goal is to have this completed by April 1, 2025
- Continue conversation from retreat and Pastor Emily's discussion:
  - Capital campaign?
  - Options on the table:
    - Actively work to grow our congregation and remain in place
    - Close the church completely, sell the building, disperse assets, and say good bye to OSLC, Rochester, MN
    - Stay as we are, no changes, and keep trying to stay solvent for as long as we can
    - Consolidate with another congregation, and together become something new
    - Build another building and start over

Emily Blain also shared information about **6261 ministry community** (6 congregations, 2 full time pastors, 6 licensed lay ministers, 1 fulltime deacon). After discussion, the group decided not to move forward with this option at this time.

("The goal is that each 6261 Ministry Community will be bound together in common life, ministry, and mission. For many, this is a cultural, paradigm shift. Leaders work in co-partnership with one another and across the 6 congregations for the purpose of deeply rooted, shared ministry within the community").

- **Next steps:**
  - We will organize a congregational meeting (Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> after worship) to discuss what we have learned in our meeting discussions, the retreat, and ideas from Pastor Emily. Brunch will be provided.
    - Focus will be to briefly share the options and to ask for feedback from those we serve
    - If the majority support one option, will ask members to lean into the work of making that option a reality

- For instance, if recruiting new members and re-engagement of non-attending members is the goal, we make a specific plan on how to accomplish this and ask congregants to commit to reaching this goal (i.e. enhanced social media about our programming, music, fellowship, benevolence, etc. and how to reach out, approach, and re-engage people to share our ministry work).
- If there is no clear consensus on a path forward, we will regroup in Leadership to determine next steps

## Reports

### Business Admin Teams (Tim Valen)

- Mold assessment of building is completed- only the back room with visible mold, tested positive, remainder of the building was clear. Sheetrock was replaced, wall was repaired, and repainted by Al Picket and Megan Valen. Cost ~ \$600.00
- Business/Finance team- reviewing insurance, including liability

### Congregational Ministries (Jon Alleckson)

- Altar Guild- process for preparing/storing apple juice for communion is going well

### Joint Ministry Team (Katie Zahasky)- meetings on hold for now

### Outreach Ministries (Sherry Rengstorf)

- Fair Trade Market/Megan Valen
  - We will be selling Fair Trade left-over inventory at the Women's Zumbro River Spring Event on April 5th at Zion Lutheran in Stewartville
- Fellowship/Ruby Florine
  - Lenten meals start 3/12. We are using SignUp Genius asking members/families to sign up to help serve soup. Schedule of soup offerings had been sent out to members and published in the Echoes Extra.
- Tanzania Palliative Care Partnership/Joanne Heathman & Sherry Rengstorf
  - Had second meeting March 3rd regarding a 2026 trip to TZ. Suggestion from the group was to set up an itinerary for summer/2026 with focus on visiting the Palliative care program like OSLC has done in the past & send out to those interested in going & see response.
- Women of OSLC/Mary Ann Smith
  - Healthy Living Tips program planned for March 17th at 6:30 pm with guest presenter Fred Woolman from 125 Live. Both Men & Women are invited from OSLC & GS. Prayer Pal opportunity will be done at the end of the evening.

### Youth and Education (Jessica Grimm)

- Cassie (youth)- Things are going well. The youth are going to visit a nursing home on 3/16 and attend a movie on 4/1 with GSLC youth
- Two youth and one adult from OSLC are going on the summer trip to Nashville.

### Vice President (Dan Jordan)- nothing to report

### Treasurer (Emily Block)

- Treasurer's Report:
  - Income YTD (as of 02/28/2025): \$63,934.81
  - Expenses YTD (as of 02/28/2025): \$83,497.75\*
  - Budgeted Expenses YTD: \$64,038.44

\* Expenses include the remaining \$23,810 for the roof repair completed in 2024.

**Close with the Lord's prayer:** Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm

Adjourned meeting at 8 pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Katie Zahasky,  
Secretary, OSLC Leadership Council