

Hilltop United Methodist Church Council Minutes

Thursday, October 16, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

In attendance: Burl Maker, Matt Sipe, Michelle Behsman, Brad Propp, Barb Keith, Paulette Adams, Derrick Galinat and Don Putzier.

Opening and Prayer: The meeting opened with a prayer led by Don.

Approval of minutes: Minutes from September were sent by email. Matt made a motion to approve the minutes. Burl seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Devotional: Matt discussed the challenges of letting God's love guide actions and emphasized the importance of serving in mission, drawing from 1 John 3 that speaks to love and brotherhood. He noted the passage's confrontational nature, particularly the idea that not helping those in need contradicts the presence of God's love, and expressed difficulty with the concept of eternal life being tied to actions. The conversation also touched on the rise of nihilistic violence and the need for love in response to violence, with Matt and others reflecting on how words and actions can either uplift or crush spirits.

Financial Report: Burl presented the September financial report.

General giving: \$13,155.00

Capital Campaign: \$1,759.38

Total Income: \$13,593.34 (does not include Capital Campaign funds received)

Expenses: \$23,210.61

Net Income: -\$9,617.11

Working general fund balance 9/30/25: \$13,412.85

Capital Campaign pledge: \$497,110.00

Capital Campaign funds received to date: \$410,327.19

YTD giving statements and a stewardship letter will be mailed next week. Motion made by Matt to approve the finance report. Barb seconded the motion. The financial report was approved.

Pastoral Compensation: Matt shared some history of how the current salary structure was established, including a significant bump after COVID, and upcoming changes concerning the church share of the pension and health insurance. He explained that pastoral compensation will be approved at the upcoming cluster conference, rather than a Hilltop church/charge conference. He said that while his total compensation package will decrease slightly due to reduced pension liability, he needs to make up for the lost pension through additional salary contributions. He recommended that any future salary increases be directed to his pension compensation rather than health insurance, as it would better support his retirement. The group discussed the need to address these changes, with Matt suggesting that a \$5,000 increase would only cost the church about \$3,500, making it an advantageous time to take a step forward in compensation. The group agreed that a salary adjustment was appropriate given Matt's 17 years of experience and leadership at Hilltop Church. They decided to consider a step increase of \$5,000 to \$6,000, with plans to reevaluate mid-year in 2026. The committee also discussed the need to address other staff compensation and benefits. Don and Brad will schedule SPRC meeting before November 15th to finalize pastor compensation.

Committee Updates: Derrick provided an update on trustee issues; including a repaired boiler and ongoing roof issues addressed by Kato Roofing. He reported that recent roof patches were successful, though additional inspections and repairs may be needed. He said that the parsonage refrigerator will need to be replaced before year end. Council

discussed upcoming events, including Operation Christmas, with plans to coordinate volunteers for box loading, and confirmed various Christmas-related services and events scheduled for late November and December. They also noted that choir members would need to coordinate their availability for singing at services around the holidays, given staff departures in December.

Calendaring:

- a. All Saints Sunday—November 2
- b. Church Cluster Conference at Hilltop—November 15, 10:30 a.m.
- c. Operation Christmas Child—November 17-24
- d. Commitment Sunday—November 23
- e. Advent begins—November 30
- f. Carols by Candlelight—December 10, 6:30 p.m. Comfort & Joy Soup Supper
- g. Christmas Eve Services—December 24, 1:30 and 4:30 p.m.

Meeting closed with a prayer from Pastor Matt.

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman