

Hilltop United Methodist Church Council Minutes

Thursday, May 21, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

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

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

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

Discussion of Children/Youth Ministry: Matt initiated discussion about the importance of Children and Family ministry, the current challenges in doing ministry. He shared research about why young people leave the church. He noted that Americans who were raised in the Christian religion and had a positive experience are more likely to continue in affiliation. It is the key predictor in continued connection with religion, according to Pew Research. Matt said this is why it is important for Hilltop to welcome children with love, acceptance and positivity. He also shared that at a recent children/youth ministry consortium with other clergy, many leaders shared the same struggles and several were planning to cut back their ministries because of the busy nature of today's families. Other attendees of the consortium were surprised to hear that we were still doing Wednesday nights, as most had abandoned their Wednesday programming due to competition with other youth events. Matt said that he disagreed with this direction and felt that it was important to either do it well or not do it at all. He suggested starting earlier on Wednesdays and active recruiting of teachers. Matt shared scripture from Deuteronomy Chap. 6, about Jesus speaking about the importance of teaching your family.

Financial Report: Burl provided a review of April finances. There was brief discussion of growth in church membership and a consensus that the move to one worship service has contributed positively to this outcome. Matt made a motion to approve the April finance report, seconded by Brad Propp. The motion carried.

April Summary:

General giving: \$24,892.62

Capital Campaign: \$8,432.24

Total Income: \$27,957.68 (does not include Capital Campaign funds received)

Expenses: \$22,229.12

Net Income: \$5,728.56

Working general fund balance 4/30/26: \$37,997.66

Capital Campaign pledge: \$497,110.00

Capital Campaign funds received to date: \$456,201.90 (92% of goal, \$40,908.10)

Calendar:

- a. May 31—Moondogs game
- b. June 7—Graduation Sunday
- c. June 16-18—Annual Conference
- d. June 21—Waseca waterpark event
- e. July 26—Bray Park service/baptism
- f. August 31—BBQ event in the evening
- g. November OCC

Other business: There will not be a Church Council meeting in June, due to the Annual Conference session.

Meeting closed with a prayer from Pastor Matt.

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Behsman