

Notes from Oct. 5, 2025 Church Council Mtg. (typed up Nov. 10)

Present: Richard P., Randy G., Virginia W., Ted M., Ann G., Annie C., Alice B./ guest, Nancy M., Rev. David, and Wendy P.

Nancy M. began the meeting and led us in an opening prayer. Notes from our Aug. 10, 2025 Church Council meeting approved.

New Business

Alice B. requests input from CC re Spirituality of Elders program. More people want to join than there is space for! Current group of 16-20 is maximum size; have chosen to meet twice a month (first and third Wednesdays of the month, 2-4 p.m., Green Room). At least 5 more non-church people (as well as church people) are interested in being in such a group. Alice has tapped into a deep need and is running a successful program. Question: How to handle a situation of more people wanting to join than there is space for? Idea: hold an Open House / information session with the folks who are interested in this / discuss ways to open it up to others. Much thanks to Alice for organizing and leading this important group.

Bulletin Board issues: Do we have too many? Randy keeps M&SJ bulletin board up to date. Importance of keeping bulletin boards fresh and up to date stressed. Decided to use hallway bulletin board (currently says Community Bulletin Board) to illustrate what our church does during Fall Festival. Palestine Board to be updated to say *We pray for Peace in the Middle East* - in time for Fall Festival. David to talk with Sherrill ahead of time re this change. Still need more clarification re who will post what on which bulletin board? Which bulletin boards do we need? Friendship Hall may be repainted soon so the decision re which bulletin boards to keep, who is in charge, etc. needs to be addressed. Approved minutes should be posted somewhere.

Old Business

Trustees: Request committee budget requests ASAP. New storage shed being put in parking lot for church usage. Key to shed same as Food Pantry shed key. Parking lot parking lines repainted by Ann and Annie. Money for "new" piano all set! Raised more money (@ \$28,000) than needed to purchase piano (@ \$12,000) - will use balance for upkeep and additional piano expenses.

Stewardship Concerns: Pledges in '25 about \$100,000. Need '26 pledges closer to \$110,000. If we're sending out letters to those in town as well as a letter to the congregation, these letters should be different. Future money Idea: Plainfield Church planning on closing (which will take time) but perhaps our church could host / continue their current and popular summer music program. Randy to talk with person in charge of Plainfield Cong. Church program. Annie to talk with Mary Link. David to talk with Bert re sending something to the wider community.

Pastoral Review - still trying to meet

Communications: Will develop a postcard for Advent events.

Office Manager: current paper cutter not sharp enough to do the job. Name of sharpener given to Virginia (Bruce Gardner / Ludwig Rd. 413-231-7020)

Fall Festival: It's happening!

Pastor's Report: Plans for paternity leave - David to take 2 wks off after baby is born (due date 1/6/26) and 3 months after Easter. Sabbatical will be postponed for a year or so.

Transformation Team: Survey is almost ready. Plan for all church Mutual Ministry Review "retreat" Nov. 8 (date later changed to Nov. 22). Church History Night scheduled for 12/9, focusing on church's more recent history, 5-7 p.m. with simple supper of soup and bread. Bruce to help with church history. Lori to interview the Deacons shortly. Kare to interview St. John's. Holly to speak on the Transformation Team Nov. 2.

Clerk's report: information dispensed re whose terms are ending in '25 (really as of 1/26).

Other

Date of Annual Meeting: decided to hold it Feb. 1 (not in January due to unknown date of baby's arrival)

Closing prayer by Rev. David

Next Church Council Mtg. Dec. 14

Next Congregational Meeting: Because we are gathering for our church retreat Nov. 22 (new date as of typing up these notes) there will be no Cong. Mtg. in Nov.

Wendy Pree, note taker

