

THE DEACON'S SPIRIT

DATE: MAY 2026
Volume 255 • Issue 255

The newsletter of St. Stephen Lutheran Church

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Office Hours:

Mondays and Thursdays
from 8am—3pm
Wednesdays working from home

Office Closed:

Monday, May 25th in observance of
Memorial Day

Deadlines:

Bulletin: Wednesday by 8:00 a.m.
Newsletter: 3rd Thursday of the month.

Facebook:

Join us to watch a livestream service
every Sunday at 9am at
<https://www.facebook.com/wausausslc>

Worship Telecast:

Our Worship Services are telecast on
Spectrum channel 980/TDS channel 14
on Sundays at 12pm (this is the previous
Sundays' service), Mondays at 3pm, and
Tuesdays at 10am and 10:30pm.



Mother's Day Slide Show

We will be having a slide show honoring mothers on Mother's Day which is Sunday, May 10th, during the announcements. Please submit your favorite photo of you and your mother and/or a photo of you and your children/grandchildren. Please, no more than one photo from each category. All photos (submitted electronically) must be to Nancy Henke by Wednesday, May 6th. If you would like to submit a photo electronically, email to nhenke@sslcwausau.com. It would be preferable to have electronic submissions in a jpg. format. Please include the names of the people in the photos with your submissions. **IF YOU SUBMITTED A PHOTO LAST YEAR, THAT PHOTO WILL BE USED.** If you have questions, contact Nancy at 715-845-7858.

Pastor Karoline Schwantes/Phone: 715-370-5514/Email: prkaroline@sslcwausau.com

Merger has been a major topic of conversation around here lately. Much discernment, prayer, and hard work has gone into the process, and this weekend our congregations vote on making the merger official! Transition and uncertainty can be hard, but there is also a large sense of excitement and hope as we move together in the future. There are a lot of feelings that will be bubbling up throughout and more time taken to get to know one another and to live into what it means to walk together to celebrate Christ's love!



I wanted to share this prayer that was crafted together by the transition team.

Transition Work Group Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

As we explore Walking Together in Christ, we ask:

To be faithful and responsive to each other.

To be honest, open, patient, and accepting with grace.

To allow others to not agree,

to avoid being easily offended and to seek clarification on points of difference.

To avoid personal agendas and to be respectful of opinions.

To continue to ask questions and to listen first and then speak, speaking only for ourselves.

And to let GOD and the Holy Spirit guide us along this path as we walk together in HIS name.

We prayed it together each time we've met as a team and as work groups. It was created by teams of varying people who have now come to see ourselves as a single team. It has helped us stay focused on who God is calling us to be and how we listen to the Holy Spirit. This includes listening deeply to each other and to you. All of these things remain important as we come together as a community of faith, that we continue to pray and discern how the Holy Spirit is leading us. Also, that we continue to listen deeply to one another, how we continue to ask questions and live together in grace.

Pastor Karoline

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

St. Stephen Calendar of Events						May 2026	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
					1	2	9:00 Stephen's Angels
3 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 6:30 AA	4 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 6:30 GriefShare	5 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 4:00 Trust Fund Mtg. 5:00 Executive Comm. Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	6 9:00 Quilting at Pilgrim 5:30 Bell Choir 5:30 Confirmation 6:30 Choir Practice	7 8:30 Quilting 11:00 Staff Mtg. 6:00 Al-Anon 6:30 Worship at Pilgrim	8	9	
10 Confirmation Mother's Day 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 6:30 AA	11 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 6:30 GriefShare	12 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 5:30 Council Mtg. 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	13 11:15 Women's Luncheon at BB Jack's 1:00 Women's Bible Study 6:30 Choir Practice	14 8:00am—3:00pm Rummage Sale at Pilgrim 8:30 Quilting 1:00 Worship Comm. Mtg. 6:00 Al-Anon 6:30 Worship at Pilgrim	15 8:00am—3:00pm Rummage Sale at Pilgrim	16 8:00am—1:00pm Rummage Sale at Pilgrim 9:00am—4:00pm Saturday Crafterday	
17 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 6:30 AA	18 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 6:30 Property Comm. Mtg. MEMORIAL DEADLINE FOR MAY	19 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	20	21 8:30 Quilting 6:00 Al-Anon 6:00 Special Olympics 6:30 Worship at Pilgrim NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	22 NO SCHOOL	23	
24 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 6:30 AA	25 Memorial Day 3:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum NO SCHOOL OFFICE CLOSED	26 10:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 10:30 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum	27	28 6:00 Al-Anon 6:30 Worship at Pilgrim	29	30	
31 9:00 Worship 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 980/Spectrum 12:00 Worship Telecast Ch. 14/TDS 6:30 AA							

ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS



Anniversaries

The following couples are celebrating their May Wedding Anniversaries.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

May 4th

Ben & Peggy Roble

May 5th

Allen & Susan Brouchous

May 20th

Gregory & Kim Grau

Elroy & Faye Schalow

May 25th

John & Connie Schneider

May 30th

Edward & Shirley Schwede



Birthday Blessings

The following people are celebrating May Birthdays

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

May 2nd

Jerelyn Weinke

Seth Wiskow

May 3rd

Allen Seymour

May 5th

Elizabeth Lenoble

John Seehafer

May 7th

Rachel Tordsen

May 9th

Patty Pippenger

May 13th

Jessica Dabler

May 14th

Jane Seubert

May 15th

Susan Flaker Johnson

Randy Van Natta

May 17th

Davis Kole

Terry Lyon

May 18th

Pastor Karoline Schwantes

May 19th

Debra Zahrt

May 21st

Joan Ninnemann

May 22nd

Julie Cheyka-Sawyer

May 28th

Melissa Peters

May 31st

Thomas Utecht



Funerals

"...in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to almighty God..."

Florence Beese ~ March 25, 2026

Sandra Schilling ~ April 3, 2026

John Bandock ~ April 4, 2026

Benevolence

Through your support of St. Stephen in the month of March 2026, we were able to contribute to the following ministry:

ELCA National & Synod Support \$569

This is the third month of our unified budget in which we now give four and one half percent (4.5%) of our current expense receipts and loose plate offerings for benevolence. The above amount is based on the income of \$12,643 for March.

St. Stephen Family Checkbook

For the month of March 2026 and the year to date, the St. Stephen family checkbook looked like this:

March 1—31, 2026

What we received.....\$19,393.

What we spent.....(\$23,756.)

Our balance.....(\$ 4,363.)

January 1—March 31, 2026

What we received.....\$59,716.

What we spent.....(\$72,477.)

Our balance.....(\$12,761.)

Order of Importance of Memorials and Other Special Offerings

Primary Funds: Current Expense Receipts, Building Improvement/Maintenance Fund, and Sustainability Trust Fund.

Secondary Funds: Bell Choir Fund, Brick Maintenance (tuck pointing), Choral Fund, ELCA Scholarship Fund, Good Neighbor Fund, Library Fund, Organ Fund, Quilters Memorial Fund, Parish House Alarm, Technology Fund, and WELCA Clean Water Fund.

Other Funds: Confirmation/National Youth Gathering, Faith Enrichment Fund, Major Church Improvement, Missionary Sponsorship, Rooted in Faith (Crossways Capital Improvement) Fund, Seidel/Meyer Scholarship, Seminary Scholarship, and World Hunger.

Church Rummage Sale

The Pilgrim/St. Stephen Rummage Sales will be occurring at Pilgrim this year, but you can drop your treasures off at St. Stephen like years past. The Angels will be processing the items and then taking them over to Pilgrim. We are in need of household items like towels, blankets, kettles, utensils, coffee makers, baking pans, and glassware. We will also accept table lamps, wall hangings, working radios, picture frames, flower pots, and, of course, holiday decor. No large electronics like TVs, VCRs, or computers. You may drop off items through May 8th. After that the drop off will be at Pilgrim by the doors leading into Fellowship Hall. The first sale is May 14th thru the 16th and the second sale is June 4th thru the 6th. There will be a Bake Sale during our Church Rummage Sale. If you would like to bring an item for the Bake Sale, we will be pricing those yummys on May 13th at Pilgrim. You may drop Bake Sale items off from 10am until noon and 1pm until 3pm. Thank you to all who donate.

Crossways and Camp on Location at Rib Mountain

Crossways Camps have been providing amazing outdoor ministry for our congregation and synod for many years. Outdoor ministry has huge impact on the faith of people of all ages. This is the second year that they are offering "Camp on Location," a one-week day camp taking place at Rib Mountain June 22-25. They also have many options for youth, families, and even seniors! Check it out at crosswayscamps.org or e-mail info@crosswayscamps.org or pick up a brochure at church!

Graduates

Are you or a member of your family graduating from high school, a tech college, or a 4 year college? Please let us know so we can help you celebrate this milestone during our worship service on Sunday, June 7th! Submit a photo to Nancy Henke at nhenke@sslwausau.com and let her know if you will be present for the service on June 7th. Photos of graduates will be in the announcements before the service.

Lenten Offerings

We collected a total of \$853 from the offerings from Ash Wednesday, February 18th thru Palm Sunday, March 29th for the Wausau Free Clinic. A check will be cut and sent to the clinic. We averaged 15-20 people for each Midweek Lent Lunch Church Service.

Saturday Crafterday

Saturday Crafterday on May 16th. Bring your favorite craft and play! Join us for a fun and relaxing day of crafting and conversation. We will be meeting upstairs in the choir/arts room. This activity is FREE! Lots of space, natural light, and long tables. Elevator access. Bring a snack to share. Coffee provided. Bring your own lunch or there are lots of food options downtown. Card making supplies available. The church address is 512 McClellan St., downtown Wausau. Parking available on the street or in the St. Stephen lot on McClellan (on the other side of the brick house).

Summer Song Madness

Throughout our summer worship services we will be voting to select our Hymn of the Year 2026 in bracket style playoffs. Submit your suggestion for your favorite hymns by May 17th. On May 24th, Pentecost, we will be launching our brackets and voting will be open each week! How to submit suggestions: E-mail Pastor Karoline or fill out a Song Nomination Form at church. Hymns must be in our hymnal (500, 581, 720, 728 will not be eligible). Info will be coming out in the next newsletter for how to vote. Will launch on Memorial Day Weekend, May 24th!

Volunteer Needed

Shirley Kasten has decided to retire from her volunteer job printing and collating bulletins. This job takes around an hour and is usually done on Thursday afternoons. If you would be interested in taking over as bulletin printer/collator, please contact Nancy Henke in the church office at nhenke@sslwausau.com or call her at 715-845-7858. THANK YOU, SHIRLEY for your years of dedicated volunteerism! I will miss seeing you every week!

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study Group will meet at BB Jack's on Wednesday, May 13th at 11:15am for a luncheon. There will be a Bible Study after lunch at the church at 1pm. Any women in the congregation who would like to attend are WELCOME! Please call Jane Seubert to RSVP at 715-675-3644 by Monday, May 11th. Thank you!

TRANSITION WORKGROUPS UPDATE

Walking Together to Celebrate Christ's Love:

Doing Outreach Better Together

April, 2026

St. Stephen and Pilgrim congregations will consider resolutions on April 26th to affirm a merger and become one congregation; one church family. The Transition Team's work groups have looked at how this merger may shape worship, prayer life, church governance, finances, safety, and more.

The Outreach Transition Work Group identified programs both congregations already support, including ELCA's annual day of service, "God's Work Our Hands", and community meals. The rummage and bake sale is another example of outreach. This year, it will be held in Pilgrim's Fellowship Hall, in conjunction with southeast side neighborhood rummage sales.

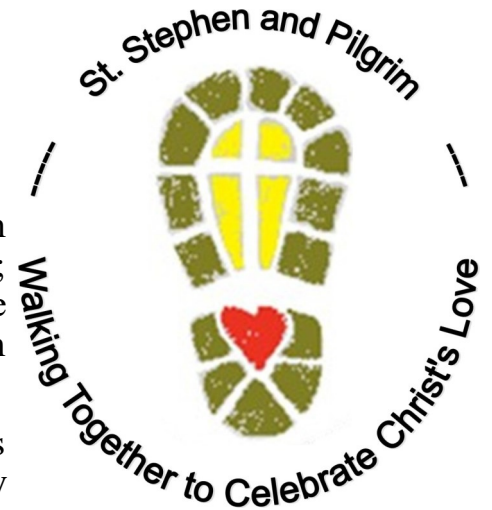
Jeff Kessel coordinates the "Blessings That Give Hope" ministry at Pilgrim, and he anticipates expanding the program, which provides food, personal hygiene items, school supplies, and clothes to students at four east side schools. Regarding the many outreach programs being done throughout the church calendar, Kessel stated: "Having a wide variety of joint outreach programs means more opportunities to give to a ministry that you are passionate about."

The work group encouraged communication between members, using email lists and gathering data about existing programs with the goal of "doing better together." Look for your outreach program leaders to introduce themselves during Sunday announcements and be available for conversation during fellowship.

The Outreach Work Group concluded its work in April. Other work groups continue to explore the merger, such as long- and short-term facilities usage, policies and procedures, and the Celebration Team.

Contact Nancy at St. Stephen or Fred at Pilgrim to get connected with an outreach program leader.

Pictures below are from the Easter services at Pilgrim and St. Stephen.



APRIL 2026 MEMORIALS

In loving memory of Florence Beese

Current Expense Fund -- \$100

Family & Friends

Capital Campaign Fund

In loving memory of Florence Beese –
Kelly Brown

In loving memory of Chuck Deffner –
Lynn Deffner

In loving memory of my Husband, Bill Lewitzke; Daughter, Judy Spear; Granddaughter, Jodie Gaulke; and Sister, Debra Johnson –
Joanne Lewitzke

In loving memory of Kathleen Jaecks and Marjorie Nimz –
Sarah Lonsdorf

In loving memory of Florence Beese –
Sarah Lonsdorf

In loving memory of John Baddock –
Sarah Lonsdorf

In honor of my Dad & Mom, Ed & Shirley Schwede –
Russell Schwede

In loving memory of my Sister and Best Friend, Deb Johnson who passed away April 25, 2023 –
Jane Seubert

In honor of the ladies of the church whose donated time during funerals has helped and is helping many people in need –
Women's Bible Study Group

Sign Fund

In loving memory of Violet Hackbart –
Roger & Pam Hackbart

In loving memory of Violet Hackbart –
Jim & Bonnie Von Rueden

TRANSITION TEAM MINUTES ~ 03/17/2026

“Walking Together to Celebrate Christ’s Love.”

Present at the meeting: Dick Holster, Pr. Karoline Schwantes, Verlyn Oelke, Charlie Freiberg, Frank Koerten, Sue Koerten, Jim Von Rueden, and Jeff Kessel.

We read our Transition Prayer in unison.

Frank reports that two local churches have expressed interest in looking at Pilgrim. In fact, the pastors of one of the two churches will meet with the Long Term Facilities Use Work Group at 5:30 pm this evening. The visit will include a walk-through of Pilgrim. We agreed that this is exciting news.

Update on the health of one Pilgrim member who is hospitalized.

Brief discussion of review and distribution of meeting minutes.

- Jeff sought clarification of one sentence in the March 3rd minutes.
- The team decided that after a draft of meeting minutes is sent to the team, Jeff, who takes the minutes, should only wait for 2-4 days for comments and suggestions before sending the final version out to the team, Pr. Cath, Pr. Dara, and Pr. Nate.

Constitution and Bylaws issues:

- Verlyn has not heard from Pr. Heintz, our synod appointed consultant on constitution issues, to discuss remaining questions that we have on a number of issues.

Discussion of resolutions on merger issues that will be presented to both congregations:

- Pr. Cath has indicated that the congregations need to vote on two resolutions:
 - A resolution to affirm our commitment to a merger.
 - A resolution that will affect the merger.
- We learned that Pr. Dara will provide the resolution(s).
- The synod must define what steps are necessary to come up with wording for the resolutions, establish a timeline, etc. In other words, what are the things we must do?
- One specific issue is how to transfer the membership of Pilgrim members to St. Stephen. One conclusion is that we accept or transfer all Pilgrim members into the St. Stephen roster on the day of the merger.
- Pr. Karoline volunteered to discuss our concerns with Pr. Dara. Time was taken to develop a list of questions for Pr. Dara.

Discussion of Pilgrim’s Service of Leave Taking, the last Sunday service at Pilgrim:

- Pr. Dara has provided dates that synod representatives are available to officiate. Specifically, the first choice is July 19th, and the alternate date is July 12th.
- The date for the Service of Leave Taking needs to be approved by the Councils or Joint Council and the Celebration Work Group.
- It is noted that the Service of Leave Taking is separate from a Celebration Service.

Updates on some of the work groups and other events.

- Communications: the group will have an April press release printed in the April Deacon’s Spirit and the April Progress.
- Long Term Facilities Use: An architect has been contacted to do walk-throughs; things are proceeding. This work group will meet next on March 23rd.
- Legal: work is progressing. We were informed that a special Transition Team meeting may be required to act on recommendations.
- We discussed the mechanics of scheduling various events and meetings such as God’s Work Our Hands in September.

We continue to aim for the two congregations to meet on April 26th to vote on a merger resolution or resolutions.

Our next meeting: 3:00 pm April 7th at St. Stephen.

We concluded the meeting with the Lord’s Prayer.

Submitted by Jeff Kessel

“Walking Together to Celebrate Christ’s Love.”

Present at the meeting: Dick Holster, Pr. Karoline Schwantes, Verlyn Oelke, Charlie Freiberg, Pam Hackbart, Frank Koerten, Sarah Lonsdorf, Sue Koerten, Jim Von Rueden, and Jeff Kessel.

We read our Transition Prayer in unison.

Minutes for the last Transition Team meeting on 3/17. There were no corrections.

Verlyn asked the team if everyone has reviewed the document titled Summary of March 24th meeting. That meeting of Church officers, transition team leaders, and Pastor Karoline was called by Dick Holster after speaking with the lawyer referred by the Synod. Everyone has reviewed the document and there are no corrections.

Drafts of the resolutions that will be presented to the Pilgrim congregation and the St. Stephen congregation were passed out.

- Some wording changes were made to Pilgrim’s Resolution 1.
- Resolution 3 on revised Bylaws was eliminated; that will be dealt with in October or so.
- The mechanics of resolution preparation was discussed.
- Meeting quorums were discussed.
- The resolutions will be presented to both councils for approval. It was decided that the councils will be polled electronically today and asked to respond within 24 hours.
- The congregational meetings to vote on the resolutions are still planned for April 26th. The required 1st notice will be made to the congregations on Sunday, 4/12. The 2nd required second notice to the congregations will be made on Sunday, 4/19.

Constitution and Bylaws issues. Verlyn reports that clarifications were obtained in a meeting with Pr. Heintz, the constitution committee chairperson.

- The Constitutions can be approved in meetings one month apart.
- Approval of the Bylaws only requires one meeting. One team member wants the new Bylaws approved asap.
- Use of a Consensus Resolution/Motion was discussed.
- The aim is to have the second meeting (to approve the Constitution) in February 2027. Further the Bylaws can be approved at that meeting.
- Interim governance structure was discussed.
- The aim is to have the new Bylaws by 4/12. The councils will vote on them the 16th.

As noted in prior minutes a one-day workshop with Pr. Cath is being planned. Pam gave an update on planning. Topics for the workshop include grief, handling change, and moving forward. Pam asked the team for suggestions on more topics. One suggestion was “establishing a new blended family”.

Pam announced that she will be the lead person on the Inreach work group because Jean Trempe is cutting back on her transition work. Inreach includes education and visitation.

Dick informs the team that a combined budget is being developed.

Miscellaneous updates.

- There was a discussion of job changes as Fred Patten, Pilgrim’s Office Administrator, moves to a position at St. Stephen.
- Once a merger is complete the Transition Team will be deactivated. Work groups will report to the Council.

We continue to aim for the two congregations to meet on April 26th to vote on a merger resolution or resolutions.

Our next meeting: 3:00 pm April 21st at St. Stephen.

We concluded the meeting with the Lord’s Prayer.

Submitted by Jeff Kessel

TRANSITION TEAM MINUTES ~ 04/21/2026

“Walking Together to Celebrate Christ’s Love.”

Present at the meeting: Dick Holster, Pr. Karoline Schwantes, Verlyn Oelke, Charlie Freiberg, Frank Koerten, Sarah Lonsdorf, Sue Koerten, and Jim Von Rueden.

An appraisal of the Pilgrim church building has been scheduled.

- Karen Mikalofsky (from Peak Appraisal) is the appraiser.
- Quoted charge will be \$1400-\$1800
- This bill should be sent to St. Stephen.

Sunday, April 26th is merger voting day.

- Pastor Dara will be attending the church service at Pilgrim and staying afterwards.
- The plan is to have the vote completed at Pilgrim.
- Frank will call Dick with the result, then proceed with the voting process at St. Stephen.

Today’s discussion topics included:

- Church envelopes. This will need to be addressed by the Council in the fall. Currently, Pilgrims will continue to use their envelopes until the end of the year.
- SCRIP program. Fred and Cathy Teske have been communicating.
- Walk-through by 2 groups showing interest in Pilgrim’s property.
- Grieving process.
- The utilities will need to continue at Pilgrim through (at least) July, which includes phone and electricity.

Pastor Dara’s request for a merger package.

- She emailed a list of 10-15 items that should be completed before June 8th.
- Fred, Jim, and Verlyn will reply to each of these items and will have this document finished by the next Council meeting (May 12th) so Council members can preview it.

After June 8th, the Council make-up will be completed with (hopefully) the current open positions filled.

Historical information:

- The first time the two transition teams (Pilgrim’s and St. Stephen’s) met was on June 15, 2025 and the choir has been together for 4 years.

Submitted by Sarah Lonsdorf



Pentecost is May 24th

For \$6.00, purchase a red geranium for the church's celebration of Pentecost on Sunday, May 24th. The plants can be taken home after the worship service or donated for planting on the Pilgrim and St. Stephen church grounds.

Orders and payments are due in the church office by Sunday, May 10th.



Geraniums

Name _____

_____ x \$6.00 = _____
of Plants Total Cost

In Memory of _____

In Celebration of _____

Number of Plants
to be Picked Up:

Number of Plants
to be Donated:

COUNCIL MINUTES ~ APRIL 16, 2026

Present: Dick Holster, Jim Von Rueden, Betsy Utecht, Sarah Lonsdorf, Darrin Koehler, John Kronenwetter, Pastor Karoline, and Shauna Robinson

Absent: Sue Holster, Vicki Romang, Jacque Schremp, and Jeff Blomquist

Pastor's Report: Pastor Karoline provided a written report. Additionally, a workshop with Pastor Dara has been scheduled for August 16th. Pastor Karoline also discussed FaithX Neighborhood Insights Reports, which provide demographic information for the area surrounding a church. This could be a useful resource for future evangelism.

A motion was made and carried to accept Pastor Karoline's report and to accept the March 10, 2026 Council meeting minutes without changes.

Treasurer's Report: The total capital is \$ 14,500.89.

A motion was made and carried to accept the treasurer's report.

Committee Reports:

Good Stewards: No written report was provided. The Community Dinner will take place on April 26th.

Property: A written report was provided.

Worship: A written report was provided from the March 12, 2026 meeting.

Trust Fund: A written report was provided from the April 12, 2026 meeting.

A motion was made and carried to accept the committee reports.

Old Business:

- Memorial Fund Order – No change to the order this month. Current Expense Fund is number one, Building Improvement and Maintenance Fund is number two, and Sustainability Trust Fund is number three.

New Business:

- Invoice Approval—The total amount of invoices paid was \$21,857.38.
 - **A motion was made and carried to approve the paid invoices.**
- Capital Campaign Update—The loan balance was \$95,436.95 as of March 31, 2026.
- **A motion was made and carried to receive Phil and Virginia Giese as members by affirmation of faith.**
- Combined Pilgrim and St. Stephen Rummage Sales will take place at Pilgrim on May 14-16 and June 4-5.
- Synod Assembly—June 4-6, 2026 in Oshkosh.
 - Shirley Ostrem was selected as St. Stephen's first delegate for the Synod Assembly.
 - Shauna Robinson is no longer able to participate as St. Stephen's second delegate.
 - **A motion was made and carried to select John Kronenwetter as St. Stephen's second delegate for the Synod Assembly.**
- The current plan is to have combined worship at St. Stephen on Sundays beginning on May 24. Discussions will continue regarding the continuation of, and different possibilities for, Thursday evening services.
- A combined Pilgrim/St. Stephen newsletter will be issued starting in July.
- Council meetings will continue during the summer, with combined Council meetings in May and June.
- Transition Team—Update
 - Work groups will continue following the Special Congregational Meeting on April 26th.
 - The next Transition Team meeting will take place on April 21st.
- Special Congregational Meeting—April 26, 2026.
 - Resolutions for the meeting were approved by the Council via email.
 - **A motion was made and carried to accept the revised combined 2026 budget.**
- **A motion was made and carried to change the investment policy for all funds to 65% in stocks and bonds and 35% in shorter-term investments.**

The next Council meeting will be on Tuesday, May 12, at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was made and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betsy Utecht, Council Secretary