St Mark's Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting
September 15, 2026

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Attendance

Date: September 15, 2026	**Location:** St. Mark's Church
Time Started: 7:03PM	**Time Ended:** 8:50PM

Invited	**Apr 21**	**May 26**	**June 18**	**Sept 15**	**Oct 21**	**Nov 25**	**Dec 16**	**Jan 20**	**Feb 17**	**Mar 17**	**April 21**
Jen Polet (S)	P	E	P	P							
Brian Lorch (T)	E	P	E	P							
Nels Kristenson	P	P	P	P							
Marijus Timmerman (C)	P	P	P	P							
Lyndon Graff (VC)	P	P	P	P							
Kurt Simonsen	P	P	P	E							
Sheila Matsubara	P	E	P	P							
Brenda Catchpole	E	P	E	P							
Mabel Harrington				P							
Guests:											
Rev. Vince Solomon	P	E	E								

Minutes

1. Opening Devotion - led by Lyndon.

2. Approval of Agenda

   MSC CC-2026-36 - That the Agenda for September 15, 2026 be approved.

3. Approval of Minutes

   MSC CC-2026-37 - That the Minutes of the Council Meeting dated June 18, 2026 be approved.

4. Business Arising from minutes

5. Finance -see report

6. Reports
   a) Chair - see report

   MSC CC-2026-38 - That Mabel Harrington be appointed to council to fill the existing vacancy until the next AGM in April 2027.

   MSC CC-2026-39 - That the following persons be recommended to affirm their baptism on Reformation Sunday October, 25, 20027: Ashton Saunders, Mariela Kisoso, Jackson Palmer, Jens Kristenson.

   MSC CC-2026-40 - That Da Boy Next Door be contracted to provide Fall 2026 and Spring 2027 yard clean up service and sidewalk show removal service November 2026 through to March 2027.

   MSC CC-2026-41: That the recommendation of the St. Mark's Youth and Young Adult Committee to hire Michael Gingrich as Youth Group Leader for the 2026-2027 year be accepted.

7. Committee Reports:

   - Sunday School
   - Social Ministry
   - Property
   - Call Committee
   - Worship

8. New Business:

Melissa's Time Allocation

MSC CC-2026-42: That Melissa Gingrich as a member of the National Church Program Committee for Worship (PCW) be allowed to reallocate 18 hours per year from her normal duties to support the PCW and that this time must be used in June, July or August.

Melissa's Coffeehouse time was also discussed and will remain at 5 hours.

Adjournment 8:50 PM

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2026 (Sheila)
Future dates: November 25 (Kurt), December 6 Congregational Budget Meeting, January 20 (Brian), February 17 (Brenda), March 17 (Nels), April 11 AGM, April 20

Finance Report – September 2026

Overview

Income	Latest Month	YTD Comparison as of August 31	
Offerings via	**August**	**This Year**	**Last Year**
Envelopes	2,280	14,601	14,396
PAD	14,046	108,663	107,145
E-Transfer	2,985	26,966	22,291
Loose	45	350	382
Securities		11,640	7,737
From Other Charities		19	72
Total Offerings	**19,356**	**162,239**	**152,023**
Other Income			
Gain / Loss on Investments		- 660	267
Interest	205	1,872	1,578
Facility Rentals		4,370	2,885
Misc. Income		529	172
Total Income	**19,561**	**168,349**	**156,926**
Expenditures	**11,359**	**124,182**	**176,150**
Operating Surplus	**8,202**	**44,167**	**-19,224**

Of Note:

- **Income**
  - Total offerings up just over $10K year over year.
  - Notable increases in e-transfers and stock donations.

Expenses

- Extraordinary Expenses in August included:
  - Annual fire alarm inspection plus replacement of one backup battery ($621).
  - Supply pastor expenses (3 x $240)
  - Renewal of One License (for use of music / displaying lyrics) $543
  - Ron Long reimbursed for mileage associated with visiting shut-ins ($256)
- Common Mission Support reimbursements to the Synod continue remain on schedule. Remittances are pegged at 75% of budget allocation with top up planned in December once year-end giving total is known.

Music Director Hours

- As of August 30, accumulated unpaid OT sits at 11.5 hours. Timecards are being submitted weekly. Council Chair and Treasurer met with Music Director in August. A plan is in place to take "time off in lieu" to erase banked OT hours.
- In addition, one week of vacation time will be taken in November

Recurring Rental Groups

- Village Green Dancers will not be returning this fall as they have found another venue more suited to their needs.
- Archimedes Math and RTAM Choir have also declined to renew contracts.
- Rental income from these three groups in 2025 was approximately $5,800.

Other Notables

- Rough calculation of financial position if full-time pastor had been in place plus no vacancy in office admin position shows an operating deficit of $8,500
- Calculations did not discount $3,000 expended for MG to attend National Worship Workshop in Yellowknife.
- For comparative purposes, as of August 31, 2025, the operating deficit was just over $19,000

Full Financial Statements

- Please see September council meeting folder for August financial statements, bank statements and bank reconciliation report.

Respectfully Submitted by
Brian Lorch, Treasurer.

Finance Committee Meeting Notes – September 9, 2026

Present: Rachel Martens, Cole Parsons, Brian Lorch, Marijus Timmerman, Charlie Polet

1. **Houston Scholarship – logistics for transferring control to St. Mark's**

The transfer of funds held in the Houston Scholarship Trust fund have not yet arrived. Cheque will be made payable to St. Mark's. Currently, our understanding is that funds are to be segregated from other St. Mark's accounts. Hence, we assume that Charlie, as trustee, will open a bank account and St. Mark's will issue a cheque to transfer funds to that account.

Still to be determined is how / when Charlie will communicate updates to the council about funds held in trust (e.g., market value, earned interest) and what direction will be given to Charlie as to the type of instruments the funds may be invested in (e.g., bonds, stocks, GICs, etc.)

Charlie to make inquiries with work colleagues concerning CRA reporting requirements for funds held in trust.

2. Review of Latest Financials

a) Financial Statements as of August 31. Noted that we continue to have significant operating surpluses. YTD, income has exceeded expenses by just over $44,000.
Ongoing issue is the variance between book cost and market value of bond funds held in the TD Direct Investing Account. Current practice is to not use a mark to market approach.

b) Rental Income – loss of recurring income. Village Green Dancers will not renew its recurring use agreement as they are relocated to a venue with more space. We have also been notified that Archimedes Math Group has suspended operations.

c) Disbursement of refugee sponsorship funds. Noted that the family we are sponsoring will be arriving in Winnipeg on September 24 meaning our commitment to provide monthly stipends will begin soon. Monies to be drawn from the Refugee Sponsorship Fund. Likely process will be to cut cheques mid-month to be delivered to the family on or near the first day of the following month. This will allow time for collecting signatures and delivery of the cheque before rent payments are due.

d) Investment of surplus cash. Balance in TD Direct Investing Investment Savings Account (ISA) is $126,500 and currently earns

1.8% interest. At some point, we may want to transfer funds from the ISA to the chequing account to maintain a minimum monthly balance of $45,000 in the chequing account. If minimum monthly balance falls below $45K, a monthly service fee of $72 is assessed.

3. HR Items

a) Director of Music – Banked Overtime Update. As of August 30, accumulated unpaid OT sits at 11.5 hours. Timecards are being submitted weekly.

b) Reporting period for payroll. Agreed that for hourly-paid employees, we will transition back to a schedule where reported hours during a 15-day period (e.g., Sept 1 to Sept 15) would be submitted by the employee within a few days of the end of that period, reported to Payworks by the deadline in order for payment to be made on the next pay date (e.g. Sept 30 for hours reported for the period Sept 1 to Sept 15).

c) Brief discussion of queries submitted by the Director of Music regarding her appointment by the MNO Synod to the Program Committee for Worship of the National Church. Major issue relates to whether time spent on PCW activity can be covered by St. Mark's. BL to prepare list of options for council to consider.

4. Replacement Value Update

A replacement value study was conducted in 2021. Cole reported that such studies are normally undertaken every five years. Insured values have increased yearly except for no change between 2023 and 2024. Increases are those recommended by AON.

Year Renewed	Building	Contents	% Change Building	% Change Contents
2021	3,500,000	360,000		
2022	3,766,875	463,500	7.6	28.8
2023	4,143,563	495,945	10.0	7.0
2024	4,143,563	495,945	0.0	0.0
2025	4,568,277	546,779	10.2	10.2

2026	4,888,057	585,054	7.0	7.0

Agreed to seek council's opinion as to whether we should contract for an updated replacement value study. BL to seek info on approximate cost of updating the replacement value study.

5. Budget 2027 timeline

Agreed to adopt the schedule proposed (see below). BL to send out requests to committees and staff for input.

6 Other Business / Items for Information

a) GST Rebate. Latest submission was made for the period Jan 1 – June 30, 2026. Normally submitted every six months. Rebate automatically deposited into our chequing account approximately three weeks after submission.

b) 2025 Charitable Return. Was completed and submitted ahead of the June 30 deadline.

c) Offering counters. Schedule has been filled out through to the end of 2026. Currently have five teams. Offering is counted every other Sunday.

7. Date for Next Meeting

Wednesday, October 14 to complete first draft of 2027 budget.

Proposed Budget 2027 Timeline

September 11	Info package distributed to committee chairs.
October 9	Deadline for input from staff / committees
October 19	Finance Committee finalizes 1st draft. Post documents to council meeting folder.
October 21	Presentation of First Draft to Council
November 20	Finance Committee finalizes 2nd draft. Post documents to council meeting folder.
November 23	**Official Notice of Congregational Meeting sent by email to members**
November 25	Council finalizes budget for presentation to congregation.
November 29	Limited number of hard copies available in Parish Hall
November 30	Proposed budget emailed to members.
December 6	Congregational Budget meeting.

Sunday School Report – Summer 2026

The Sunday School program concluded a successful 2025-2026 year with an enjoyable End-of-Year Sunday School Celebration at the end of May. We are thankful for the students, families, and volunteers who participated throughout the year and helped make the celebration a wonderful way to close the season.

During the summer months, preparations have been underway for the upcoming Sunday School year. New Sunday School curriculum materials were ordered and have been received by Alisha Sherlock. These resources are for the current liturgical year and the new year as well.

Sunday School will resume on September 13, 2026.

The presentation of Grade 5 Bibles was discussed with the Worship Committee. After consideration, it was decided that the Bibles will be presented on Confirmation Sunday, providing a meaningful opportunity to recognize and encourage our young learners as they continue to grow in their faith.

We are grateful for our current Sunday School teaching team:

- Shirley
- Marla
- Cyan
- Ken
- Alisha

Their dedication and commitment are greatly appreciated. However, there is a continuing need for additional Sunday School teachers and volunteers. Several of our current teachers are committing to teaching on a weekly basis, which can be demanding over time. Recruiting additional volunteers would help share the responsibility, provide flexibility in scheduling, and support the long-term sustainability of the program.
Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Sunday School ministry through teaching, volunteering, prayer, and encouragement. We look forward to another blessed year of learning and growing together in Christ.

Respectfully submitted,
Alisha Sherlock
Sunday School Co-ordinator
St. Mark's Lutheran Church

Social Ministry Report – September 2026

Friends of Creation: Two more FOC Sundays have been organized and coordinated with Worship Committee (Sept 13 and Oct. 4). The program wraps up Oct. 31st and we have raised a little over $5500.00 to date towards our goal of $7500.00. Social Ministry will be contributing $500.00 to the program this month from its budget.

Sponsored Family: Rhonda Lorch has been informed that our sponsored family is arriving in Winnipeg on Sept. 24. Plans are underway to assist the family with their settlement by identifying their needs and seeking donations of household goods from our congregation.

Harvest Volunteer Program: This program has received very good feedback and is resuming this month after a summer break.

Tuxedo Family Resource Centre: In an ePort to strengthen St. Mark's ties with our local community, Social Ministry has been researching ways to help the Tuxedo Family Resource Centre (Doncaster Street), such as donating school supplies or used clothing for those families living in government-subsidized housing in the area. Our committee will be considering this further and planning a project for 2027.

Webpage Revision: Our committee is updating the Social Ministry webpage on the church's website, targeting completion for Oct. 31st. We hope to do this task annually.

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: An E-News announcement is planned for Orange Shirt Day (Sept. 30th)with suggested activities.

Land Acknowledgment: Based on a suggestion from the Call Committee, Social Ministry has decided to review our church's Indigenous land acknowledgment in 2027 to see if it would benefit from revision. As this forms part of the Welcoming Statement, we will be in touch with Worship Committee in due course. Any proposed revisions will be submitted to council for approval.

Submitted by:
K. Jennifer Moroz, Chairperson

Property Committee Report

The following are the members of the Property Committee

- Perry Kohli
- Ed Mann
- Ken Charleson
- Travis Wog
- Fred Mann (interim chair)
- Advisory Contacts: Kurt Simonson and Rob Hammerling

The following have occurred during the months of June to August:

- After the June storm, Ed Mann collected the fallen branches around the church. Fred Mann disposed of them at the Brady Land Fill site. No other damage to the roof or property was noticed.
- Fred Mann replaced the fluorescent light in the women's washroom.
- Ed Mann arranged with Dominion Carpet and Cleaning for the cleaning and waxing the Parish Hall floor in July. Cost: $945.00.
- Perry Kohli replaced the loose nosing in the choir loft and repaired the door stop in Melissa's office.
- The annual fire alarm inspection was completed in August. Cost was $635.40 including replacement of one battery.
- Kurt Simonson brought to Perry's attention that the fan in the air handler unit for the parish hall was not working and Perry made arrangements with Howell Plumbing Heating and Cooling to determine the problem. Howell determined the fan motor needed replacement (estimated cost $1,500).
- Lyndon Graff completed the community garden plot project by spreading bark much around the garden paths as well as around some of the trees and flower beds.

Respectfully submitted,
Fred Mann
Interim Property Chair

Call Committee Report

The Call Committee report is pretty short for this update as we are back in a bit of a waiting period. The Congregational Profile was submitted in mid July following a review and (limited) feedback from the Bishop. Subsequently we worked with the Congregation to solicit names of possible candidates which was completed and submitted to the Bishop in mid August. The Bishop is now working to contact the potential candidates on that list as well as any others he has in mind and will present us with candidate suggestions in due course. Bishop Jason returned from holidays in mid August and indicated it would take a few weeks to contact everyone on our list so we hope to get the list of options from him sometime this month, after which we will start the interview process.

Submitted by Danielle Graff

Worship Committee

Meeting held at St. Mark's on August 5, 2026, 6:45 pm.

Those present: Melissa Gingrich, Sarah Harrington, Rachel Kristenson, Wendy Kublik, Marilyn Simonsen, Siri Kristenson

Agenda

1. Opening prayer & check-in
2. Dive into SOC (Sept & Oct)—Water Theme
3. Melissa's "take-homes" on Whitehorse Worship Arts Festival and Contemplative Retreat 2026
4. More items of note
5. Review of summer
6. New business
7. Closing prayer

1) Opening prayer & check-in

- Rachel led an opening prayer and round table check-in

2) Dive into SOC (Sept & Oct)—Water Theme

- *Each service will have a thanksgiving for baptism which includes a short call to worship, and confession and forgiveness. We'll do the creation Affirmation of Faith from last year, and otherwise the service is not too different.*
- **ACTION**: Need a visual display about water and ecosystem is needed. The font likely needs to be placed centrally or accessibly. The SOC guidebook suggestions beginning the season with dying plants in the display and then weekly additions reflecting increased water, and growth and flourishing of the ecosystem.
- Foodbank drive / offering?
    - Start September 6th to Thanksgiving
        - Mention Harvest Manitoba, highlight presence yellow bin
        - Rachel will make announcement and blurb for e-news
        - Offertory announcement (Melissa will add wording to service binder)
        - Move yellow bin into back of sanctuary
        - Marilyn will make sure it makes it to Harvest MB after thanksgiving
- Friends of Creation Sept 13th -tbc SOW social ministry leading the service
    - Come together Sunday
    - Rachel will email Marijus to pass on to committees that this is the day for coming together
    - Melissa will touch base with Sunday School about liturgy (not standard lectionary)

- Sept 20th – SOC 3 Lenise HC
- Sept 27th – SOC 4 Video sermon – Phyllis telling her story
    - Wendy Worship Leader
    - 2 weeks before promote Friday 18th
    - Provide indigenous source for purchasing Every Child Matters shirts
- Oct 4th – Lenise, but Friend of Creation might highlight end of program
    - May need to use alternate readings.
- Oct 13th – Thanksgiving
    - Leave water flourishing décor up for Thanksgiving day
    - Maybe add some harvested items

3) Melissa's "take-homes" on Whitehorse Worship Arts Festival and Contemplative Retreat 2026

- Ben Johnston-Urey and Katelyn composers
- Liturgy of healing – fresh language
- Communion liturgy – highly recommended
- Taize – opportunity for evening worship within other seasons or possibly for lent?
- Lectors
    - Powerpoint – slow changes (moments of pause fade to black)
    - Avoid flowery or cheeseball language (unnecessarily poetic)

4) More items of note:

- August and September continue with a pattern alternating communion and service of the word, Sarah confirmed that there is enough info for roster
- October is all communion because of Lenise's availability plus Thanksgiving (Jeremy) plus Confirmation (Oct 25)
- **Jeremy** has offered pulpit supply to St. Mark's as frequently as once per month.
    - How about: All Saints Sunday (Nov 1) or Peace Sunday (Nov 8)? Advent 2 (Dec 6)? He's been asked to consider Christmas Eve. Melissa will confirm his availability
- Marijus requested Worship Committee perspective on benefit of a contract with an Interim Minister, would be valuable to have theologically trained pastor to provide input for:
    - binder and worship materials wording
    - décor and appropriate representation
- Ideal to have Lenise start for Advent, Sarah to find out Lenise's availability through to December.
- **ACTION:** Confirmation**:** we'll need to be more hands on than usual in laying out the service.

    - robes, boutonnieres, flowers? – Ask Rhonda and Annette (Melissa already reached out to Annette), education committee needs to be kept informed
    - order book which has the Occasional Services liturgy
- **ACTION**: now is the time to purchase needed supplies. New mac laptop(s)? Microphones? Fabrics? Storage system?
    - Budget available for Michaël to work ahead
    - Indigenous artist commission for TRC or Monica Bailey commissioned
    - Wendy will prepare budget for fabric for Season of Creation

5) Review of summer

- binders (should bold-print be for speaker and not congregation? Not always matching PP), decided not essential to change, leave as is because it'd be a lot of work to do it for everything.
- Wendy noted some camera angles when watching livestream, discussed adding background paraments on the wall behind the pulpit, but all agreed that is only applicable to some camera angles for livestream and would likely distract in person.
- Sound seemed to go well
- Note that an extra worship binder should be provided to the supply musician so they know when additional words will be spoken. Had some instances of
- Welcome to those worshipping online? Sometimes dropped/sometimes in. Discussion around whether including too much makes the service a bit heavier, but also want to acknowledge and show appreciation for those online, to know that they are included in worship. Will likely include a brief welcome to those worshipping online.

6) New business

- Aiming for end of October 28th, 7 pm for next meeting

7) Closing prayer

- Wendy led a closing prayer

Participation in Synodical and National Church Events by Staff Members

Background

Our Music Director has, on the recommendation of Bishop Zinko, been appointed to the National Church Program Committee for Worship (PCW). The Committee takes a lead role in planning worship services and special music at National Conventions and installation services for national officials and is responsible for producing the Eternity for Today devotional booklet series. As well, it is the committee behind the annual national worship workshop like the one Melissa Gingrich attended this past summer in Whitehorse.

Appointments to the PCW are for an initial three-year term with appointees eligible to serve one additional three-year term.

The National Church does not provide remuneration for lay people who serve on national committees but they do cover travel, food and accommodation expenses. Lay people serve on these committees as volunteers and in many cases, dip into their vacation time to participate. Alternatively, they are fortunate to have a flexible work schedule that allows them to juggle responsibilities.

PCW Time Commitment

Melissa estimates the time commitment needed to participate on the PCW as follows:

- Three ZOOM committee meetings per year. Meetings run two to three hours.
- Prep time ahead of meetings (unknown)
- Fall site visit to host of the following year's National Worship Workshop. This fall, the visit takes place from Oct 17-20.
- Attendance at the National Worship Workshop (normally scheduled in the summer months)

Question from Melissa

Melissa has inquired about the extent to which time doing PCW-related work can be considered part of her workload at St. Mark's.

Precedents

Rostered ministers, on occasion, are asked to assist with Synodical or National Church activities while providing no direct remuneration to the rostered minister or the congregation they serve. As an example, Pastor Zsofi participated in the Thanksgiving Luther Village Youth Retreat as a resource person. While participation in the retreat did not result in any overtime hours being paid out by St. Mark's, there was a direct cost to us in the form of a supply pastor fee as well as time in lieu taken by Pastor Z for hours over and above her normal work week. In essence, time spent at the retreat came at the expense of how she might have spent those hours working in the congregation.

Participation of rostered ministers in synodical and national events may be seen as gift from the congregation to the wider church. Clearly, synodical and national

events would not exist if it were not for congregations releasing their pastors to participate or for the many hours put in by volunteers.
The question becomes whether the concept of gifting time and talent of a rostered minister to non-congregational activity can be extended to non-rostered staff position.

Options for Council Consideration
The following options for responding to Melissa's request are presented for council's consideration.

Option 1 – Wider Church Participation is considered as voluntary
Melissa's decision to accept the position to the PCW should be considered a personal gift by her to the National Church. If participation on the committee requires her to take time away from her responsibilities at St. Mark's, that time would either be considered as vacation time or time absent without pay.

Option 2 – Wider Church Participation compensated by time in lieu
Under this option, Melissa would be allowed to devote a portion of her normal work hours to the PCW with the proviso that the total number of hours worked in a calendar year (St. Mark's hours + PCW hours) not exceed 864 hours (48 week @ 18 hours per week with 4 weeks of vacation). This approach is similar to our current agreement allowing her to count up to five hours towards her normal work week for time spent organizing Cambridge Coffeehouse events.
Council would have to consider whether a ceiling should be placed on the number of hours that can be "billed" against PCW work. Anything over the ceiling would be considered volunteered time.
Under this option, there would be no overtime hours cost to St. Mark's. Added expense would be limited to additional supply musicians that would be needed .
A possible benefit to St. Mark's would be knowledge and experience gained through PCW work that might be transferred back to her work within the congregation.

Option 3 – Wider Church Participation compensated as overtime pay
Under this option, time spent on PCW work would be added to her normal 18 hours per week with the excess hours being paid out as overtime.
A suggested way to manage this option would be for council to set a ceiling on the amount of OT that will be covered and that any hours over the ceiling would be considered as her volunteering her time to the PCW.
To simplify payroll and GSI benefit logistics, expected annual OT hours could be built into the annual salary and paid out in 24 equal semi-month instalments.
For council's information, each hour of OT would cost in the order of $40-$45 considering the hourly wage and other employer contributions to pension and other benefits. The question would become how much additional cost can be absorbed. This question will become more salient once a new pastor is in place and the office admin position is filled.