FINAL

Epiphany Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting
October 13, 2026

Attendance: Pastor Brad, Dianne Mawhirter, Cindy Ganem, Ray Holmes, Lynn Rigelman, Ashley Turner, Mike Poyer, Jeff McCullough

Excused: William Lytle, Dell Moller, Josh Thornton

Guests: Terry McCandless, Jeff Mitchell, Ann Leak, Steve Wolfarth

Call to Order: Dianne called the meeting to order.

Prayer: Pastor Brad opened the meeting with a prayer.

Devotion: Diane's devotion was based on the passage from Corinthians 12:12 that we should be serving Christ with one heart.

2027 Budget presentations:

Terry McCandless stated the 2027 Budget for Worship & Music in all areas can remain the same except Sacramental Expenses will need to increase by $500 to cover the rising costs of supplies. Terry also explained his plans to retire sometime in the April/May timeframe. *(Terry then left the meeting.)*

Jeff Mitchell went over the proposed 2027 Budget covering the copier, Internet service, MTS (miscellaneous tech stuff), and Christian Education. He projects needing an additional $200 to cover increased costs for Internet service in 2027. *(Jeff then left the meeting.)*

Ali Adams presented the proposed 2027 Budget for Children, Youth & Family Ministries via a pre-recorded video. While there will be some increased costs, those should be offset by decreases with a planned curriculum change which leaves the CYF Budget total at $18,000 for 2027.

Epiphany Mission Endowment Fund (EMEF) presentation: Board of Trustee Chair Steve Wolfarth and Vice Chair Ann Leak then joined the meeting to request Council's approval to change the EMEF Regulations that grant amount distributions will not exceed 10% of the earnings available in the Fund in a given year. Before beginning their presentation, Steve advised that he will be resigning from the Board at the end of this year and Ann will take over as Chair. Steve would like to see a replacement Trustee with some investment experience to help guide the Board.

The argument from the Board to make this change is that they have given away 80% of the Funds Available (interest earned from the Fund's principal) over the last several years. The Board feels if this trend continues, there will come a time when no funds are available to use. The Board also feels the EMEF should only be used for extraordinary requests; not for items that should be part of Epiphany's annual budget.

There was some discussion about how we can better promote the Endowment Fund. The Board was interested in looking to set up a scholarship which would be available to Epiphany's members and should help create interest in people contributing to the Fund.

Council's initial reaction was limiting grants to only 10% of Funds Available (which are approximately $105,000 as of 9/28/26) would not be in keeping with the reason why people contribute to the Fund and its purpose. The money is to be used within the limits of the current Regulations. At this point in the meeting, Council thanked Steve and Ann for bringing this matter to its attention and they left the meeting.

Council Minutes/Approval: The September 8, 2026 Minutes were previously sent out for review. There being no corrections or changes, Council dispensed with the reading of these Minutes. After motion by Ashley Turner and second by Ray Holmes, motion unanimously carried to approve the Minutes as written.

Treasurer's Report/Approval: Josh was unable to attend the meeting and no Report was provided.

Pastor's Time:

- He and Josh are working with the consultant from GSB on the fall stewardship emphasis with presentations planned for Nov. 1, 8, 15 and 22. Commitment Sunday will be on the 22nd. Council is asked to make their 2027 financial commitment by Nov. 10.

- The 2026 Nominating Committee has a candidate for the Congregational Events position and are still working on the Property position.

- Intern Tony Maggio is meeting with representatives of his candidacy committee, Trinity Lutheran Seminary faculty, and Southern Ohio Synod staff for his approval interview on Oct. 22. If approved for ordination, Tony's graduation would be on May 23 pending completion of his internship and seminary coursework.

- We will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of Epiphany's library ministry during worship on Oct. 25 with Laura Reed making a brief presentation followed by a reception between services.

- Pastor, Becky Gee, and Casey Jones are developing strategic initiatives to strengthen Epiphany's Welcome and Outreach ministries (explained on a handout).

- Coffee and Christ continues to meet on Thursdays at 7:30am via Zoom.

- All Saints Sunday is on Nov. 1 which will include highlighting names of those who have died this past year (members and other loved ones) and lighting candles as remembrance.

- On Dec. 6, there will be one service at 10:00am to welcome Pastor Paul Oman who was the inspiration for the Easter mural painted by the congregation in 2025. Pastor Paul will be painting in the chancel area, throughout the service, as he artistically interprets the scripture, prayers, and song. This service will be followed by the annual women's Christmas lunch and an opportunity to paint with Pastor Paul.

- Pastor Brad then asked Council for approval to spend $3,000 to help sponsor the Hopewood Gala. 100% of our sponsorship will support camper scholarships to allow kids to attend summer camp. After discussion, Ashley Turner made a motion to spend up to $3,000 for this sponsorship and with a second by Cindy Ganem, motion unanimously passed.

Committee Reports:

Congregational Events: Nothing reported.

Finance: Nothing reported.

Preschool Board: A new teacher who started this year has resigned due to a family situation. The Board was able to find a replacement but still needs a "floater."

Property: Nothing reported.

Social Services: The annual Coat & Blanket drive is underway and some items have already been donated. We are partnering again with the LSS Food Pantry in Lancaster to help feed families at Thanksgiving; this year's goal is 120 bags.

Welcome & Outreach: Welcomed 4 "family units" of new members at the 9a service on Oct. 11 with a reception afterwards. Will be assisting with Trunk or Treat on Oct. 31 and the Advent Nativity Brunch in December. Working on a small giveaway for the Christmas Eve services. Special thanks to our dedicated volunteers—Kathy Cruz, Lee Ann Perin, and Jeanne Farnlacher—to keep the Pew Pockets, Welcome Center, and greeters running smoothly, as well as Jeff McCullough and Sara Lundy who jump in as needed.

Children, Youth & Family: Registration opens on Oct. 21 for kids to sign up to attend the ELCA 2027 Youth Gathering. Upcoming events include Pickerington's Haunted Village on Oct. 22 where Epiphany flyers will be passed out and Epiphany's Trunk or Treat on Oct. 31.

New / Old Business:

- Endowment Regulations. Due to the length of the meeting, the EMEF's request will be discussed and voted on at the November meeting.

- Special Congregational Meeting-Nov. 8. This is to approve moving the Annual Meeting to January and some other ELCA required Constitution changes. Ashley and Jeff volunteered to count votes.

- Stewardship for All Seasons. Tabled until the next meeting.

- New Member Approval. Eight new members were received on Sunday, October 11, 2026: Linda & Rev. Mark Diemer; Beth, Curtis & Paige Leyda; Nicholas, Alexis & Roman Slatoff . Upon motion by Ray Holmes and second by Mike Poyer, motion unanimously carried approving the addition of these new members to Epiphany.

Strategic Planning:

- Space – Kitchen. Will reports this project continues to move forward with a final walk through of changes on Oct. 16 and then the next week or so for inspections, etc.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 10th, at 7:00p. Mike will have the devotion.

Adjournment: Dianne led Council in the Lord's Prayer and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Ganem
Cindy Ganem, Secretary