

# Q1 2026 OSLC Voters Meeting

## Meeting Attendance

**Sunday, January 18th, 2026 @ 10:30 AM Church Sanctuary**

### Attendance

- See attendance sheet.

## Meeting Agenda

### Opening

- Justin Lavicka, President, opened the meeting at 10:30 AM with (34) members present. Pastor Minton followed with prayer.
- The Secretary's report was read by the Secretary and reviewed by the members present.
- The Treasure's report was reviewed by the members present.
  - Renee explained the increase in church expenditures during the last quarter of 2025, noting that most were due to purchasing subscriptions for 2026.
  - She also expressed concerns about chatter and "secret meetings" in 2025 related to church expenditures and decision-making.
  - Renee addressed comments from congregation members who blamed Pastor Minton for declining attendance. She acknowledged that some members may have left because of the Pastor, but noted this conclusion may have been premature. She shared membership trends from the past several years for context.
  - Renee discussed giving trends and acknowledged that although giving has declined, the church still maintains a healthy bank account.
    - Possible options to reduce expenses:
      - Eliminate the monthly newsletter, as most information is already included in the bulletin.
      - Eliminate the large-print bulletin.
      - Change the bulletin format.
      - Discontinue providing Portals of Prayer; congregation members could purchase their own copies.
      - Convert the custodian position to an hourly role (similar to the secretary and organist), or consider having families volunteer for custodial tasks.
      - Eliminate external financial services (Fox Group).
      - Discontinue the Church360 annual attendance-tracking subscription.
      - Reduce copier-related expenditures.
      - Reduce VBS expenses (e.g., eliminate VBS shirts).
      - Discontinue the radio ministry while continuing to stream services.
      - End missions giving.
      - Sell the current parsonage
      - Enter a dual-parsonage arrangement

- Additional discussion points:
  - The average tenure of a pastor at OLSC is approximately 5½ years.
  - There was a budget prepared for 2025, but it was not formally approved.
  - Laurie Lingley shared that some people leave due to the state of the world today. She noted that no pastor is perfect and that the decline in attendance is not solely the fault of Pastor Minton. She emphasized the importance of being thankful for the pastor we have.
  - Several congregation members engaged in a positive conversation about the suggestions made. However, it was noted that a larger issue is the need for members to trust the decisions of the Pastor and church leaders, and avoid making discussions or decisions personal.

### **Pastor's Report**

- Bible Studies
  - Wednesday Morning Bible Study is studying the books of Samuel & Kings.
  - Sunday Morning Bible Study is studying the Large Catechism.
  - "Farther Along" video will continue to be put out on the congregation's Facebook page and YouTube channel over the next few months.
- Vacancy Report
  - Good Shepherd and Immanuel are considering their options for the future. Their last Call in November was declined.
- Adult Instruction Class
  - 1 new member starting Adult Instruction Class this week. More are welcome to attend.
- Official Acts 2025
  - Recorded in the 2025 Annual Report dated 1/18/2026.
- Vacation Days in 2025
  - Total vacation days – 12/20
  - Total Sundays – 1/4
- Upcoming Events
  - Out of town: February 6-7
  - Ash Wednesday: February 18
  - Palm Sunday: March 29
  - Maundy Thursday: April 2
  - Good Friday: April 3
  - Easter: April 5
  - Out of Town for Gabe's Graduation: May 13-19 (may change slightly)
    - Pastor Strom Preaching May 17

### **Elder Report**

- Neil Rieches, Head Elder, present.
  - No report.

### **Trustee Report**

- Landon Reutter, Head Trustee, not present.
  - No report.

## **Board of Education Report**

- Courtney Rieches, Board of Christian Education Superintendent, present.
  - Christmas Program 2025: 109 people in attendance.
  - VBS 2026: Brenna Schroeder has agreed to continue as our VBS Director.
  - Christmas Program 2026: Benny and Sarah Verswijver have agreed to continue as our Christmas Program Directors.
  - The 2026 Christmas program will be performed on Sunday, December 20th, beginning at 9:00 AM.
  - Youth Group:
    - Brenna and Jan continue to co-lead the Iroquois County youth group, and have recently started a second youth group to serve OSLC youth in grades 4–12.

## **Board of Financial Oversight**

- Gretchen Brown, Financial Secretary, not present.
  - General Fund #1:
    - \$5,030 was placed into a 3-month CD at 3.6%, due for renewal on January 17, 2026.
    - The Council agreed to roll it over into a 7-month CD at First Trust at a rate of 3.75%.
  - General Fund #2:
    - \$25,514.14 was placed into an 11-month flex term CD at 3.75%.
  - Building Fund:
    - \$12,239.00 was rolled-over into a 6-month CD at 3.5%.

## **Mahlah Comfort Dog**

- Courtney Rieches, Treasurer, present.
  - \$1,000.49 dispersed to OSLC for a memorial bench.
  - \$5,707 each dispersed to Christ the King in Coeur d'Alene, ID and First Trinity in Tonawanda, NY to support the development of their comfort dog programs.

**Josh Harms made a motion to accept all reports discussed above. Dave Lucht seconded. Motion carried.**

## **Old Business**

- The formal security plan requested in Q4 (October) will be available at the next voters' meeting.
- Patrick will also look into security-camera options.

## **New Business**

- 2026 LCMS Convention Nominations
  - Synodical President: Dr. Matthew Harrison
  - First Vice President: Rev. Nabil Nour
  - Central Regional Vice President: Rev. Benjamin Ball

**Dean Lingley made a motion to accept the suggested nominees. Sandy Stuckwich seconded. Motion carried.**

- 2026 Proposed Budget

**Josh Harms made a motion to accept the 2026 proposed budget. John Lee seconded. Motion carried.**

**Dennis Selk made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laurie Lingley seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.**

Justin Lavicka closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully, Courtney Rieches, Secretary.