

Congregational Assembly

St Paul Lutheran Church - Ann Arbor, MI
November 23, 2025, 12:13 pm-1:02 pm at
Earhart
76 attendees signed in

St Paul's mission: *We equip families and individuals to know Christ, to discover truth, and to create meaningful connections.*

Call to order: Tim Adler (Board of Directors Chair)

Opening prayer: Pastor Aaron Roggow (Associate Pastor)

Mr. Adler explained that the constitution and by-laws require two congregational assemblies per year, one in May and one in November. He shared that the Board of Directors members are Tim Adler, Russ Keinath, Stephanie Kelly, Dennis Kuhn, and Rich Nesbitt.

Minutes approval: No corrections or additions were raised for the May 20, 2025 minutes, so they stand as distributed.

Topics addressed

A. **Building campaign update:** Pastor Ted Hopkins (Senior Pastor) stated that the school expansion project has received \$1.7M in gifts. The project will turn the existing library into an additional preschool classroom for 3-year-olds, build a new media center, and restructure the parking lot. They have started to work with the city and hope to break ground in the spring.

Donn Bohde of SBW/Architects is the schematic designer for this project and represents St Paul to the current architect and builders. Mr. Bohde shared that the drawings are essentially completed, and the project is now in the approval stage. Once the Ann Arbor Board of Zoning Appeals gives its approval on how many electric vehicle chargers will be required, the project will be added to an Ann Arbor Planning meeting agenda for site plan review, probably December 16th or January 6th. When the approvals are given, the project will go to bidding, at which point the contract costs will be known.

No questions were raised from the assembly.

B. **Downtown preschool discontinuation:** Rich Nesbitt (Board of Directors Secretary) explained that the Executive Team informed the Board of Directors that despite various efforts, the Liberty preschool income and enrollment did not rebound enough after COVID to make the program sustainable. The board formally approved the team's recommendation to discontinue the downtown preschool. The Infant Toddler Program continues at Liberty. Mr Nesbitt offered to answer questions after the meeting and discuss this with anyone who wanted to talk more about this.

C. **Financial report:** Dan Kelly (Treasurer) walked through the details of the financial performance for the first four months of FY 2026. The actual net operating income is \$54,775 under the budget. Much of this is due to offerings which are \$45,077 under the budgeted amount, and \$21,493 lower than the previous year at this point. The

Congregational Assembly November 23, 2025

budgeted offering amount was increased from last year. The school's non-operational income is \$10,164 lower than the budget. This is due in part to some facilities rentals not yet being recorded. The school's tuition is \$16,010 higher than the budget. The church operating expenses, including maintenance are slightly higher than budget, but mostly on track. The school operation expenses were higher from increased curriculum expenses and the IT technology was a little more expensive than expected. The rebranding also increased expenses for athletic uniforms and equipment. Preschool expenses appear over budget due to timing. They are entered into the books in July, but actually are on budget. Mr Kelly is willing to answer questions in person and by email.

- D. **Special Gifts update:** Fred Metzger (Special Gifts Committee Chairman) reported. The Church and School Foundation began in 1986 with gifts given by Carl and Isabelle Brauer. The foundation is about 70% endowed funds and 30% dedicated gifts. For FY 2025, the foundation had \$3,277,953 in income and \$248,339 in expenses. Most of the FY2025 income is from the Oscar Haab trust and other significant gifts. \$1.3M of the Haab gift has been set aside for the school expansion project. The cash investments are mostly invested in the Church Extension Fund, and have earned 4.2%. The investment accounts are managed through Schwab and CAPTRUST, and they earned 12.6%.

Legacy gifts are from estates, and most are endowed and grow over time through investment. The committee averages 16 financial quarters to calculate the 4% that can be allocated each year in special gifts. Special Gifts provides funds toward expenses--like facilities, advanced education, music programs, and extracurricular activities like athletics, art and robotics--so that staff can focus on their ministries. This year, special gifts were used for replacement window plexiglass, bathroom improvements, new playground equipment, seminary and undergrad student support, K-8th grade scholarships, teacher development and conferences, and \$500 to each teacher to purchase items needed for their classrooms. Mr. Metzger encourages those who want to contribute to focus on offerings first and the capital campaign second, but there are many additional ways to give. Julie Burgess can help with planning legacy gifts. Mr. Metzger offered to take questions after the meeting.

- E. **Advent and Christmas service schedules:** Pastor Roggow detailed changes in services times. Based on lots of feedback from families and discussions with the Elders, the midweek, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday services will now be at 6:30 pm. The dinners will start at 5:30 pm. On Christmas Eve, the family service is at 4:00 pm at Earhart, the lessons and carols service is at 6:30 downtown, and the candlelight service is at 10:00 pm downtown. Christmas day and Thanksgiving day services remain at 10:00 am. Postcards with the Christmas service times were available at this meeting, and will be available at the services for the next few weeks.
- F. **Planning Center software:** Pastor Hopkins announced that St Paul is changing its database software from Church360 to Planning Center. St Paul members will be able to use the new software's app, Stripe, for giving. It charges only 30 cents per

Congregational Assembly November 23, 2025

transaction for giving by ACH and 2% for giving by a credit card. The app will be in place by Jan. 1, 2026. Jeffrie Brooks and Jeremy Potts were instrumental in gathering the data about the software.

G. **Emmaus update:** Pastor Chris Troxel shared that they have an average weekly worship attendance of 42 people. They have 13 members from University Lutheran Chapel and more from St Paul. They held 9 events in FY 2025. 47 children attended the Easter event. Emmaus raised \$1700 for their selected partner missions: local (Delonis Center), regional (the high school of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in St Louis), and international (Groundwork Guatemala). They prepared 100 bags with hygiene and personal comfort items and made 33 no-sew blankets. They raised \$1100 from Art Fair parking for the Delonis Center. Even with the most excellent programs, only about 30% of the population in any given culture will decide to attend Sunday morning services, so Emmaus explores ways to go into the community and build relationships with its neighbors. Emmaus has put together a five-year vision, which Pastor Troxel will share at St Paul's next congregational assembly.

H. **St Paul's vision planning process:** Pastor Hopkins mentioned that a team of eleven people has been assembled to consider where St Paul will be in 7-10 years from now. The team factors in the gifts, passions, interests of St Paul; the needs of the community; and where God leads. Jason Hallman is co-chair with Pastor Hopkins.

Closing prayer

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bethany Huseman, Recording Secretary

Congregational Assembly

St Paul Lutheran Church--Ann Arbor, MI

March 1, 2026, 12:13-1:01 pm at Earhart

84 attendees signed in

St Paul's mission: *We equip families and individuals to know Christ, to discover truth, and to create meaningful connections.*

Meeting to call the principal and amend By-law 3.3

Call to order: Tim Adler (Board of Directors Chair)

Agenda: Presented.

Opening prayer: Pastor Ted Hopkins (Senior Pastor)

Topics addressed:

Principal call process presented by John Bates (Principal Call Committee Chair)

In December, Principal Bob Burgess announced that he will retire at the end of this school year. The Board of Directors asked John Bates to head the Call Committee and recommended some members to him. The committee consists of Stephanie Kelly (Board of Director member), Nick Steenstra (Elder), Jessica Meier (teacher), Lauren Warren (parent), Stacey MacDonell (parent of former students), Clara Twork (former teacher), and Rev. Ted Hopkins (ex officio, non-voting member). The committee started meeting in January. They asked the Michigan District LCMS office and the congregation for names of people to consider. The Board of Directors and the Executive Team gave the committee four qualities that they thought were the most important: 1) self efficacy, 2) strong communication across constituents, 3) collaborative by nature, and 4) high character in Christian faith. The committee started with a round of interviews via Zoom and narrowed the list down to two candidates, who were interviewed in person in February. Both are good matches for the position. The committee decided to pick one to present to the congregation for consideration of a call.

Principal candidate details and the vote process presented by Mr Bates and the other call committee members

Emily Johnson got her BS from Concordia, Ann Arbor and her MS in Educational Leadership from Concordia, Portland, Oregon. She is considering pursuing a PhD in leadership. Ms Johnson is currently the principal at Holy Cross Lutheran School in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Previously, she has also taught 1st-5th grades, coached, and coordinated technology.

Mr Bates and the other committee members shared the qualities that they observed in Ms Johnson and answered questions from the assembly.

Elders, distributed, collected and counted the following paper ballot:

Yes! I vote to call the candidate the committee is presenting for principal, or, No. I do not vote to call this candidate at this time.

John Bates gave a prayer for the call process.

By-laws amendment led by Tim Adler while the ballots were counted
Two amendments had been presented to the congregation before the meeting, and were also available as a handout at the meeting.

The first proposed amendment (bolded words are added to original By-laws)

3.3 EXECUTIVE TEAM:

*The office of the Executive Team may consist of three positions: the Senior Pastor, the School Principal, and the Business Manager. **The Senior Pastor leads the executive team and directs the strategic plan of St. Paul Lutheran church and school.** The Senior Pastor is **also** a called and ordained servant who is responsible for conceiving and managing ministry activities, based upon input from the congregation. The School Principal is a called and commissioned or contracted servant who is responsible for conceiving and managing school activities and school staff. The Business Manager is an employee at will who is responsible for managing the infrastructure that is necessary to enable the ministry staff to function and succeed.*

Mr Adler and Pastor Hopkins explained that the Executive Team is a collaborative, consensus-driven body, but someone ultimately has to be accountable, and that is the Senior Pastor. This is already in the Board Policy Manual. Putting it into the By-laws makes it more transparent. Essentially, this amendment does not change what is already in place, but it does state who chairs the meetings.

>> Mr Adler asked for a voice vote to approve the change. The vote passed, with no nays heard.

The amendment of By-law 3.5, originally planned to be considered at today's meeting, was not covered today. It was about determining the structure of the Principal's Advisory Committee. Discussions in the days before the meeting led the Board of Directors to conclude that the new principal should be part of forming this process.
>> Pastor Hopkins stated that this amendment is intended to give some structure to the Principal's Advisory Committee and will probably come up for vote in the next year.

The principal call vote passed

>> The Elders told Mr Adler the results of the vote. He announced that the congregation approved extending a call to Emily Johnson. Brent O'Banion moved to make the call unanimous. The motion passed by a voice vote.

John Bates thanked those involved in the call process for their work.

Closing prayer by Pastor Aaron Roggow (Associate Pastor)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bethany Huseman, Recording Secretary

Bolded words are added.

3.3 EXECUTIVE TEAM:

The office of the Executive Team may consist of three positions: the Senior Pastor, the School Principal, and the Business Manager. **The Senior Pastor leads the executive team and directs the strategic plan of St. Paul Lutheran church and school.** The Senior Pastor is **also** a called and ordained servant who is responsible for conceiving and managing ministry activities, based upon input from the congregation. The School Principal is a called and commissioned or contracted servant who is responsible for conceiving and managing school activities and school staff. The Business Manager is an employee at will who is responsible for managing the infrastructure that is necessary to enable the ministry staff to function and succeed.

NEW 3.5 PRINCIPAL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Our Lord said "if you hold to My teachings, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32). In this light, the Principal's Advisory Committee will support St. Paul congregation in spreading the truth of the Gospel through Christian education, which includes opportunities to study God's Word; development of discipleship, parenting and social skills; discovery and use of ministry gifts; and development of the mission potential of the Day School and Early Childhood Center.

The Principal's Advisory Committee has three distinct roles: 1) Support the principal and the school's main task of spreading the Gospel through Christian education by giving advice to the principal on all manner of things related to Christian education at St. Paul School. 2) Serve as a means for parents and others to bring important school issues to the attention of those entrusted with the administration of the school. 3) Serve as an additional connection between the Board of Directors and the School Ministry, helping the Board of Directors understand the best way to support the School Ministry.

The constitution of the membership of the committee shall be set by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Executive Team as described in the Board of Director's Policy Manual.

The Principal's Advisory Committee shall meet regularly with the principal. The PAC typically meets monthly, except in July and December. The presence of more than 50% of members of the PAC shall constitute a quorum. If problems arise in the three roles of the PAC, the PAC Chair shall report them to the Principal for resolution. If resolution is not reached, then the Chair shall report them to the Board of Directors Chair for appropriate action.

The Principal's Advisory Committee shall annually elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and a Secretary from among its members. The Chair shall serve no more than 4 consecutive years. The Secretary is to send the preliminary minutes of every meeting to the Board of Directors within one week of the meeting, and the final draft within 3 days of final approval of minutes, if any changes were made.

OLD 3.5 PRINCIPAL'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

The Principal's Advisory Committee may advise the School Principal on all activities related to education, with the following ministry emphasis: Our Lord said "if you hold to My teachings, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32). Therefore, St. Paul congregation will spread the truth of the Gospel through Christian education, which includes opportunities to study God's Word; development of discipleship, parenting and social skills; discovery and use of ministry gifts; and development of the mission potential of the Day School and Early Childhood Center.

Members of the Principal's Advisory Committee are appointed by the School Principal, with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors.

Congregational Assembly

St Paul Lutheran Church--Ann Arbor, MI
March 29, 2026, 12:04-12:44 pm at Earhart
64 attendees signed in

St Paul's mission: *We equip families and individuals to know Christ, to discover truth, and to create meaningful connections.*

Principal call meeting

Call to order: Pastor Ted Hopkins (Senior Pastor)

Opening prayer: Pastor Ted Hopkins

Agenda: Presented

Topics addressed:

Principal call process overview and qualities of the candidate presented by John Bates (Principal Call Committee Chair) and some of the other committee members. The committee's other members are Stephanie Kelly, Nick Steenstra, Jessica Meier, Lauren Warren, Stacey MacDonell, Clara Twork, and Rev. Ted Hopkins. In December, Principal Bob Burgess announced his upcoming retirement. The committee met in January and reviewed the list of internal and external candidates that they had been given. They interviewed candidates by Zoom. In February, they conducted in-person interviews with the two finalists. Both were good fits. The call extended to one of them earlier this month was declined, so the committee is now recommending the other good candidate.

Mrs Roth is the principal at Trinity Lutheran School in Saint Joseph, Mich. Before that, she was a 2nd grade teacher, a young 5s teacher, and an athletic director. She earned a BA at Siena Heights University, a master's in curriculum and instruction in early childhood education at Concordia Portland, and a master's in special education from Moreland University. Mr Bates shared how she displays the qualities that the Board of Directors and Executive Team asked the committee to look for: 1) self efficacy, 2) strong communication across all constituents, 3) collaborative by nature, and 4) high character in Christian faith. Mr Bates and some of the committee members then answered questions from the assembly.

Mr Bates then asked for a show-of-hands for those ready to vote on the candidate, and it passed.

Mr Bates led a prayer.

The Elders, distributed, collected and counted the following paper ballot:
I vote to call Amy Roth as principal of St Paul Lutheran School, or, I do not vote to call Amy Roth as St Paul's principal at this time. Mr Bates announced their ballot tallies and that the vote passed. A call will be extended to Mrs Roth.

Brent O'Banion and Beth Hopkins made a motion to make the vote unanimous. The motion passed by a voice vote.

Update on the building expansion project presented by Dan Brieschke

Two years ago, the project was expected to cost \$4.3 M. The prices rose while the final details were being worked out and approved by the city. However, due to some factors in the construction trade, current prices are considerably less than feared. At this time, the projected cost is under \$6 M. Between the pledge drive and the availability of a Church Extension Fund loan (if needed), St Paul has enough to proceed with the project. A second pledge drive will be conducted for furnishings and other finishing touches for the new spaces.

They are in the process of getting final permits to build, and plan to break ground before the end of this school year.

Mr Brieschke announced that he would stick around after the assembly to answer any questions.

Closing prayer by Mr Bates

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bethany Huseman, Recording Secretary