

## **Council President's Report – August 2025**

This has been a busy and meaningful year for our church council. At our July meeting, the council approved trying something new—an **email-only meeting** for the month of August. With winter weather often making in-person gatherings difficult, this gave us a chance to test a new option. The trial went smoothly, and in the future, if weather conditions prevent us from meeting, we'll have this method available rather than canceling or rescheduling.

We also filled a vacancy on the council this month. After a vote, **Jeff Van Keulen** was elected to serve in this role until the next council elections. Jeff will join us officially at the September meeting. I want to sincerely thank Jeff, and also the other members who were willing to step forward and serve. Your willingness to lead and support our church is deeply appreciated.

As many of you know, our **outdoor worship service and meals** had to be moved indoors due to the weather. I am grateful to everyone who helped make that transition smooth—our Praise Band for leading worship, Jenn for adjusting the schedule, Barb Knutson for coordinating the meal, and the council members who pitched in. Even with the change in plans, it was a wonderful time of worship and fellowship.

An update related to the vote that was taken at the January congregational meeting about amending our Constitution: After review and consultation with the executive committee, in the August newsletter, I had noted a compromise that if three conditions were met, that in my capacity as council president that I would be willing to call a Special Meeting. I had not received any request for a special meeting prior to August 10, 2025. In the evening on August 10, I received one email calling for a second or first vote. In the last newsletter, I outlined the conditions under which a Special Meeting could be called. Since those conditions were not met, after consultation with the executive committee, we decided not to call a Special Meeting. This decision was not made lightly, but with thoughtful consideration of many factors. To ensure all council members were equally informed, an **informational gathering was held to ensure all members had the same information as the executive committee**. At that meeting, ideas were shared, and we agreed that the ideas will be an agenda item at the September council meeting. Please know that while there are no simple answers, your council is committed to moving forward steadily and prayerfully.

Looking ahead, **September is a busy and exciting month for our youth** as they return to school and begin a new year of activities and ministry. Our youth leaders are preparing for the fall kickoff, and we look forward to all that God has in store for them this year. I find myself thinking about ways that we can get youth involved in service for others and have heard exciting ideas from others as well.

Angie DeVos, Chris, and I had a meeting with our bank. We reviewed the accounts, updated signature cards, and discussed a number of different items. As we receive more information about these items and best practices, this information will be shared.

I also anticipate the approval of the new **Building Committee** at our upcoming council meeting. This group will begin evaluating the needs of our church facility so they can provide recommendations to the trustees and council as we plan next year's budget. In addition, the **new camera system** that was approved in July will soon be underway, which will be a valuable addition to our ministry and outreach.

Thank you all for your prayers, support, and patience as we work together to lead our congregation faithfully. It definitely is like peeling onions, there are a lot of layers to look at! There are a number of items that are in the works that have been noted previously, and updates will be given as they continue to progress.

Amie Ascheman

Council President