

Shepherd of the Valley and First Lutheran Joint

Council Minutes

September 22, 2025 met in person

Members in attendance are listed on the attached page.

The meeting was called to order by Steve at 7:00 pm.

- Presidents' updates: Shepherd of the Valley:
 1. We have a new hire, Danny Summers, for the position Ministry of Music
 2. Reminder to communicate to congregation that the joint service start time is 10 am, October 26th, at First Lutheran.
 3. Members are offering to make car pools available for the joint church service to First.
 4. Noted that Anita, our custodian, is ill and a number of our members jumped in to clean the church during her illness.
- First Lutheran President:
 1. They are looking forward to the joint services.
 2. Hope to continue to see attendance numbers going up at these services at each church.
 3. All ministries at First are still doing well.
 4. Plan to build on our strengths to grow together.
- Reviewed the Letter of Agreement for ministry elect Leslie Aska to serve as pastor.
- Pastor workload report – Reviewed the summary of Pastors weekly hours and percentage of time spent at both congregations. Detailed breakdown is available but overall sense is approximately 45% at First and 55% at SOTV. Concerns expressed by Pastor: church finances, building expense, and workload.
- Financial review and treasurers' updates. Explained shortfalls due to mortgage on SOTV building, large donations have historically been at the end of the year. Treasurer, Phil Smalley, confident balance out will occur. First Lutheran expenses up slightly but not concerned at this time.
- Program year, Worship and Calendar discussion.
 1. Worship times at both congregations seems to be going fairly well. Some adjustments have to be made but overall feeling is, it will be okay.
 2. Christmas Eve service will be held at First at 3 pm. Easter will be at SOTV at 10 am, 4/5/26. Motion made by Phil to accept these dates and times, 2nd by Shelly. Motion carried. Next year, this will be reversed.

3. Discussing the best ways to notify members where and when joint services are being held. Thoughts on banners or signs being posted in advance to that Sunday service. Further discussion and research needed.
 4. Installation for Pastor Leslie will be on 11/30/25 in SOTV church at 10 am joint service. Worship and Music to discuss details.
- New business: Important dates to remember:
 1. There will be no services held for Thanksgiving at either church.
 2. Next joint council meeting to be on November 17th at First.
 3. SOTV game day to be on October 7th at 10am.

- Committee reports:

Outreach: a.) Northern Illinois Synod WELCA, Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America had their 36th Annual Convention on Saturday, 9/20/25. The theme was Rescue, Redeem, Restore. Topic being Anti-Human Trafficking. The speaker was Heidi Provo-Remedies from Rockford. Location was at First Lutheran Church, 225 South 3rd Street Rockford.

Finance: The Financial report was reviewed and is posted on the kiosk in the Narthex.

Property: Nothing to add.

Worship and Music: a.) Signage needed to post times and location of services. Susie suggested a nice eye-catching banner be created. Susie offered to help plan.

b.) Discussed restarting SOTV Bible Study. On September 23rd at 9:30 they will meet to plan what they want to study. The first gathering will be on the 4th Tuesday of every month.

Fellowship: Nothing to add.

Motion to adjourn by Janette, 2nd by Phil. Motion carried.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next joint council meeting will be in person at First on November 17th at 6:00pm

Next SOTV council meeting will be in person, at SOTV on October 22nd at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Pearson