

# Atonement Council Minutes for September 18, 2025 at 7:00pm

## Council Attendees (11/11)

Matt Badding	Lyn Bowers	Angie Brickson
Genevieve Brown	Cathy Dykman-Acinger	Tim McCandless
Greg Moffitt	Jeremy Otto	Neil Pfeiffer
Dave Stelzer	Laura Trentadue	

## Other Attendees

Pastor Zac Sturm, Toni Pearson, Nathan Choate (zoom), Pat Bjuland (zoom)

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## OPENING

### Opening Devotions – Angie Brickson

### Friendly Fellowship – Angie Brickson

- Everyone was invited to share “If you had two hours completely to yourself, with no family members around and no responsibilities, how would you spend the time?”

### President's Direction – Cathy Dykman-Acinger

- Was reminded that leaders set the tone. As we are all leaders, we have the ability to help set the tone here at Atonement, and we should feel wonderful having that opportunity.
- It's a very exciting time to be here, there's so many wonderful things happening at Atonement. We can be excited about growth, we have a nice number of people signed up for pizza with the pastor, and that's a great thing. There are new groups starting, there are old groups reconnecting, and the way we're setting goals and trying to get better at process, direction, and culture is all very positive.
- We are each encouraged that it is a time to dig deep, doing the best we can with whatever part of the ministry we are working on. And to remember that you are God's beloved and I'm God's beloved, and this is God's beloved community. When we have that in the forefront of our mind, as we work and go along, it can make all the difference.

### Monthly Ministry Highlight – Neil Pfeiffer and Angie Brickson

#### Welcome Journey Conversations: Progress Report and Upcoming

- We just completed “Part 1” of our 4-part plan, Deacon David Behling presented on Saturday, September 13 and Sunday, September 14, presenting about the Reconciling Works organization and the Reconciling in Christ program. It was very well attended, 28 people on Saturday and 87 on Sunday, around 115 total. It was recorded and will be posted on the website for anyone who was not available to attend.

- “Part 2” will be coming up Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. We have invited Pastor Sarah Pierce from All Saints Lutheran Church in Blue Springs, Missouri, Interim Pastor Jealaine Marple from Salem Lutheran Church in Lenexa and Overland Park, and Senior Pastor Michael Peck from Holy Cross Lutheran Church, also in Overland Park. We will be hosting a panel discussion for our guests to share “*What does welcoming & affirming mean to the community around us?*”, voices from new members they have welcomed, and their journey toward Reconciling in Christ with their congregation.
- “Part 3” will be the Survey, asking the congregation to give their position on (1) Atonement updating our Welcome Statement, and (2) if Atonement should become a Reconciling in Christ partner congregation. The purpose of the survey will be to gather more than just approve/not-approve sentiment and to help the congregation better understand the range of sentiments we represent.
- “Part 4” will be the Congregational Meeting, scheduled for October 26<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the results of the survey and potentially vote on the two questions in the survey. Reconciling Works recommends getting a 75% threshold of approval in straw poll as a benchmark before considering a vote.

## REPORT ROUNDTABLE

### August Minutes

- **MOTION #1:** (Matt Badding moves, Angie Brickson seconds)  
*Motion to approve the council meeting minutes from August 28, 2025, without corrections.*
  - 10 voting members present: **all Ayes, no Nays, Motion Carries**

### Pastor's Report – Pastor Zac

- Will be attending the LALC (Lutheran Association of Larger Churches) Gathering from Sept 23-26 in Lake Geneva, southern Wisconsin. The main presenter is Dr. Bill Withers, part of the executive leadership team & HR team at Lutheran Church of Hope in West Des Moines, Iowa.
- “Preaching Lab” Bible Study class has begun on Wednesdays. People are really enjoying helping to craft a sermon and learning where sermons come from.

### Horizons Stewardship Report – Pastor Zac

- Strategy Update:
  - » Sunday Morning Experience team – just getting started
  - » Communication team – Nathan Chaote and Nikki Esser – has started meeting and making plans.
- Next Level Generosity Update:
  - » NLG team – members have been identified – the first meeting was delayed until early October, will be getting started by meeting with Dustin Cooper for a full day of training and planning.
- Atonement Annual Stewardship Emphasis:
  - » Atonement Stewardship team is doing on our own (not involving Horizons). The emphasis will be starting in October, the theme will be “Rise”, and asking the question “Are our best days behind us, or are they in front of us?” There will be planned Temple Talks and Sermons. The Grace & Gratitude BBQ will be on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Ministry & Staff Reports

- Read through each Staff Report's "*Requested Support from Council*", items of note:
  - » Please help greet people after and before worship. Those connections are so incredibly important.
  - » Toni included a request to consider replacing the 80-ton HVAC unit in the sanctuary, was also discussed during the Operations & Properties report, as well as during Open Discussion.
- Jeremy shared the feedback from parents as to the importance of VBS to them, raising awareness to Council that we'll want to help figure out ways to best support it.
- Cathy shared the New Members & Welcome team has formed to help Boo and Drew, Beth Eland is going to chair, team is requesting that Council members assist greeting new visitors and giving out the welcome gift bags from the Connect & Serve table.
- Greg shared the Worship team is looking at enhancing the Prayers of the People.

## Treasurer's Report – Mike Daley & Tim McCandless

### August 2025

#### *Topline & Giving*

- August ended \$49,000 better than budget, a surplus of \$28,000
- General Fund giving was \$23,000 better than budget
- Dedicated giving to Campus Sustainment was \$5,000
- August year-to-date total **surplus** is now \$19,500, better from budgeted deficit plan of –\$91,500

#### *Balance Sheet*

- Cash balances are:
  - \$193,000 in unrestricted cash (prior month: \$187,000)
  - \$214,000 in restricted cash (prior month: \$211,000)
  - \$407,000 total (prior month: \$399,000)
  - \$108K free cash balance: *Unrestricted Cash of \$193K remains concerning, as it includes advanced giving of \$85,000.*
- Advanced giving balance is \$85,000 (prior month: \$106,000)
- Campus Sustainment is at \$93,000 (prior month: \$90,000)

#### *Budget*

- Expenses were \$13,000 better than budget with the following line-item variances noted:
  - Better: Communication \$1,000 ⇒ due to timing
  - Better: Payroll \$6,400 ⇒ vacant positions and lower hourly expense
  - Worse: Property & Utilities \$3,200 ⇒ due to higher water costs
  - Better: Worship: \$3,200 ⇒ *Worship YTD is now in-line with budget, with \$3,300 grant from Atonement Foundation in July 2025*
  - Worse: Youth \$1,400 ⇒ due to timing
  - Better: Benevolence \$1,000 ⇒ reduced per Council directive 4/24/25

- Year-to-date general expenses are \$33,000 better budget (prior month: \$20,000 better).
- Year-to-date general fund giving is \$25,000 better than budget (prior month: \$1,000 better).
- Year-to-date Campus Sustainment: \$61,000 + \$50,000\* (\*\$12,500 transfer stopped 4/24/25)
  - Anticipated Campus Sustainment remaining to be given: \$54,000 (total planned is \$115,000)
- Year-to-date surplus actual is \$19,500 (year-to-date deficit plan was -\$91,500).
- Year-to-date total variance is now \$111,000 better than budget (prior month: \$62,000 better).

## Operations & Properties Report – Toni Pearson & Dave Stelzer

- Campus Sustainment Fund balance as of August month-end was \$93,000.
- Toni informed Council that we will need to consider replacing the 80-ton HVAC unit in the sanctuary prior to next summer as it is leaking refrigerant and only one of the two circuits is somewhat functioning. Due to its age and parts no longer available, this unit cannot be fully repaired. A new system will take 3 to 6 months to manufacture so we need to make a commitment to replacing it NO LATER than November. There is no guarantee that we will have air conditioning in the sanctuary next summer with the current system.
- Additional considerations for the sanctuary HVAC will be the installation. The last time it was installed by helicopter, will require a custom-hire crane or similar heavy lifting equipment.
- We will need to start securing the deposit amount required when ordering the 80-ton unit.
- Newly found: Charter Hall A/C is also leaking and will need to be repaired.
- Donovan Coup is meeting with a contractor to see if a smaller fix could be applied to the 1962 roof beams that would extend life about 5 years. Would not be a permanent fix, but
- Office Moves: 2 people have already moved, 2 people (Jordan and Toni) will be moving next week, painting was completed by someone who donated their services. Staff members who would like new furniture will be providing their own.
- During Open Discussion, Council discussed moving forward with the method to secure a loan.

## Up Next & Open Discussion

- Open Discussion was to get Council feedback on if we should explore re-engaging Mission Investment Fund to secure a capital improvement loan.
- Mission Investment Fund had many advantages over Equity Bank and Thrivent during the last round of exploration and would be Mike's recommendation as to who to engage.
- Toni's initial priority list of repairs to fund with the loan are to (1) replace the 5 HVAC systems that are failing, (2) replace the parking lot, and (3) redoing the lower level flooring for Sunday School.
- This would need to coincide with a Stewardship Capital Campaign starting after the first of the year, we also have the opportunity to engage Horizons Stewardship to help with that campaign.
- This will require a congregational approval to secure the loan. We can target holding a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. We can plan to announce it at the Congregational Meeting on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>.
- Verbal agreement was for Toni Pearson, Mike Daley, and Tim McCandless to move forward.

## **CLOSING**

### **Closing Prayer**

- Lutheran Book of Worship, p.48

**Adjourn at 8:40pm**

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Recorded by: Neil Pfeiffer

Submitted for council review: 10/21/2025

Approved: 10/23/2025