

First United Methodist Church Little Rock

Leadership Council Meeting

August 18, 2026

Present: Elaine Bultena, Stark Ligon, Jim Wohlleb, Juanita Woodard, Harvey Wiley, Debbie Boyd

David Freeman, Harold Wesley, Sonja Taylor-Larkowski

Elaine Bultena, substituting for chair Kelley Jackson, opened the meeting and asked Rev. Freeman to pray. Elaine asked for approval of last month's meeting minutes. Jim Wohlleb made a motion, Stark Ligon seconded and all approved.

Harold Wesley, director of buildings, grounds and security, is pleased with the newly hired elevator company. The company has served us well and assured Wesley there were no further problems with the elevator by the sanctuary.

The Methodist Museum, in the church basement, has water damage. The floor in the flower room (above the museum) leaked into the museum. Wesley did mold remediation and cleaned the carpet. He said the floor in the flower room will need to be addressed.

The new courtyard statue pump had to be replaced.

Stark Ligon announced that David Freeman's 52nd birthday is Friday. Stark offered cake to the group.

David, Elaine, Sonja, and Lane Harber met to develop guidelines for the church to use when outside groups request using church facilities. David passed out copies of the proposed guidelines. The group discussed the guidelines and procedures and made corrections. Juanita Woodard made a motion to approve the guidelines and Stark seconded the motion. All approved.

Sonja Taylor-Larkowski, director of finance and administration, reported that YTD 2026 the church ended with a deficit of \$19,414. She reviewed and answered questions about the financial statements she emailed to the council members. Stark moved to accept the financial report as information, Jim made a second, and all approved.

Sonja reported that the church insurances renew October 1. We will be saving \$5000 a year from previous years.

Sonja would like to hire a new auditor. She thinks our current auditor is too expensive. Their fee is \$30,000. Elaine asked for a motion to allow Sonja to pursue a new auditor. Jim made a motion and Stark made a second. All voted to approve.

David explained what the fall 2026 stewardship process will look like. There will be more videos sent to church members. He hopes that if people are inspired by the vision plan, they will be more generous. (working plan attached.)

SPRC – David related a conversation James Stanley had with Elaine Bultena. James didn't know how much vacation time he was entitled to. David passed out pages from the church personnel manual.

David offered an idea: an award for a member of our church who has made a significant difference in our community. David wants to form a group to work on this idea. Kathy Webb approached David with the same idea. David asked permission from the leadership council to form a task force to develop parameters for the award.

David mentioned the idea of changing the time for combined worship service to 10:00 instead of 11:00. A trial time change will occur on December 27.

David passed out his latest draft of the church vision plan.

David announced a special leadership council meeting for September 13 12:00 – 3:00 P.M.

There will be no regular Tuesday meeting in September.

David closed the meeting with a prayer.

Debbie Boyd

Secretary