

Lutheran Church of the Cross
Saturday, January 17, 2026

Record of Discussion: Funding Priorities Session

Part 1: Introduction and Background

Council Chair Karen Johnson-Lefsrud and Council Vice-Chair Laura Cochrane opened the session by noting that this is not a special congregational or final decision-making meeting. Rather, the purpose of today's session is to continue discerning how best to use two recent and significant sources of income: the proceeds of the sale of Luther House, and the special bequest left by Eva Baird.

By way of background for today's discussion, 3 handouts were provided:

1. **Record of Discussion – PROCEEDS WORKSHOP** (*a summary of the session held in January 2025*)
2. **DRAFT Lutheran Church of the Cross Vision and Priorities 2026-2030** (*a summary of the document drafted after our session together in the Fall of 2025, which will be formally adopted at the AGM in March*)
3. **Fact Sheet** (*a summary of the two sources of funds being discussed today – the proceeds from the sale of Luther House, and the bequest from Eva Baird*)

Participants received brief ministry updates from Pastor Lyndon Sayers (including an update on Jashan Khandal's Campus Connector work and Pastor Eli Deifeld's work on the preaching rota and in Confirmation & Youth Ministry), Allyson Roberts (Connection Team Co-ordinator) and Florentien Verhage (Sunday School Co-ordinator).

Part 2: Small Group Discussion

Participants were divided into small table groups, asked to review the "Record of Discussion – PROCEEDS WORKSHOP" document, and in particular the **lists of priorities** identified at that session, and then to consider the following four questions:

1. At the Funding Priorities session a year ago, it was decided to utilize the funds from the proceeds of the sale of Luther House for capital or asset-related expenditures and to utilize funds from the Eva Baird bequest for more programmatic expenditures. Are you in agreement with that direction?
2. Do this list of priorities (as noted on the Record of Discussion – Proceeds Workshop document) still represent your priorities?
3. What is missing from this list of priorities?
4. Looking at the Vision & Priorities document that came out of our work together on November 22, 2025, do our list of priorities line up with that document or are there some gaps for us to consider?

A few items on the “non-asset expenditures” list of priorities required additional contextual information in order for the group to consider them fully, including:

- #1 - *Harmony project* – music program for Children, also known globally as an El Sistema program. This program started in Venezuela and has spread throughout the world to engage children in musical programs who would not otherwise be able to pay for lessons. The curriculum is built on the belief that the collective playing of music, especially orchestral and choral, fosters discipline, teamwork, and social integration. With a strong musical heritage in this parish, we would be looking to reach out in our community to establish the church as a musical hub in our community. This could be a start-up grant (similar to what happened when we supported the Shelbourne Community Kitchen) and then an independent Board would be formed to manage the project, which would apply for funding grants, etc.
- #2 – *Kantor salary* - Church Council is looking at raising Nathan’s contracted time from 9 – 12 hrs per week. This increased time commitment is a more accurate reflection of the amount of time that Nathan is already spending on delivering a first-rate music program to our parish.
- #7 *Additional staff (part-time pastor)* – in response to requests from some members of our parish, Church Council has been exploring the possibility of bringing Pastor Eli Deifeld onto the BC Synod clergy roster. Pastor Eli is on the clergy roster of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil and has been serving LCC by sharing with Pastor Lyndon in teaching Confirmation classes, being the Youth Group leader, being part of the Sunday School teaching cohort and beginning last fall to preach regularly once a month in our parish. Bishop Kathy Martin has confirmed the process: for a pastor to be placed on the BC Synod roster, first a call must be issued. Our parish could extend a part time call to Pastor Eli (minimum 20% or 1/5 time). There is a different relationship when a pastor is under call to a congregation – a relationship of trust and leadership in our ministry together. And as Eli has already been in the budget for her Coordinator role we are a good way towards this goal.
- #11 – *Expand Children’s Ministry* – the expansion would provide more resources across the age-spectrum as the Sunday School grows.

Part 3: Large Group Sharing

One representative from each Table Group shared the highlights of their discussion.

There was general support voiced for the use of funds as previously divided: asset-related expenditures (e.g., capital and building) to be funded by the proceeds of sale, and non-asset-related expenditures (e.g., programming and projects) to be funded by the bequest.

It was suggested that it might be appropriate to shift some of the bequest funds and use them to support asset-related expenditures, especially since those expenditures support and pave the way for ongoing and new programs.

Participants also expressed a desire to protect our existing assets (both physical and financial) for the future. The building is aging, so upgrades and replacements are likely to be required in the coming years.

In addition, building upgrades (both structural and cosmetic) could also make the building more attractive to potential renters, thereby increasing our income in the longer term. There was a sense

of “getting our house in order first”, ensuring that it’s still standing long enough to support the “20-year vision” we dreamed about at our Vision & Priorities session.

It was recognized that there isn’t enough money to accomplish everything we might want to do, and that some organization and prioritization of the list of options was needed. And a balanced approach was favoured, between the necessary, practical projects, and the more visible and exciting ones.

As the groups shared their discussions, a few items were added to the project lists that were generated last year. Paying off the existing mortgage was removed, as was buying new toys for children’s ministry.

Part 4: Prioritization of Projects

Each participant was given six stickers and asked to add a “dot” to three items from List A (asset-related expenditures), and three items from List B (non-asset-expenditures). A record of the number of dots each item received is recorded below, with the four highest rated items in each category highlighted:

| List A: Asset-related expenditures | Number of Stickers |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Pay off existing mortgage | 0 |
| 2. Set up Heritage Fund for facility repairs/upgrades/replacement of equipment and appliance | 25 |
| 3. Finish Lower level, multi-purpose rooms, shower and bathroom, music room, senior center, youth activity space, storage | 26 |
| 4. upgrade servery- new fridge, utility sink | 8 |
| 5. replace windows in upper hall | 1 |
| 6. New/upgraded sound system | 14 |
| 7. Green projects, heat pump, solar panels | 5 |
| 8. Replace roof | 1 |
| 9. Invest to create an income stream to provide regular income for the congregation | 5 |
| 10. Renovate upper hall, make it more attractive, storage | 1 |
| 11. Landscape with native plants | 0 |
| 12. Start new housing project, think big | 0 |
| 13. Don’t do anything that would constrain the congregation in the future | 0 |
| 14. Earthquake proof older building | 0 |
| 15. Cover round window in sanctuary | 0 |
| 16. Expand parking, buy land to build 2 story parkade | 0 |
| 17. Improve soundproofing between floors | 0 |
| 18. Fund landscaping upkeep | 3 |

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| 19. Develop new Kitchen | 14 |
| 20. Upkeep of website and social media | 2 |

| List B: Non-asset-related expenditures | Number of Stickers |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Harmony Project, Music program for children | 22 |
| 2. Music, increase Kantor salary | 14 |
| 3. Scholarships to support seminary students | 0 |
| 4. Refugee sponsorship | 9 |
| 5. Add/replenish memorial fund | 2 |
| 6. Finance small projects to benefit us all now | 0 |
| 7. Additional staff, deacon/part-time pastor | 26 |
| 8. Support existing ministries before taking on new ones | 0 |
| 9. Create fund to support choral scholars and special music | 1 |
| 10. Drop in café for congregation and neighborhood | 0 |
| 11. Expand children's ministry buy more toys | 22 |
| 12. Support new ministries | 1 |
| 13. Pre-school and day care program | 1 |
| 14. Help the elderly attend church | 3 |
| 15. Enhance campus ministry | 0 |
| 16. Bring back fall and Christmas dinners | 0 |
| 17. Youth Choir | 5 |
| 18. Use funds from Eva Baird bequest for capital investments that will support programs | 15 |