

First Baptist Church, Bloomington, IL
Annual Congregational Business Meeting Minutes
Sunday, May 3, 2026, following the 10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Moderator Al Strauch gave the opening prayer. A quorum was present. Those watching online were invited to use the YouTube Live Chat if they had any questions or comments.

Approval of Minutes

Becky Strack made a motion to approve the February 1, 2026, Quarterly Congregational Business Meeting minutes. Fred Moore seconded. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Officer Reports

Moderator (Al Strauch) --

He hopes everyone has had a chance to review the Annual Report which is a snapshot of what happened in the life of the church last year, and he is looking forward to great things as we start a new business year. If anyone has thoughts or ideas of things we would like to see happen in the coming year, please let him know.

Vice Moderator (Mary Jo Douglass) --

She also hopes everyone has had a chance to review the Annual Report which people put their hearts and souls into writing. Committees and teams are always looking for more members, so as we read the Report look for ways to be more involved in doing the work of the church.

Clerk (Debbie Stumm) --

- The Clerk Report is on page 9 of the Annual Report and is dated as of April 1, 2026
- Since then, we have had 3 more deaths: Janie Rempel on April 18, Carolyn Cockrell on April 20, and Betty Pennington on April 23
- We have also had 4 requests for membership: Sara Kellum, Roger & Diana Strunk, and Aubrie Grizzard who was baptized on April 12. As Clerk, I made a motion for the congregation to affirm these membership requests. Sue Strauch seconded. **MOTION APPROVED.**

Treasurer (Mary Jo for Paul Lawrence) --

- The Treasurer Report begins on page 10 of the Annual Report
- Assets grew in 2025 for an increase of \$58,034.47
- Our total income exceeded our total expenses by \$17,777.88, and the surplus exceeded our budgeted deficit of \$65,437.82 by \$83,215.70
- At the end of the first quarter in 2026, we are also ahead of the budgeted deficit
- The congregation's prayers and faithful giving are appreciated and allow us to do the church's programming and to help in the community and worldwide
- Al also added his thanks for the congregation's generosity and noted our church has had a long history of supporting missions

Nominating Service Team (Mary Jo) --

- As Vice Moderator, she is also Chair of the Nominating Service Team which has been tasked with filling some open positions. The Team looked at skills needed and tried to match people with those skills.
- For 3-year terms: Vice Moderator -- Nathan Jennings, Clerk -- Debbie Stumm, Worship -- David Greenfield, Pastoral Relations -- Rich Clemmons and Helen Ogar, and a new position Wedding Host -- Beverly Jennings and Becky Strack. Hearing no other nominations from the congregation, Mary Jo made a motion to approve the slate presented by the Team. Coming from the Team, so no second needed. **MOTION APPROVED.**
- Thank you to those going off for their time and faithful service to the church: Vice Moderator -- Mary Jo Douglass, Pastoral Relations -- Ashley Benton and Al Azinger

Facilities (Sue Strauch) –

- The Facilities Committee continues to tackle significant repairs and replacements that are inevitable in a building that is 30 plus years old. In addition, there are new responsibilities such as the pollinator habitat and keeping up with city and state regulations for buildings. Anyone who has an interest in helping with repair work of all different types and levels is encouraged to talk with Sue about how to help.
- Facilities costs can be high, and not everything can be budgeted for as we do not know when some equipment might fail or the state might mandate something be brought up to code. Some recent equipment in the process of being replaced are the 2 boilers and the gas stove. We are working on getting a phone with a monitored line in the elevator so we will be up to code. Some of these circumstances require us to use funds from memorials or bequests or our Baird investment account or gains from the investments. Sue also mentioned the Capital Fund that is a General Fund dedicated account. Specific donations to that fund can be used for some of these expenses that we foresee in the near future.
- We were hoping to have a prescribed burn of the pollinator habitat, but the weather has not cooperated. We have 3 benches that we will be adding to the habitat and are working on figuring out signs to add.
- Finally, there is an all-church workday this coming Saturday, May 9, from 9-12. Please consider coming to help. Any questions?

Outreach (Becky Strack) –

- Outreach is busy. We often work with other committees and teams such as Connecting the Community and Worship for the new Summer Vespers.
- The recent wonderful Talent Show raised over \$2,500 for future mission trips
- ABWM is going on a field trip and all are invited (even the men). On Monday, May 11, we are going to tour the Bridge Project and then go to lunch at Garden of Paradise (if road construction allows traffic to that restaurant). Meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. to carpool.

Worship (David Greenfield) –

- We had a really great year of worship together and tried to create a variety of worship experiences for all ages. Highlights were Christmas and Easter. There are a lot of moving parts each Sunday, and we applaud Pastor Brian and the staff for how well that is done.
- This year we are trying to have different types of communion bread we can experience together. Needed are breads for June-December. These can be homemade or store-bought. If you could provide bread for a month, please talk with Pastor Brian.
- Sunday outdoor worship services with meals and games will be held on the 4th of July and Labor Day weekends. Livestreaming will also be available.
- David is putting out a call for special summer music. The choir will sing once a month. If anyone or visiting family members would like to provide special music, please let him know.
- Some minor or major repairs are needed for the upper chamber of the organ
- Allison Benton is stepping down from her Praise Team Leader staff responsibility to devote more time to her schooling. Human Resources and Worship are looking to fill this role.

Congregational Questions/Comments (Al Strauch) –

- Gabrielle Hastings suggested we consider having a neighborhood pollinator event now that First Presbyterian Church across the street also has a pollinator habitat
- Becky Strack thanked Mary Jo as outgoing Vice Moderator for her leadership. Al added Mary Jo is outstanding to work with and is a vital part of a lot of things that happen here.
- Al thanked those watching online and the behind-the-scenes kitchen help who are preparing for today's potluck. He then invited the congregation to Barker Hall which is named so due to the generosity of a former member. Including the church in estate planning is something for us all to keep in mind.

At 11:51 a.m. Pastor Brian also thanked Mary Jo for her help in the past, gave the closing meeting prayer, and gave the opening potluck prayer.