



Rooted in God's grace, we joyfully witness and serve.

Core Values

*Intimacy With God
Inspiring Worship
Intentional Faith Development
Compassionate Outreach
Caring Community*

Church Council Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2023, 7:00 PM

2022 Elected Church Council Members	Executive Committee (Incoming)	Representatives (voting representatives)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Barbara Cranfill ● Chrissy O'Farrell ● Brian Fisher ● Allison Johnson ● Susan Prosser ● Rebecca Riley ● Bill Stoll ● Evonne Kuchera ● Tom Neuhaus ● Jim Dinges ● Kristine Dawson ● Rick Gardner ● Tracy Blois 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bill Stoll (President) ● Tom Neuhaus (Vice President) ● Chrissy O'Farrell (Secretary) ● Rick Gardner (Treasurer) ● Brian Fisher ● Rebecca Riley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wendy McClary- Child Development Center ● Caleb Clem and Tiana Stouch - Youth Group

Call to order

The meeting was via Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by President Bill Stoll.

Council Members Present

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Barbara Cranfill | 7. Jim Dinges |
| 2. Chrissy O'Farrell | 8. Kristine Dawson |
| 3. Allison Johnson | 9. Rick Gardner |
| 4. Susan Prosser | 10. Tracy Blois |
| 5. Bill Stoll | 11. Rebecca Riley |
| 6. Evonne Kuchera | |

Representatives Present

1. Wendy McClary

Staff Members Present

1. Pastor Julie Morris
2. Joe Zimmerly



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Determination of Quorum

(C12.06) majority of members of the council-majority is defined as one over one-half (7).

- 11 council members plus the Pastor and the Children, Youth and Family Director
- Number of council members present: 11 of 13
- Number of voting representatives present: 1

Devotion: Led by Kristine

Caring Conversation: What is your favorite restaurant?

Posey's (Santa Paula), Slate, Rabalais Bistro (Santa Paula), Boccali's Pizza (Ojai), Papa Linen's (Ojai), The Hip Vegan (Ojai), Latitude 34, Finney's

Approval of Minutes for July 18, 2023

Motion made by Becky: *"to approve the minutes from the July 18, 2023 meeting"*

- 2nd by Barbara
- The minutes are approved

Information

- Committee reimagining Task Force
 - Talking to committee chairs and liaisons to find out how council can support, any concerns they have, feedback
 - Looking ahead to Rally Sunday (Date TBD)
- Tech help
 - Looking for individuals to assist with technology help on Sundays, regular and short-notice fill ins
- Service in the Park (Bob Kildee Park - September 10th)

Reports

- Staff Report: Pastor Julie - report below
- Staff Report: Joe Zimmerly - report below
- Treasurer's Report: Rick Gardner - report below
- CDC update and report were heard by council (Wendy McClary)
- Committee liaison updates were heard by council
- Listening post comments were heard by council

Went into Executive session at 8:34 PM for personnel matter

Emerged from Executive session at 9:20 PM



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Motion

Motion made by Becky: "to extend meeting to 9:15"

- 2nd by Allison
- The motion is approved

Motion made by Becky: "to extend meeting to 9:30"

- 2nd by Barbara
- The motion is approved

Information

- Next Council meeting – [September 19th at 7:00pm at PLC](#)
- Executive Committee meeting – [September 7th at 7:00pm Zoom](#)

Meeting Adjourned at 9:23 PM

DEVOTIONS			
FEBRUARY Becky	MARCH Bill	APRIL Susan	MAY Tracy
JUNE Chrissy	JULY Allison	AUGUST Kristine	SEPTEMBER Brian
OCTOBER Barbara	NOVEMBER Evonne	DECEMBER Tom	JANUARY 2024 Jim
COUNCIL LISTENING POST 1st Sunday of the Month on the patio after service			
FEBRUARY Brian	MARCH Susan	APRIL Tom	MAY Jim
JUNE Bill	JULY Becky	AUGUST Tracy	SEPTEMBER Allison



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OCTOBER Wendy	NOVEMBER Barbara	DECEMBER Kristine	JANUARY 2024 Evonne
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Pastor's Report

Pastor's Report for August 15, 2023 Church Council Meeting

July 19 - August 15, 2023

I was away the first week of this reporting period, enjoying good time with family and friends, including birthdays for two of our daughters. Paul and I have entered a new era of parenting. It's hard to believe we are now officially parents of three young adults, as our youngest daughter turned eighteen at the end of July. Many thanks to The Rev. Dr. Colleen Windham-Hughes from CLU for presiding at worship and preaching on Sunday, July 23.

The second week was a wonderful VBS whirlwind (see Joe's report). Mount Cross VBS is a real gift that we offer the community, and it is a blessing for me to be part of it. Thank you to the many, many helpers and to Joe Zimmerly for his leadership.

The rest of the month has consisted of worship planning, preaching preparation, visits, committee and team meetings, and planning for the fall.

I am especially looking forward to the Discipleship Experience I am co-leading with Chrissy and Kevin O'Farrell. Fifteen parents of young children in our congregation are joining together to grow closer to Christ and each other. They are committing to daily prayer, weekly worship, monthly gatherings, and service. Some of them (along with me and others in the congregation) will be attending a Via de Cristo retreat Sept. 28-October 1 in Frazier Park. See <https://www.californiavdc.org/> for more information about this three-day retreat. I will need to take Sunday, October 1 as one of my "buy out" Sundays. I hope this Discipleship Experience experiment, lasting from September 2023-May 2024, will become an annual offering at Mount Cross as a pathway for those seeking spiritual growth and increased connection and leadership in the congregation. Please pray for the Discipleship Experience.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the RIC (Reconciling in Christ) Team for their wisdom and care as they have been guiding the congregation through the process of discernment, and I want to thank the congregation for their thoughtful and faithful work



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in exploring becoming an RIC congregation. The RIC Team offered two excellent programs this summer helping people to understand what the Bible says and doesn't say about LGBTQ+ issues. On July 30, they screened the Matthew Vines video and facilitated discussion about it. On August 14, they welcomed Roman Catholic priest and biblical scholar, Fr. Patrick Mullen, for an in-person presentation. Both forums were well-attended. I am heartened by the sincerity, prayerfulness, and genuine love with which people are engaging this important matter. I am reminded of the saying the Christian Church has always tried to live up to: "Unity in things essential; liberty in things non-essential; charity in all things."

As always, thank you to our Executive Committee, Church Council, Staff, Committee Chairs, and members for being generous in giving and serving Mount Cross and the wider community.

Glory to God whose power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:2-21).

Joe Zimmerly

August 2023 - Council Report

On July 24th, our middle and high school youth were invited to join Holy Trinity Lutheran Church for a day at Six Flags! Because of their hard work fundraising at Easter Breakfast, they were rewarded with a free trip. We had 2 adults and 4 youth attend from Mount Cross.

After three weeks of fundraising, we raised over \$500 towards Children's Hospital Los Angeles. The donation was written in honor of Celia Joy Moraga, our most recently baptized baby at Mount Cross.

Vacation Bible School was a wonderful time! We had 75 kids attend this year and over 25 volunteers. Our theme was Operation Restoration and our daily themes were Feed, Pray, Heal, Forgive, Rest. We partnered with St. Columba's and their food ministry raising over 700 canned food/non-perishable items which meant Joe and Pastor Julie were dunked in the dunk tank on Friday. Tuesday was our Zander's Game House night where we had 11 people attend. Wednesday was our Topper's Pizza fundraiser night where over 40 people gathered and raised \$320 for our youth programs. Thursday was our VBS Program where our kids highlighted what they had learned all week. Afterwards we enjoyed a cookie and ice cream social under the pavilion. Friday, we closed the week with water day. Some fun numbers to hear is that we had 16 kids from Mount Cross attend, 11 church members teach, 5 youth as teachers assistants, 2 young adults as helpers, and 1 youth lead snacks by the end of the week. Our kids learned



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more about God's creation and how we, the members, can make a difference in our daily lives by following those five themes. We have already started designing what next year will look like!

On August 20th we will be hosting a Zoom information meeting regarding the ELCA National Youth Gathering. Our hope is to travel and attend with Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in hopes to attain group rates and build community with our neighboring Lutherans. The estimated cost per person is \$1,500 which means there will be many fundraising opportunities in the coming months.

Community Time on Wednesday's has been a great opportunity to connect with each other. We have averaged 5-7 families most nights throughout the summer. We will be ending this program for the season the last week of August as we prepare for Fall Programs.

Our Fall Programming will restart September 13th following the schedule below:

- Rooted / 5:00PM-5:45PM
- Fun With Faith / 5:00PM-5:45PM
- Dinner / 5:45PM-6:30PM
- Confirmation / 6:30PM-8:00PM

August 15th (today), I would have attended an Employment Law 101 - for Non-Lawyers.

I have been selected to lead a Thriving Leadership Formation cohort this Fall focused on creative solutions for doing ministry differently. I will be equipping other ELCA youth leaders and those involved in youth ministry settings with the skills to build and adapt in a changing world.

My responsibilities include 12 hours of training and 10 weeks of meetings that range from 1-1.5 hours. I have been part of this program before as an attendee and have benefited greatly from this experience and I look forward to giving others the opportunity to learn new skills and experience spiritual renewal. Here is a link to their website:
<https://thrivingleadershipformation.org/>

Treasurer's Report

Budget Performance (through July 2023):

Gross income for July was \$36,791 (88% of budget versus 98% last month).

Gross income YTD was \$274,370 (94% of budget versus 95% last month).

Pledged giving for July was \$27,191 (91% of budget versus 84% last month).

Pledged giving YTD was \$206,335 (99% of budget versus 101% last month).

Expenses for July were \$43,950 (103% of budget versus 89% last month).

Expenses YTD were \$302,969 (102% of budget versus 101% last month).



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Net income for July was $\$36,791 - \$43,950 = -\$7,159$ (compared to budget amount of -
\$967).

Net income YTD was $\$274,370 - \$302,969 = -\$28,599$ (compared to budget amount of -
\$6,772).

Calculated reserves were \$103,569 compared to \$111,492 in June.

Analysis:

1. Our finances in July were subject to the typical summer swoon with pledged giving and gross income falling below budget. Expenses for the month were below budget in most accounts, but this was more than offset by a huge, unexpected increase in the cost of earthquake insurance.
2. We ended the month with a loss of over \$7,000 dropping our reserves below \$104,000. We will likely fall below our desired reserves of \$100,000 within the next month.
3. The recent gifts totaling \$210,000 have been placed in a temporary holding account awaiting further disposition.

Respectfully,
Rick Gardner
Treasurer