Mount Cross
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Core Values

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

Draft Church Council Meeting Minutes

09/29/2026

2025 Elected Church Council Members	Executive Committee	Voting Representatives
1. Ken Riley (President) 2. Tracy Blois (Vice President) 3. Amanda Honda (Secretary) 4. Jim Prosser (Treasurer) 5. Vicky Edell 6. Ralph Midtyling 7. Tom Neuhaus 8. Maria McDonell 9. Jeanne Kuchera-Sikoff 10. Gayle Johnson	• Ken Riley (President) • Tracy Blois (Vice President) • Amanda Honda (Secretary) • Jim Prosser (Treasurer)	• Henry Moraga (CDC Liaison) • Kaitlyn Edwards (youth rep)*

*1 vote between both youth representatives

Call to Order

The meeting was held in-person with a Zoom option. None joined by Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:07pm by President Ken Riley.

Council Members Present

1. Ken Riley (President)
2. Tracy Blois (Vice President)
3. Amanda Honda (Secretary)
4. Jim Prosser (Treasurer)
5. Vicky Edell
6. Ralph Midtyling
7. Maria McDonell
8. Tom Neuhaus
9. Jeanne Kuchera-Sikoff
10. Gayle Johnson

Voting Representatives Present

1. Henry Moraga
2. Katelyn Edwards

Staff Members Present

1. Pastor Julie Morris

Devotion: Led by Vicky Edell

Determination of Quorum

(C12.06) majority of members of the council-majority is defined as one over one-half (5).

- Number of council members present: 10
- Number of voting representatives present: 1

- Number of council members and voting representatives present: 13 of 13

Caring Conversation: What does Make, Bake, Celebrate mean to you?

Personnel Update from Tom Neuhaus

Motion by Maria McDonnell: "to follow Ken's, Julie's, and Tom's guidance regarding Pastor Marc's leave"

- Second by Jeanne Kuchera-Sikoff
- The minutes are approved via a hand vote, none opposed

ACTION: Approval of Minutes

Motion by Henry Moraga: "*to approve the minutes from the August meeting as modified with Jim's edits to Tracy"*

- Second by Jim Prosser
- The minutes are approved via a hand vote, none opposed.

ACTION: Acceptance of Staff and Committee Reports

Motion by Ralph Midtyling "to approve membership for Kathleen Wulf, Maria Fernandez, Paul Holmer-Monte, and Katie Beck"

- Second by Henry Moraga
- Passed via a hand vote, none opposed.

Information: Treasurer's Report

Update: Play Garden Water Space

- No new updates

Two Motions from Property Committee

Motion from Jim Prosser "to reject the recommendation from Property Committee to purchase the art shed and nullify Council's prior approval to purchase the art shed, returning the money to Endowment for reconsideration"

- Seconded by Amanda Honda
- The motion is approved via hand vote, two opposed

Recommendation from Tracy Blois to revisit the Outdoor Play Garden Space to include the vision of the outdoor art shed, water feature, moving the house, etc and recommendation from Council to Endowment that the funding try to be redirected to the outdoor space

Motion from Property Committee "to install 4 benches in the Outdoor Play Garden" with the placement to be reviewed by the original planners of the space

- No second needed
- The motion passes via hand vote, none opposed, one abstained

Information: Next Meeting Dates

1. Council Meeting on October 20th, 2026 at 7pm via in-person with Zoom option
2. Executive Committee on Thurs, October 8th at 7pm on Zoom

Motion to Adjourn

Motion made by Henry Moraga "*to adjourn meeting*"

- Second by Ralph Midtyling
- The motion passed unanimously by hand count, none opposed

Meeting Adjourned at 8:56pm with the Lord's Prayer

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Pastor's Report- Julie Morris (provided via handout)

We give thanks for the life of Jennifer Churchill and will gather to commend her to God's loving care on Friday, October 2 at 2 p.m.

Sunday Sermons

8/23: "The Gift of a Good Question"
8/30: "Overcome Evil with Good"
9/6: "Tangled"
9/13: "77 Times: Grace or Grudge?"
9/20: Thank you **Pastor Ralph** for preaching "It's Not Fair – Thank God!" and presiding so that Paul and I could celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary in Lake Tahoe, where we got married.
9/27: "The Mind of Christ"
I was also happy to be the guest preacher at Afternoon Chapel on 8/20. My homily was entitled "Humble and Gifted."

Make Bake Celebrate: I'm grateful for the way people are pulling together, in the absence of an official committee and chairperson, to make a special 60th anniversary edition of Make Bake Celebrate on October 3. Paul and I were happy to host two planning meetings at our home and look forward to the special spirit that is always present at this event.

60th Anniversary Events: We have a lot planned in October to celebrate Mount Cross' 60th anniversary:
10/3 at 5:00 p.m. - Make, Bake, Celebrate
10/4 at 9:30 a.m. - Blessing of the Animals, outdoors under the MBC Tent

10/11 at 9:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – Welcoming New Members in the a.m.; Feast of Faiths in the p.m. (in Ventura)
10/18 at 2:00 p.m. - "60 Years—A Legacy of Handbell and Choral Music"
10/22 at 2:00 p.m. - Senior Ministry Mocktail party
10/25th at 9:30 a.m. - 60th Anniversary Worship on Reformation Sunday, with Holy Baptism, *followed by a celebration potluck*!

Child Development Center: I met with the CDC directors, two teachers, and Pastor Marc to put a plan together for chapels this year. Now that the preschool morning goes until 12:30, we moved chapel from 11 a.m. to Noon on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. The Church/CDC Discernment Committee chaired by Kevin O'Farrell is progressing in its work. They are planning to survey the church, CDC family, and CDC staff in the next few weeks. The next meeting of that committee is on Zoom October 4.

Play Garden: I'm working with our CDC, the Child Care Licensing Agent, Tovias Landscaping, Amanda Honda and Craig and Tracy Blois to remodel the Play Garden stream to meet licensing requirements. In the meantime, there is a fence around it during school hours.

Bible Studies: Men's Bible Study runs twice monthly year-round. Women's Bible Study began its Fall season on Sept. 15, meeting weekly on Tuesdays.

Wednesday Evenings: Fall programs began Sept. 9. Fun with Faith and Rooted combined on 9/9 and 9/16 for intergenerational programming. Confirmation is beginning a new curriculum from Augsburg Fortress called *Lutheran Yes!*

Membership Exploration Class: On September 27, I held a chat for people interested in joining Mount Cross. At least 4 people hope to join through Affirmation of Baptism on October 11: Kathleen Wulf, Maria Fernandez, Paul Holmer-Monte, and Katie Beck. **Action required from Council.**

Three Congregations: The 4-week "Faith Journeys" series at Camarillo United Methodist Church was well-received and well-attended. It was an honor for me to share my story on Sept. 8, and I am grateful for the support of all the Mount Cross folks who attended. It was good to hear that Mount Cross placed prominently in the Chili Cook Off at St. Columba's on Sept. 26. Thank you to all who participated or attended.

Wider Church: on 8/20 I was a webinar speaker for the Episcopal Church Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations about the relationship between the ELCA and the Episcopal Church. On 9/12, I joined the local region of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles in welcoming our new bishop, Antonio Gallardo, to the area.

In the Community: On 9/2, Gordon Henry and I attended the ribbon cutting for the 6 new tiny homes on Barry Street. Mount Cross furnished one of the homes that will be available to people transitioning out of homelessness.

The past month was filled with all of the above and lots of **visitation and pastoral care**, my joy!

Looking Ahead – I'm very excited that Paul Holmer-Monte will be leading a book study on *Reclaiming Church* by J.J. Warren for LGBTQ+ Christians, seekers, and allies. It is especially wonderful that Jeanne Sikoff-Konas is donating space for this study at Zander's Game House in Old Town Camarillo. The study will meet on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. 10/5,12, 19, 26 and 11/ 2, 9, 16.

Thank you for serving our congregation!
"Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus."

Treasurer's Report - Jim Prosser

The good news is that we have weathered the summer months in fairly good shape. But, the final quarter of the year will need to be good to avoid going into the red.

Total Operational Income through August was $312,228. That's 105% of the budgeted amount of $296,911.

Total Income through August was $386,848 vs budgeted of $373,458.

Comparing Operational Income through August to our full year goal, we are at 70%, with all subcategories of Operational Income at roughly that point.

Comparing Total Income through August to our full year goal is slightly better, coming in at 72%, with only interest income significantly under performing at 49%. This type of underperformance is often due to when interest is credited to the account by the bank.

In addition to overperforming on the income side, we have successfully managed our expenses. Our total expenses for the first 8 months were $408,316 vs the budget of $437,975. That is a difference of $29,659 or nearly 7%. (This does NOT include the spending on the Playground Remodel, which is totally funded through Dedicated Funds.)

We are also using less of our dedicated funds than projected in the budget. The budget projected using $69.828 of dedicated funds to balance our budget. But as of the end of August, we have only used $34,500 of our dedicated funds. (This does NOT include the spending on the Playground Remodel, which is totally funded through Dedicated Funds.)

Playground remodel: A contract was executed with Joe Tovias Landscape In June for a total amount of $50,940. The contract was approved by Council plus an additional $5,000 to cover any overages. The initial downpayment of $1000 was made on June 29th. Construction started on or about August 10 and was "completed on or about August 25th. On August 15, 2026 a change order was agreed to for the purpose of improving the 6x6 post supporting the swing set and other areas, in the amount of $1,480. To date a total of $52,420 has been spent under the Tovias contract. This includes $41,529.89 from the Playground Improvements Account (35366) and $10,890.11 from the Gift(temp holding) Account (35318).

There is now a dispute regarding the water feature as it is much larger than called for in the contract, which called for a max height of 14" and as constructed it is about 4' high. State Licensing has flagged the height as a problem and required it to be fenced off, which has been done. Discussions with the contractor to resolve the matter are ongoing.

The following documents were forwarded by email to council members:

2026 Church Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2026; and
2026 Church Budget vs Actuals for July, August and Year To Date.