

MOUNT CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES SEPTEMBER 20, 2022, 7:00 PM

2022 Elected Church Council Members: Barbara Cranfill (Stewardship), Kevin Churchill (Tech Committee), Brian Fisher (Endowment Committee), Allison Johnson (Worship & Music), Susan Prosser (Property), Rebecca Riley (President, Personnel Committee), Bill Stoll (Secretary, Learning), Evonne Kuchera (Care Team), Tom Neuhaus (Vice President, Service & Missions), Jim Dinges (Adult Education), Kristine Dawson (Fellowship & Welcome), Rick Gardner (Budget & Finance)

Executive Committee: Becky Riley (President), Tom Neuhaus (Vice President), Bill Stoll (Secretary), Rick Gardner (Treasurer)

Representatives: Wendy McClary- Child Development Center
Collin Edwards / Sophia Valencia - Youth Group

Call to order: The meeting was held virtually utilizing Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 P.M. by Vice President Tom Neuhaus

Council Members Present: Barbara Cranfill, Brian Fisher, Kevin Churchill, Allison Johnson, Susan Prosser, ~~Rebecca Riley~~, Bill Stoll, ~~Evonne Kuchera~~, Tom Neuhaus, Jim Dinges, Kristine Dawson, Rick Gardner,

Representatives Present: Wendy McClary- Child Development Center

Staff Members Present: Pastor Julie Morris, Joe Zimmerly

Determination of Quorum- Six council members plus the Pastor

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

Number of council members' present: 10 of 12

Number of voting representatives present: 1

Devotion: Led by Kris Dawson – Do not judge / Do not argue with God

Caring Conversation: Back to School. September brings the traditional first day of school. What was one of your favorite years of school, and why?

Approval of Minutes for August 16, 2022; **Motion** to approve the minutes made by Brian; 2nd by Rick. **The minutes are approved as amended.**

Action: To facilitate communication between the Property Committee and CDC, the Executive Committee **moves** to adopt a resolution inviting a representative of the CDC Board to serve as a non-voting member of the Property Committee. **Passed.**

Action: Motion from Property Committee to approve janitorial contract. **Passed**

Information: Status of new computer purchase – Kevin Churchill; Computer arrived last Sunday. Allows a higher quality feed. Faster and easier to switch cameras.

Information: Update re: VENMO account – Joe; Working great. Many using it on Wednesday night dinner. At some point we may want to have a “how to” seminar.

Information: Update on status of van donation and van sale – Susan Prosser & Rick Gardner; Looking to donate the old van to a homeless person. **Motion** by Brian to direct the property committee to remove Mount Cross labeling from the side of the van and proceed with the donation. 2nd by Kevin. **Passed**

Information: Update re: 2023 Budget process - Rick Gardner; Introduced budget assignment form & instructions which will be provided to committee chairs. Due on 10/31.

Information: Update on Property Committee action re: church stucco and Ad Hoc Committee status - Susan Prosser; Property beginning to tackle Ad Hoc projects (stucco & painting, roofing; Prefer tile to re-stucco). Need to get roofing bids and prep bids. Also thinking about costs for paving and technical elements in sanctuary.

Information: Request to open discussion re: organization of Committees and Volunteers - Allison Johnson; We need to do something different in engaging our members in volunteering for committees. We also need to make sure our volunteers are contacted and encouraged.

Information: Update regarding the need for Joe Zimmerly Health Insurance in 2023 – Tom Neuhaus

Staff Reports

Written reports from Staff, Pastor Julie, Joe Zimmerly; see below

Pastor Julie – Guy hopes to be back in October but may be too soon. Masks are now optional. Can we set the annual meeting for January 29? Bill moves Allison 2nds **Passed**.

Joe – Tomorrow from 5-6:30 be part of Pastor Julie’s adult group and Bible study. Need to hire another Wednesday night childcare person through e-vote.

Motion by Bill to extend the meeting to 9:15. 2nd by Susan. **Passed**

Reports: Treasurer’s Report – 9/20/2022

Budget Performance (through August 2022):

Gross income for August was \$33,382 (91% of budget versus 102% last month).

YTD gross income was \$312,813 (106% of budget versus 108% last month).
Pledged giving for August was \$20,400 (79% of budget versus 115% last month).
Pledged giving YTD was \$232,790 (113% of budget versus 118% last month).
Expenses for August were \$42,413 (104% of budget versus 108% last month).
Expenses YTD were \$331,553 (101% of budget versus 101% last month).
Net income for August was \$33,382 - \$42,413 = -\$9,031 (compared to budget amount of - \$3,994).
Net income YTD was \$312,813 - \$331,553 = -\$18,740 (compared to budget amount of - \$31,951).
Calculated reserves in August were \$144,827 compared to \$154,262 in July.

Analysis:

Pledged giving plummeted to a monthly low, even lower than February. This may be due to a summer swoon that the previous Treasurer had warned me about. Still, pledged giving year-to-date is 13% higher than budgeted.
Expenses were somewhat over budget for the month, mostly due to one-time expenses for the synod convention.
Reserves continued to decline, more or less in accordance with projections. However, the reserves are still considered in the healthy range.

Respectfully,
Rick Gardner
Treasurer

Committee Reports:

Worship & Music: Allison - Suggestion box for music; Discussed ideas for Linda Franz memorial funds.

SAM – Susan; Proposing to take on one Monday/month for many meals. Karin Grennan will coordinate. Looking for cooks or people to provide food.

RIC: Bill – Committee members took part in RIC online training and will meet in October to plan next steps.

FFF: Bill - Learning Committee changed its name to Family Faith Formation.

Motion to extend the meeting to 9:30 by Bill; 2nd by Barbara; **Passed**

CDC: Wendy – Thanks to property committee. Year has started well. New board additions are great. Incorporation is complete at a cost of \$7000. Can Council help with that? Will be

discussed at Executive Committee.

Property: Susan - people concerned about gravel in parking lot – due to COVID; Changing bulbs in sanctuary to LED.

Information: [Note assignments for Devotions and Listening Post](#)

Information: Next meeting date – Oct. 18, 7:00 pm on **zoom**; October meeting on **Zoom**; November meeting **4th Tuesday**, November 22

Information: Executive Committee meeting October 6 at 7:00 on **zoom**

For the Good of the Order:

A motion was made by Brian to adjourn at 9:30; seconded by Allison. **Motion passed.**
Adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer at 9: PM.

Looking ahead:

Next Executive Committee meeting: **October 6, 2022 7:00 p.m. Zoom**

Next Council Meeting: **October 18, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Zoom**

* DEVOTIONS			
FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
Bill	Becky	Susan	Bill
JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
Kevin	Allison	Brian	Kristine
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY 2023
Barbara	Evonne	Tom	Jim
** COUNCIL LISTENING POST (1st Sunday of the Month (unless otherwise indicated), on the patio, between services)			
FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY
JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
Brian	Becky	Susan	Allison
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY 2023
Wendy	Bill	Kristine	Evonne

**Pastor’s Report and Deacon’s Report for September Church Council Meeting
August 16, 2022 – September 20, 2022**

Our wonderful and joyful worship in the park and picnic officially concluded summer at Mount Cross. Thank you to all Council members who made invitation calls to church members and friends listed in our directory, and thank you to all who helped make the event happen. It was a beautiful Camarillo day, and the majestic Shamel Ash tree made a lovely canopy over our altar.

Our Fall programs resumed the week of September 12. In addition to our CYFM programs (see Joe Zimmerly's report), and our 3 Bible studies (Tuesday morning Women's; Wednesday evening all; and 1st and 3rd Thursday Men's), we are experimenting with a new program I am calling "ROOTED" for parents of Fun with Faith children and all interested adults. The first week was off to a good start.

On August 17, I attended a *Faithful Innovation* webinar hosted by Luther Seminary called "Getting Clear on the Why of Your Church." Churches across the country are facing existential questions about survival. In the face of tremendous cultural change regarding church affiliation and attendance (exacerbated by the pandemic) congregations need to do a lot of soul-searching about our core purpose. We were encouraged to start conversations in our congregation about why we are Christians and what difference it has made in our lives to be followers of Jesus. Being disciples of Jesus and helping others to become disciples of Jesus is our why. Wanting to lead by example, I used the September newsletter to share a little bit about why I am a Christian and what difference it makes to me. Here is an excerpt of what I wrote:

I am a Christian because Jesus invited me into his open, gentle, and humble heart offering rest, grace, guidance, strength, and a deeply meaningful life. He was and continues to be true to his word. As I follow Jesus, I notice my own heart expands. I care more for others; I want all people to experience belonging and love; I appreciate the beauty of the earth and the wonder of life; my priorities become clear; I recognize the world's empty promises; I find friends and companions with whom I can share burdens and joys; and I can face risk, suffering, evil, and death through the lens of the cross, trusting in the ultimate victory of goodness and life. Although I doubt I'll get beyond beginner status, I aspire to embody Jesus' way of self-giving, down-to-earth love and service wherever I find myself. Knowing Jesus has led me to encounters with the most wonderful people, from living Christian saints to holy men and women of other faiths. I have learned that God-shaped people and places are full of gratitude, generosity, compassion, justice, and joy. I want to be around them forever.

I hope you, as Church Council members, will practice answering the questions: Why are you a Christian? What difference has following Jesus made in your life?

I continue with Sunday worship and preaching, pastoral care, committee work, staff supervision, and collaboration with the Child Development Center. It was great to return to preschool chapel this week. My service to both the Southwest California Synod and the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles will increase this year. For the synod, I will continue mentoring a candidate for the diaconate and will also take on supervising a candidate for Word and Sacrament. For the diocese, I am helping to create a system for licensing lay leaders and will be part of the planning team for two discernment gatherings in the spring for Episcopalians interested in serving in lay or ordained leadership roles.

Life and ministry feel very full. Some days I wonder how it all gets done. Some days it does not all get done, but the grace of Christ always charts the course and fills in the gaps. Thanks be to God!

Below is a report from Deacon Cecelia Travick Jackson as she comes close to her one year anniversary serving with us. She is also on staff for the synod. Talk about a full plate! God bless Deacon Cecelia.

Report Church Council
(Excerpts from) ELCA CONSTITUTION As of April 2022

MINISTRY OF WORD AND SERVICE

*7.54.01. Ministers of Word and Service shall be known as deacons.
7.61.02. Responsibilities. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall: a. be rooted in the Word of God, for proclamation and service; b. advocate a prophetic diakonia that commits itself to risk-taking and innovative service on the frontiers of the Church's outreach, giving particular attention to the suffering places in God's world; c. speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad;...*

Ministers of Word and Service are relatively new to the ELCA; therefore, it is good to be reminded of what a deacon is and their call to service. I have the pleasure of walking and serving in these worlds. It is especially gratifying to experience the connection and interconnectedness of these worlds. I serve in my local church (Mount Cross), I serve in the Southwest California synod as an Assistant to the Bishop, I serve on the Board for California Lutheran Homes (St. John's Manor), Deacon formation committee for the Rostered Ministers' Gathering in 2023, and the Deacon Dialogues book discussion group, and newly added, in October I will bring a monthly worship service to one of our assisted living communities in Camarillo and I also provide pastoral and spiritual guidance to this same residential home. In each of these groups and gatherings I speak publicly and boldly of adult senior citizens and their gifts especially the gifts that through God's Grace only age and experience can bring. I will break down each of these areas and my contributions since my ordination on December 12, 2021.

Mount Cross

What this report will not include is time spent on sermon preparation, reading, phone calls to congregation members, e-mails, texts, other work-related correspondence.

The following are recurring meetings and responsibilities

- **Weekly Staff Meetings**
- **Weekly Meetings with Pastor Julie for Pastoral care and counseling**
- **Attend Monthly Care team meetings**
- **Attend Monthly Mary Circle Bible Study**
- **Monthly Submission to the Grapevine**
- **Chair Monthly Senior Adult Ministry Committee Meetings**
- **Preside and Preach Monthly Chapel Service**
- **Assist in Sunday Worship Service**
- **Assist Sunday Drive Through Communion**
- **Contact person when Pastor Julie is away**
- **Preach at Mount Cross three times a year**

Following are the tasks related to Diaconal Ministry
December 2021

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
12/15-Bible Study and Dinner	12/15-Synod Executive Council		
12/18-Hanging of the Green	12/21-Budget and Finance Committee		
12/19-Christmas Concert			
12/23-Tech rehearsal for New Hope Lutheran			
12/24 Two Christmas Eve Services			

12/26-Guest Preacher-New Hope			
12/30-Funeral			

January 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
1/6 – Take down Christmas decorations from church	1/4- Planning for Policy & Governance meeting	1/4 -Practice Epiphany for Deacons	1/2-Pastoral call to grieving family in the community
1/9 – Attend new member class	1/5 – Policy and Governance meeting	1/6 – Deacons Epiphany Worship Service	
1/9—Cemetery interment for Mount Cross member	1/14-Policy and Governance meeting		
1/30-Annual meeting	1/18-Budget and Finance meeting		
	1/19-Meeting with Bishop Brenda		
	1/20- Mutual Ministry meeting		
	1/21-Pre-nominating committee meeting		

	1/25-Budget and Finance meeting		
	1/29-Synod Council meeting		

February 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
2/18- made 3 home communion visits	2/2 Meeting with Bishop Brenda		2/20-pastoral care visit to person just released from hospital
2/26 Funeral for Mount Cross member	2/3 Mutual Ministry		
	2/4, 2/5, 2/9 – Policy and Governance		
	2/7- Meeting with Pastor Toni		
	2/16-Executive Council		

March 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
3/2- Ash Wednesday service	3/8- Executive Council	3/24- 3/27 Deacon Bridge (formation) Event	
3/4- Funeral for Mount Cross Member	3/9-Mutual Ministry		

3/5-Funeral for Mount Cross Member	3/9-Lenten Service		
3/13-Pastoral care meeting with member of the congregation	3/10-Mutual Ministry Meeting		
3/16-Lenten Service	3/11-Nominating Committee		
3/30-Lenten Service	3/15-Policy and Governance		
	3/19-Council meeting		
	3/30-Meeting with Pastor Toni		

April 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
4/6-Lenten Service	4/5-Executive Council		
4/7-Channel Island Colloquy	4/12-Meeting with Bishop		
4/9-Help decorate church for Palm Sunday			
4/12-Christm Mass			
4/14 Maundy Thursday Service			

<p>at St Columba's followed by planning meeting for Good Friday and Holy Saturday</p> <p>4/15-Stations of the Cross-St. Columba's</p> <p>4/15 Tenebrae service at Mount Cross</p> <p>4/16- Great Vigil of Easter-St Columba's</p> <p>4/28-Channel Islands Conference Assembly</p>			
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May 2022

<p>Mount Cross 5/2 Bishop's Colloquy</p> <p>5/3 First Call Theological Education</p> <p>5/4 Channel Island Colloquy</p> <p>5/7 Funeral for Mount Cross member</p>	<p>Synod 5/17 Candidacy Cultivation Experience</p> <p>5/25-Synod Assembly Logistics Meeting</p> <p>5/31-Have sample sermon completed for</p>	<p>ELCA 5/18 Ministers of Word and Service- A Time to Gather</p>	<p>Wider Community 5/16 – 5/20 Festival of Homiletics</p>
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5/9 Liturgical Ministry Training	Synod Assembly		
5/14 Pastoral care Assisted Living Visit			
5/14 Pastoral care Home Visit- Communion			
5/16-5/20-Festival of Homiletics			
5/18- Pastoral Care Assisted Living Visit			
5/22-Confirmation Sunday			

June 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
6/2 Active Shooter training	6/2 Channel Islands Conference Assembly		
6/5-End of Life Issues- Grief			
6/7-Pastoral Care hospital visit	6/10 Boundaries Workshop		
6/16-Pastoral Care home communion visit	6/11 Synod Assembly		
6/24-Funeral for Mount Cross member	6/12 Visitation to Simi Valley Lutheran Church		

	<p>6/14 First Call Theological Education</p> <p>6/21 Meeting with Pastor Jaeger</p> <p>6/22 Meeting with the Bishop</p> <p>6/23 Meeting with Pastor Abel</p> <p>6/23 The Haven Stillpoint Religious Presentation</p> <p>6/30 First Call Theological Education- Afternoon Tea</p>		
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July 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
7/18-Pastoral Care hospital visit	7/1-Zoom tutorial with Claudia		
7/24-End of Life Issues-Palliative and Hospice Care	7/3-St. Luke Lutheran Church		

<p>7/25-Pastoral Care Home Communion Visit</p> <p>7/28-Adult Senior Dinner and Social</p>	<p>(Woodland Hills)</p> <p>7/6- Meeting with Pastor Abel</p> <p>7/8-Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church Bellflower</p> <p>7/20-Meeting with Bishop Brenda</p> <p>7/27- Meeting with Pastor Abel</p>		
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August 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
<p>8/8-8/12- VBS with therapy dog Sunshine</p> <p>8/13-Pastoral Care visit with congregation member</p> <p>8/27-Funeral for Congregation Member</p> <p>8/29- 30 First Call Theological Education</p>	<p>8/3-Meeting with Rev Danielle and Pastor Abel</p> <p>8/7-St Matthew Lutheran Church North Hollywood</p> <p>8/17 Meeting with Pastor Javier and Pastor Abel</p>	<p>8/25-Elected to the bord of California Lutheran Homes-St John's Manor</p>	

	8/19-Synod Deacon Gathering event 8/20-Synod Council Retreat 8/31 Meeting with Pastor Javier and Pastor Abel		
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September 2022

Mount Cross	Synod	ELCA	Wider Community
9/6- Meeting with local care facility 9/11-Channel Islands Fall Conference Assembly 9/13 In-person meeting with local care facility 9/13 Pastor care and home communion visit with congregation member <i>The remainder of September has yet to be scheduled</i>	9/1-Pandemic Pastoring Webinar 9/21-(scheduled) Meeting with Bishop Brenda 9/21-(scheduled) Meeting with Pastor Abel 9/24-(scheduled) First presentation on Grief Series with Reverend Danielle	9/8- Deacon Pre-Gathering to Rostered Ministers Gathering 9/27-(scheduled) All Region Ministers of Word and Service	

	9/29 (scheduled Fe y Esperanza in South Gate		
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Joe Zimmerly -September 2022 Report

At the end of the summer, our middle school girls' camped out in Fillmore. They stayed at a beautiful house overlooking all of Fillmore. The night started with setting up tents and transitioned into a wonderful dinner cooked by Jessica and Joe. We are thankful for opportunities like this that bring our kids together.

In September, our programs restarted with an increase in attendance. We are experimenting with a new schedule as we try to meet the needs of the congregation, especially our families. We expect that there will be more changes along the way as the year continues. The schedule for the night is shown below. All are welcome!

- Fun With Faith / 5:00PM-5:45PM
- Rooted / 5:00PM-5:45PM
- Adult Bible Study / 5:00PM-5:45PM
- Dinner / 5:45PM-6:15PM
- Confirmation / 6:15PM-7:30PM

Another change to our programs is with our confirmation program using “playlists” for theyear. As explained by John Roberto of Lifelong Faith, “the idea of a playlist is simple: it is a sequence of activities and resources on a topic designed for individual and/or small group learning, usually available on a digital form. Playlists make faith formation available at any time. They are a way to personalize faith formation around the needs and interests of each life stage and the diversity of people’s spiritual and religious needs. Playlists make the learner of any age the center of faith formation, providing multiple ways to grow in faith. The responsibility for learning and growing in faith shifts from the provider to the person.” Stay tuned for updates of how it is working. Who knows, you might want to have a playlist for your Bible study group too!

The church picnic was full of joy and laughter this past Sunday, September 18th. It was a great place where families could gather with one another. After worship, you could find the kids playing on the playground or making flower crowns. I am so thankful to everyone who showed up and cannot wait until next year.

Our Venmo is set up and has already been in use for our Wednesday night meals. We

received over \$300 in Venmo transactions the first week of our meal programs making it easy for families to attend dinner without having to look for cash or run to the bank. In fact, I heard before we had Venmo some families would not attend dinner because they didn't have cash on them and didn't want to ask for an "IOU". I want to say thank you for meeting the needs of our families in this specific area.