CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEENAH/ MENASHA

Ministry Council Agenda
June 5, 2025

Present: Denise Stewart, Terri Flesburg, Mary Janess, Chris Parsons, Connie Regazzi, Jeff Nichols, Chuck Luebke, Sue Knuth, Signa Meyers

Missing: Pastor Rob, Sherri Jischke

Welcomed Guests: Kevin Shumann

Gathering Devotion: Jeff Nichols

Joys and Concerns: Replaced by introductions and sharing of fun facts.

Quorum Count: Quorum confirmed.

Minutes taken by: Chris Parsons

Agenda Adjustment: None

Ministry Council Minutes May 1, 2025: Approved

Council approved and proceeded with the following Consent Agenda Items:

Item	Owner	Minutes Received
Ministry of Spiritual Life June 8 – Next scheduled meeting. June 15 – Ice cream social scheduled. June 15 – All-church picnic scheduled. The Ministry will follow-up with Pastor Rob for additional details and offer needed assistance.	Terri	Yes

Ministry of Service
June date – Next meeting to be scheduled.
The Ministry shared the following regarding Service Sunday:
• "Thank you" note with pictures was received from Bletzinger House
• Positive feedback included the following:
  ○ The variety of projects provided a variety of skill/activity levels.
  ○ Lunch was appreciated.
  ○ At the Menasha laundromat, the team had a conversation with an individual in Swahili, and a team member will follow up with community
	Mary	Yes

resources. The laundromat itself also helps at Christmas time. o At the Neenah laundromat, most people graciously accepted the help. o The individuals who helped sort plastic sorted a lot of plastic. It was a good "sitting down" project. • Opportunities: o Having rummage sale items in the fellowship hall impacted on logistics. o Do we raise additional funds? o Do we wear T-shirts to identify us (e.g., the people with the red shirts or a t-shirt with comma)? o Provide individuals with a brief card or flyer to identity ourselves and to assure people we are there to help, not to preach. o Consider scheduling as far in advance as possible and, perhaps, when Sunday School is still in session, and/or perhaps in the fall. Sleep in Heavenly Peace will be a new monthly mission. The organization builds beds and has the motto of "no child sleeps on the floor in my town." Collection will be in June, with World Relief collection in July and August (instead of World Relief collection in June, July, and August).		
Ministry of Faith Development Meeting held to recap the year and to encourage individuals to steward/clean-up accounts. Please see meeting minutes for additional information.	Denise	Yes
Ministry of Stewardship May 27 – Meeting held. Ministry is preparing for new bookkeeping vendor ("Non-Profit Accounting") as of July 1. As part of the preparation, Marilyn is cleaning up accounts, including reviewing chart of accounts and removing those not needed. Ministry is also adding signatories on bank account. Signatories will be Jeff Nichols, Marilyn Kostrzak, Sue Knuth, Kevin Shumann. This represents a new accountant after having the same accountant for 40 years. *Building and Grounds:* 1. Card and fob readers for the back door and the parking lot door would have a $60-70 monthly maintenance fee. Lake Edge is also looking at readers for their doors. The building would have one system from one company with two different log-ins. Each of church and Lake Edge would maintain a list of who has access to what doors. Church would have access to all doors, and Lake Edge would only have	Jeff	Yes

access to their two doors limited to certain week hours (as requested by Lake Edge). 2. Signa and Kevin are meeting with new Lake Edge board members on June 11 for introductions and expectation setting. Lake Edge filing cabinet is to be correctly placed. Lake Edge is expected to timely notify of any broken window and will be responsible for payment. 3. Concrete work is to be done on Monday June 16. 4. Willett determined that the stained-glass windows are in good shape. Willett proposed protecting the windows by not opening them. The cranks could be removed so that the windows could not be opened (and so that the cranks could be used on other windows). 5. There are possible new committee members to assist in evaluating priorities and managing projects.		
Treasurer's Report April was a good month, with a monthly deficit of $1,509, and a running deficit of $11,896. The deficit is partly attributed to a higher than expected We Energies bill (see below). Pledges and contributions have been lower. It is still expected that what is pledged will be received. There are no significant concerns, and the deficit is mostly due to advance pledges. More will be paid for accounting service in the second half of 2025, and next year's budget will include this additional expense. Overall, we will be mindful of expenses. The United Church funds balance is expected to reflect the increase in the overall market.	Jeff	Yes
Pastor's Report Pastor Rob was unable to attend as he was away to serve in his role as Vice Moderator for the Northeast Association of the Wisconsin Conference of the UCC at their respective annual meeting in Green Lake.	Pastor Rob	Yes

Discussion Agenda:

Old Business:

1. WE energy bill update – There was an unexpectedly large bill in April. The typical bill is $1,100 to $1,200 for gas, attributed to Lake Edge cooking and the church. Previously, We Energies billed based on estimated usage. However, in April, they billed based on actual usage. It was confirmed there was no gas leak. Kevin will monitor the We Energies statements each month. Recent charges (based on actual usage) have been slightly lower than prior charges (based on estimated usage) and are less than $1,000 per month. Building users are to be mindful of windows being left open or doors propped open in winter and reporting broken windows needing repair. The custodian has been reminded to confirm the building is secured.
2. Service Sunday recap – Please see above Ministry of Service report.
3. Pridefest update – People are still needed to work in the evening (5:00 pm to 8:00 pm). Individuals have volunteered to bring items to the park, and Pastor Rob volunteered to bring items from the park.

4. Habitat for Humanity build team update. – The build team met and plans to schedule a future meeting to discuss funds, volunteers, etc. The date for that meeting is still to be determined. The committee believes the congregation will support the build. If not, we would rely on Habitat for additional funds and volunteers. The build requires approximately $100,000.
5. Fun committee update and/or discussion – This will be a subcommittee under Spiritual Life for all-congregation informal get-togethers. Ministry of Spiritual Life will discuss at its next meeting. One event includes a possible Timber Rattlers game on August 1.
6. 175th Anniversary discussion – Mary Janess is recruiting a committee, separate from Ministry of Service. The committee is expected to meet before the August 7 Ministry Council meeting. The committee will coordinate planning with Pastor Rob, with the understanding that the 175th celebration does not need to – and may not – include all that was included in the 150th celebration.

New Business:

6. Hearing Loop – There have been complaints that the system it is intermittent and does not work well. It is known that the system does not work in the chancel, as it was not installed there. We could arrange for a vendor to test it; Heartland charges $138/hour. As an initial alternative to contacting Heartland, Sue will connect Kevin with Katie Engelhardt (an audiologist) for guidance on next steps. It is unclear if the issue is that the system is old and does not function with newer hearing aids. A possible next step could be a survey of church members who use the loop. Katie could possibly provide questions to include in the survey.
7. Council contact information for council members – Please see attached Appendix A.

Additional New Business:

8. New Members – Chuck will talk with Pastor Rob and Melanie to outline the new member process (e.g., new member introduction questions, new member picture and information, etc.) . Ministry Council will then discuss appropriate ownership of the process. It is established that Ministry of Service has ownership for new members becoming acclimated and involved.
9. Immanuel – Mary asked what we could do to help Immanuel attendees process their loss and grief. Are there resources at the UCC level?
10. Informal sit-down – Chuck shared that conference guidelines suggest having an informal sit-down with a new pastor and the search committee at six months. Chuck will follow-up.

Lord's Prayer

Next meeting: August 7, 2025

Next Devotion: Pastor Rob

Appendix A – Ministry Council Contact Information

Name	Phone	Email
Becky Nichols (Faith Development)	920-750-8802	bnichols126@gmail.com
Chris Parsons (Secretary)	920-213-5040	cbenter777@aol.com
Chuck Luebke (At Large)	920-725-5610	cluebke52yznt@gmail.com
Connie Regazzi (At Large)	920-202-2674	yeahmon40@yahoo.com
Denise Stewart (Faith Development liaison)	920-850-5238	dstewart813@gmail.com
Jeff Nichols (Treasurer)	920-558-7297	jhook1974@gmail.com
Kevin Shumann (Regular Guest)	920-830-6836	kevin.shumann@gmail.com
Mary Janess (Service)	920-475-2914	malojann@yahoo.com
Pastor Rob Van Ess	920-273-9794	pastor@cuccnm.org
Sherri Jischke (At Large)	920-475-8730	dsjischke@gmail.com
Signa Meyers (Moderator)	920-659-2247	signa.meyers@gmail.com
Sue Knuth (Vice Moderator)	920-850-9609	susan.j.knuth@gmail.com
Terri Flesburg (Spiritual Life)	920-725-4510	ltflesburg@att.net