CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEENAH/ MENASHA

Ministry Council Minutes
September 4, 2025

Present: Signa Meyers, Mary Janess, Chris Parsons, Connie Regazzi, Chuck Luebke, Denise Stewart, Terri Flesburg, Sherri Jischke, Pastor Rob, Marilyn Kostrzak

Missing: Jeff Nichols, Sue Knuth

Quorum Count (at least six council members (more than one-half of council)): Quorum confirmed.

Minutes taken by: Chris Parsons

Welcomed Guests: Kevin Shumann

Gathering Devotion: Connie

Approval of the August 7, 2025 Agenda and Minute: Approved

Read-in of Council decisions since August 7 meeting:

- Council decided via email not to approve Lake Edge Learning Center (LELC) use of Rooms 6 and 7.
- Council decided via email to temporarily allow LELC to use the south end of Fellowship Hall as a designated meal space for early lunch until end of 2025. Decision will be re-evaluated after this trial period.

Consent Agenda Items:

Item	Owner	Minutes from last meeting
Ministry of Spiritual Life Highlights • August 17 – Pet blessing and outdoor service • September 7 – Communion • September 14 – Next meeting Escalations or decisions • none	Terri	June 8, 2025
Ministry of Service Highlights • September – Next meeting Escalations or decisions • none	Mary	March 30, 2025

Ministry of Faith Development Highlights • New school year beginning: 47 kids registered for Sunday School. Last year, initial registration was 30 and ended with 40. • September 5 – Youth group • September 7 – Pancake breakfast, first day of Sunday School, Bible Sunday • HS curriculum being re-vamped for students to be more involved and to participate in off campus activities. • Mandatory reporter training completed. Escalations or decisions • none	Becky	CE Director's Report received for August. No meeting since the last Council meeting.
Ministry of Stewardship (Stewardship, Finance, Building and Grounds, Insurance) Highlights • Wiring for card system is being completed. • Policy for card keys is to be developed. • Door to Room 4 is being added for an exit door. • Lockers are being added to the wall between kitchen and furnace for storing personal items while working in kitchen. • Funding of all-church meals will be through a freewill offering. Escalations or decisions • none	Marilyn	August 26, 2025
Pastor's Report Highlights • Pastor Rob enjoyed the mediation and conflict resolution training. • CUCCNM is the host site for the ecumenical Community Thanksgiving Eve Service on Wednesday November 26 at 6:30 pm. Eleven churches are expected to participate. A joint choir will be involved. Help is needed with ushering and with food for the post-service gathering. Various promotions will be used. • Sunday September 28 – Appreciative Inquiry process begins. Escalation or decisions • none	Pastor Rob	September 4, 2025

Discussion Agenda:

Old Business

- Appreciative Inquiry (Pastor Rob) – Becky, Marilyn, and John are serving as team leads, working with Bonnie Andrews, the facilitator. Becky oversees promotion and the overall process. Marilyn oversees data collection, organization, and distribution. John oversees meals, planning, procurement, and execution and cleanup (including setup and teardown). Additional volunteers are

needed for each team. Most, if not all, supplies have been procured for the first session on September 28. Sign-ups, including sign-up for childcare, will be available starting September 7.

- Habitat for Humanity build team update (Mary) – The team is meeting again September 10. A guest speaker for an event to support a matching grant is still under consideration.

- "Fun" ad-hoc committee update (Connie) – Connie will mention the committee during service. Interest is expected to re-ignite with Sunday school starting.

- 175th Anniversary update (Mary) – The team is meeting September 15. Co-ordinating activities with the "Fun" committee is under consideration.

- Hearing Loop Follow up (All) – Possible minor issues remain with microphone interference and lag. The piano area has a good microphone. Adding a loop in the choir area is expected to cost more than $30,000. Other future alternative options include connecting to online broadcast instead of hearing loop. The sound system in general needs to be reviewed and improved (sound quality and compatibility). Council considers this hearing loop matter resolved and will consider overall sound quality concerns.

New Business

- Congregational Conversation (Signa) – As an outcome of the council's discussion related to goal setting and communications, the council is interested in hearing from the congregation. Starting September 14, two council members will be available in the lounge after service on the second Sunday of every month for anyone to ask questions, share what's meaningful for them, share what they want to see less of and/or more of at CUCCNM, share what they find meaningful, be a sounding board, etc. Council members will come ready to listen. Council members have signed up for various Sundays and will share feedback with council at future meetings.

- Food Allergen Statement (Pastor Rob) – The statement is not a policy and is intended to align with LELC. Ministry of Faith Development (MoFD) vetted the proposed statement with our insurance broker and incorporated the recommended language. MoFD also contacted UCC and non-UCC churches for examples. The goal of the statement is to be more affirming and more welcoming. MoFD submitted a proposed statement for the council's consideration. The council discussed the proposed statement and suggested a couple of revisions. The proposed statement, with the council's suggested revisions, is as follows:

    - As a church family, we want our shared meals and fellowship times to be welcoming. While we don't have a formal food allergen policy, we ask that you **please consider intentionally avoiding nuts, nut products, and shellfish** when preparing food for church events. This helps us care for those in our church community with these allergies. Thank you for helping us create a welcoming table!

  This revised statement will be shared with MoFD for review.

- Craft fair update – LELC will be informed of the event. Set-up will be on Friday evening and will not interfere with LELC. Promotions will include yard signs and other promotions. A couple of vendor spots remain. Otherwise, the fair is almost completely full.

- Council members may send a request to Signa to add items to future council meeting agendas.

- Live Nativity – December 12. The Communications Committee (Signa, Marilyn, Mary) previously managed the event. It was suggested that preparations begin thirty days in advance.

- The Communications Committee will meet again to discuss marketing, outreach, social media. Neenah News will be contacted to run an ad for Sunday School.

- Calendar Review – Meetings and events through the end of year were reviewed. A few meetings will be added.

Lord's Prayer

Next meeting: October 2, 2025

Next Devotion: Mary