CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEENAH/ MENASHA

Ministry Council Minutes
October 2, 2025

Present: Sue Knuth, Mary Janness, Chris Parsons, Becky Nichols, Terri Flesburg, Pastor Rob, Marilyn Kostrzak

Missing: Connie Regazzi, Jeff Nichols, Signa Meyers, Chuck Luebke, Sherri Jischke

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: Mary

Approval of the September 4, 2025 Agenda and Minutes: Approved

Consent Agenda Items:

Item	Owner	Minutes from last meeting
Ministry of Spiritual Life Highlights • Thanksgiving Eve service – Light refreshments and usher assistance (from the congregation) will be provided. • Hanging of the greens will be Sunday November 30 (Sunday after Thanksgiving). • Christmas Eve will have two services, 4:00 pm and 11:00 pm. Escalations or decisions • None	Terri	September 14, 2025
Ministry of Service Highlights • For monthly special offerings, the mission moment will occur once per month; several announcements will be made throughout the month. Special offering for November is Community Table and for December is The Christmas Fund. • MoFD is not planning to do alternative Christmas market. Escalations or decisions • None	Mary	September 16, 2025

Ministry of Faith Development Highlights • Alternative Christmas market is not in Sunday School curriculum. • Sunday School is off to strong start with great attendance. The new set-up for high school is working well. New families are attended. • The ministry agreed with the food allergen statement and is determining how to educate the congregation and where/how to post the statement throughout the church. The statement will not be added to the formal church policies as it is a preference/statement and not a policy. • The Safe Conduct Policy is now posted more prominently on website; the updated version and the new leadership roster are included. It will also be posted in several places throughout the church, Escalations or decisions • None	Becky	September 17, 2025
Ministry of Stewardship (Stewardship, Finance, Building and Grounds, Insurance) Highlights • Kevin is working on transferring door access from key to fob. • Ad hoc committee (Mary Zurbuchen and Bonnie Pozolinski) has been formed to determine use of memorial funds. • Transition is going well regarding transition to nonprofit bookkeeping company. Training is occurring and the ministry is becoming familiar with monthly reports. • Quarterly statements will be distributed during the week of October 5. Escalations or decisions • None	Marilyn (representing Jeff)	September 23, 2025
Pastor's Report Highlights • Pastor Rob is preparing a three-week worship series leading up to the 175th anniversary in February, during which Sunday School will teach parallel lessons. • Pastor Rob has dedicated much of his time this fall to planning, navigating personnel matters in his supervisory role, and offering pastoral care to members, families, and youth. Escalations or decisions • None	Pastor Rob	September 2025

Discussion Agenda:

Old Business

- Congregational Conversation—Sue
    - During the September session, four/five people stopped to talk. Comments included questions about church structure and how ministries work, questions about how to be active in church, and other general questions.
    - Terri and Chris will be available for the October 12 session.

- Appreciative Inquiry
    - First meeting outcomes/feedback/thoughts—Pastor Rob – The first meeting was Sunday September 28. Following that meeting, a small group developed our focus statement ("Growing an inclusive and thriving spiritual community"). An email is being sent to the congregation to invite comments and feedback on the focus statement, and Marilyn and Pastor Rob will be available for feedback after worship and after the CROP walk on Sunday October 5.
    - The focus statement serves as our direction and is not the ending. Further discussions will involve the following:
        i. How do we define "inclusive," "thriving," and "community"?
        ii. What does our community need to look like?
        iii. What communities do we need to minister to?
    - On October 12, the congregation will be invited to sign-up to interview current and former members, with interview questions provided.
    - Meals for Appreciative Inquiry meetings are paid for through the congregation enrichment fund, as previously approved by the Council.
    - Future events will have a specific agenda so people can anticipate and plan accordingly.
    - At the third meeting, ministries will be expected to discuss how to incorporate definitions of inclusive, thriving, community in their ministries.

- Communications Team update/needs – Signa, Marilyn, Mary – The council discussed re-igniting the communications team and potentially bringing in more people for communications and marketing. The committee assists with social media posts, advertising (Neenah News), and website updates (but not necessarily re-formatting entire website). The council will look for people interested in marketing and advertising, and these interests will be added to the time and talents survey.

- Habitat for Humanity build team update—Mary – The committee met and is brainstorming ideas on fund raising, with a focus on larger donations. Possibilities include (i) matching grants approach (we have this much will you match it) and (ii) partnering with other churches that have never done a build and teaching churches how to do it. The council discussed a potential "booth" on Thanksgiving Eve service to generate interest from other churches.

- "Fun" ad-hoc committee update—Mary – Five people have volunteered for committee; names to be provided in November Ministry Council minutes. The 175th anniversary group is working with the "fun" committee for 175th celebration (e.g., fun activities at 175th picnic). After the council meeting, Connie confirmed that the "fun" committee would coordinate this year's Live Nativity.

- Craft fair will be on October 25, 2025, with funds being raised to give to the Youth Group.

New Business

- Calendar Review
    a. October 12 - Lunch meeting with Immanuel members
    b. November 19, 6:30 pm – Ministry of Service next meeting
    c. November 11, 6:30 pm – Ministry of Faith Development next meeting

- Personnel update and future needs—Marilyn – Pastor Rob is now supervising Alan. Any ministry or group requesting a room set up for fellowship hall will also need to provide someone to help Alan with set-up during Alan's regular hours (Sunday afternoon, Monday, Wednesday, Friday).Continuing to clean up after ourselves after an event remains an expected courtesy,

- Live Nativity—Sue – The council discussed the Live Nativity, the reasons for having, and how to continue (if interested). Tasks include recruiting volunteers, cooking food for actors, coordinating animals, coordinating with the hayride drivers, and overall telling the Christmas story well and responsibly with dignity. After the council meeting, Connie confirmed that the "fun" committee would coordinate this year's Live Nativity

- Lake Edge again requested to use Room 6 and 7 in the afternoon. Council decision not to approve stands.

Lord's Prayer

Next meeting: November 6, 2025 (Marilyn will take the minutes in Chris' absence.)

Next Devotion: Terri