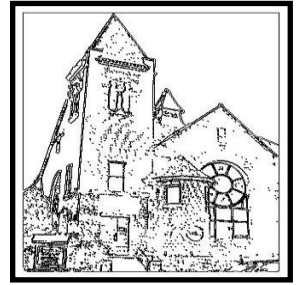


First Congregational
United Church of Christ
420 Wilson Ave.
Menomonie, WI 54751
(715) 235-5838

e-mail: office@menomonieucc.org
website: menomonieucc.org

The Bell

October 2025



October Activities

Sunday Services: October 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th

8:30am Contemplative Service

10am Traditional Service (in-person & livestream)

**Sunday, October 12th - Indigenous and Bridge
Sunday**

Wednesdays, October 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th

4:00pm Kid's Club, R2 (starts October 8th)

5:30pm Chancel Choir rehearsal

6:30pm Bell Choir rehearsal

Thursdays, October 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th

9am-12pm Tour of Homes crafts, R1 or R2

Saturday, October 4th

10am Braver Angels, FH

Thursday, October 9th

5pm Personnel Committee, R1

Tuesday, October 14th

3:30pm Executive Committee, R1

Wednesday, October 15th

11am Tour of Homes, FH

12:30pm Women's Fellowship, FH

Saturday October 18th

4pm Oxana's Piano Recital, Sanctuary

Tuesday, October 21st

11:30am Church Council, R1

Thursday-Saturday, October 23rd - 25th

Individual time: Church Members Portraits, R1, R2

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday, 9:00am-2:00pm; Friday – closed

Thursday's Table:

Community take-out meal each Thursday 5-6:00pm

Community Meetings:

AA Meetings, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 6:30am

Al-Anon Meetings, Mondays, 6:00pm

NA Meetings, Tuesdays, 7:00pm; Fridays, 7:15pm

Link to the full church calendar:

<https://www.menomonieucc.org/monthlycalendar>

**Oxana
Khramova**
piano

US Premiere and Release of Album:
M. Tariverdiev "Moods",
Simple Pieces for Piano, Op. 88

October 18, 2025, 4pm
First Congregational UCC
420 Wilson Avenue, Menomonie
Light refreshments to follow

Free admission, donations are appreciated
Signed CD is available for purchase

All proceeds will go toward Oxana's ankle surgery

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Beloved Children of God:

As we all continue through my first year, I'm sharing additional thoughts on the three strategic words mentioned last month, stabilize, sustain, and strengthen, that I believe need to guide the council's and the church's work for the upcoming future. My council report focused on those words. This is a snapshot of that report.

Stabilize During the time without a pastor, some things were taken care of the best they could and others may be in the midst of change. I continue to learn the many pieces, programs, and ministries of First Congregational. This is while getting to know people, organizations, and building relationships with the congregation and the community.

There is much happening with some eager to continue moving forward with more. I wonder...how much more (or new) can individuals, the council, the congregation, the staff take on? Let's stabilize our current initiatives, ongoing work, and future commitments (i.e. Walldogs).

Sustain How do we sustain our current initiatives and necessary ongoing work? Rally Around Sunday provided a great opportunity for individuals to learn/be reminded of ongoing ministries. Some committees got new members/volunteers for activities, not all did. Are there things to let go (or put on pause) to sustain (or strengthen) others? Is there a different way of looking at how something has been done to make it doable for our current time? Sustaining the ministries (and work) of the congregation is a marathon and not a sprint. Are we being strategic (another S!) now and in the near future?

Strengthen As we stabilize and identify what to sustain, how do we strengthen? Strengthen may mean asking for specific volunteers to get the work going; strengthen may mean focusing on a current commitment (i.e. just peace, ONA) to go deeper with the work instead of taking on new.

Supporting & Sheep dogging My role is supporting and sheep dogging all in the work: encouraging, sharing resources, connecting to others, being aware of possible conflicts, etc. There are many small groups that make much happen, and others may not realize how/when their work may impact someone else's. We must be mindful of the whole pasture and all the sheep there and not just our own little corner of grass, with our friends.

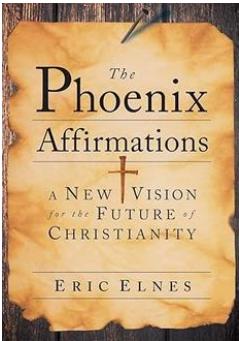
This is all in the midst of being out and getting to know the community. Reach out with any questions or set up a time to chat more. Thank you for all you do as we work sharing God's love for ALL!

Looking forward to seeing you around! Prayers and blessings for you~

Pastor René

From the Director of Faith Formation

Karen Miller



Greetings, Boozhoo, Quina Monthe!

Today's article is supposed to be about Affirmation Three, but I am behind in my work schedule so I am returning to Affirmation Two this month. We affirm the Path of Jesus by *[l]istening for God's Word, which comes through daily prayer and meditation, studying the ancient testimonies which we call Scripture, and attending to God's present activity in the world.* I promised to give you some examples of prayer that you might find helpful.

"Mental prayer in my opinion is nothing else than an intimate sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with Him who we know loves us." - Teresa of Avila

The 16th century Christian mystic, St. Teresa of Avila, spent more than eighteen years struggling in her prayer, pulled between conversing with God and being caught up in the activities of the world (i.e., waiting for the prayer bell to ring so she could get back to work). Acknowledging that she was just moving her lips, Teresa began a practice of mindful contemplation in her encounter with Christ. Her final work, *The Interior Castle*, contain Teresa's instructions for prayer and her experiences passing through the seven dwelling places of the castle. Reaching the seventh dwelling place is where the soul is transformed and united with God, through Christ. If you have not read "The Interior Castle," I highly recommend you check it out. At the very least, do a quick scan of the seven dwelling places to see where you are in your relationship with God.

The 14th century Christian mystic, Julian of Norwich, once wrote, *"The fruit and the purpose of prayer is to be 'oned' with and like God in all things."* After suffering immense pain she created this body prayer as a simple and beautiful way to pray without words.

The prayer has four simple postures and intentions.

- **AWAIT** (hands at waist, cupped up to receive): Await God's presence, however it may come to you.
- **ALLOW** (reach up, hands open): Allow a sense of God's presence) to come ...or not...and be what it is.
- **ACCEPT** (hands at heart, cupped towards body): Accept as a gift whatever comes or does not come. Accept that you don't know everything, that you are not in charge.
- **ATTEND** (hands outstretched, ready to be responsive): Attend to what you are called to, willing to be present and be God's love in the world, however God calls you to.

If you are interested in learning more about St. Teresa's seven dwellings, I highly recommend, *The Interior Castle: Study Edition* (2020), Translated and Prepared by Kieran Kavanaugh (2nd Ed.).

Blessings,

Karen

A Call to Practice Grace ~ A Letter to You from Braver Angels



I believe the work we are doing together just became significantly more difficult. As a society, we are experiencing what systems thinkers call a doom loop, or a self-reinforcing downward spiral. How we conduct ourselves now either breaks or feeds the chain.

Yet, I feel more committed and more hopeful today. Our choice is more directly in front of us than ever. We can start here, with the fundamentals on which we can all agree at Braver Angels:

- Political violence has no place in society.
- Killing anyone for beliefs or speech is a profound wrong.
- Behind the politics is a person.
- Celebrating death is wrong. It erodes our own humanity.
- We reject collective blame and condemn threats or celebrations of harm from any side.

While we stand together on this common ground, we are at risk of fueling a doom loop because we see the reasons for our crisis through completely different eyes, and we can't believe some of the things we hear. All sides hold our own truths to be self-evident.

These words came to mind while pondering this moment. "Houston, we have a problem." In 1970, an explosion crippled a spacecraft 200,000 miles from Earth. The three astronauts aboard Apollo 13 and the team in Mission Control faced a choice: they could descend into a doom loop of panic and blame, or they could unite to "work the problem." They chose to work the problem.

Societal alarms are sounding all around us. Some have been alerting us for some time now. The assassination of Melissa Hortman and her husband was shocking. The latest assassination of Charlie Kirk has set all alarms blaring. It carries wide and far with vastly different emotions.

Again, I believe we all see political violence and assassination for what it is. We reject it. We abhor it. But many have a deeply held truth that Charlie Kirk's methods were reckless. They see him as racist, divisive, anti-woman, anti-gay, not so much engaging students as bullying them, and a contributor to increasing violence. They are also confused by the lack of a national response to Hortman's murder. So when they hear calls for unity, it feels like an attempt to whitewash a history of irresponsible behavior for personal gain.

PAUSE: To you, does that description feel incredibly wrong, inappropriate, a punch in the gut, or make you mad? I know it will. I understand why. Listen to understand.

None of this statement justifies violence or contempt; it is only an attempt to show how people may get there.

In stark contrast, many among us – especially today with Charlie Kirk's funeral – are mourning the loss of someone who inspired them. They saw him leaning into conflict and getting young people to engage in dialogue and debate. They feel he was bravely sounding alarms on topics worthy of discussing and addressing head-on. For them, his murder is the ultimate, horrifying proof that the "other side" doesn't just want to change society, they want to eliminate those who share Kirk's views. And when they hear criticism of his methods now, it sounds like a grotesque justification for violence.

PAUSE: Does that description feel incredibly wrong, inappropriate, a punch in the gut, or make you mad? I know it will. I understand why. Listen to understand.

Again: empathy is not endorsement. Nothing here excuses violence.

So here we are. Standing on the common ground that the violence is wrong, while the families of Melissa Hortman and Charlie Kirk have forever lost their loved ones in a horrifying manner. But, if we are to speak freely, different sides are holding to what they believe to be true, both feeling completely justified in their profound suspicion of the other.

There is another truth we all see, even if we don't say it: **the master alarm is blaring, and the ship of our American experiment is losing oxygen.** This is real. It's personal. It's happening. Our shared vessel is coming apart. Fighting over who is to blame, no matter how justified any side feels, is wasting precious time and resources we need to respond.

When Apollo 13's oxygen tank blew, Mission Control shut down the panic loop and snapped to one rule: work the problem. They turned the lunar module into a lifeboat, rationed every watt and sip of water, and plotted a free-return path to swing the crew around the Moon. Engineers even hacked a CO₂ fix—"square peg in a round hole"—from tape, plastic, and spare parts. With clear roles and tight communications, they converted chaos into step-by-step checklists the astronauts could execute. That shift—from blame and fear to disciplined action—disrupted the doom loop and opened a narrow off-ramp home.

This brings us back to the choice that is now so clearly in front of us. The question isn't simply "Who is right?" or "Who started it?" The real question is this: How do we work the problem together, even when we have every reason not to trust the "other" person's hand on the controls? **Choose the off-ramp.**

In society, we have shifted from simply thinking the other side is wrong to believing they are evil. That is a norm we have to change. And it is not easy. It takes courage to lean into the pain and conflict to find a collective way to bring us home.

We will not give violent actors a veto over our civic life; we will mourn, lower the temperature, and keep faith with normal politics—persuasion, debate, and due process. We know the work required: assembly, dialogue, and local problem-solving—together. Systems thinkers state emphatically that doom loops are only changed when they are disrupted, boldly, with positive feedback loops.

The [Braver Angels Way](#) is the path to courageous citizenship. Exercising this civic muscle is a bold, positive feedback loop. This is our moment. Choose to connect with one person today, then again through the week ahead. Try. Lean in, don't step out. (Use our [1:1 Conversation guide](#), look at [TurnToward.us/resources](https://turntoward.us/resources).)

I want to share one last thought that has helped me in my own family discussions. I just read over the weekend a tip that John Inazu, professor of law and religion at Washington University, shares to remember how to develop this civic muscle (sounds like the Braver Angels Way). He calls it G-R-A-C-E:

1. **Ground** yourself in your convictions
2. **Respect** others
3. **Assume** complexity (more to the story), not character (assuming someone is evil)
4. **Cultivate** curiosity
5. **Engage** with empathy

Even now. Especially now. We need to practice grace in our courageous citizenship.

— Maury Giles, CEO of Braver Angels

Rally Around Sunday

At Rally Around Sunday, everyone was a winner with the wonderful pot luck food and dessert choices! The tables setup by deacons and committees were colorful and filled with information about the projects our church is engaged in. There was an opportunity to sign up and share talents in all areas. Questions about your favorite hymns and deeper dives into why you support this church and how do you live and love as Jesus taught us to do, were just a few of the ways we could participate. The following are response to the questions from the Stewardship table.

How do you live and love as Jesus taught us to do?

Try to treat everyone with kindness. By sharing my time and kindness with others. Giving dollars to support our church. I share my time and talent with those around me and far away. I teach my grandchildren to love more than their immediate family. By running the livestream. Cooking for Thursday's Table. Being a servant leader in life. By speaking out for people who are less fortunate and working for a better world. Helping at funerals.

Why do I support this church?

It provides grounding each week. It's a reminder to love each other, and a light in our community. Its reciprocal. By helping at funerals. There is so much love here. Because they walk the talk! Love, peace and joy. It's an inspiring community that helps me live in the world the way I want to. Being with everyone. I am so grateful for this fellowship. I support this church to keep a good community. For the good it does. I feel at home here.

Why do I support this mission?

It's filled with love for our community. We should all care for each other. I pray for those who are hurting. Helping and relating with others. Donating to the Helping Hand Fund. Helping others. Giving time and dollars to support the work. To give me purpose.

We had special winners who were recognized during the prize drawings.

- Stained glass piece was donated by Nancy Jackson, won by Colin Kintzinger.
- DQ certificate, won by Lisa Cody.
- Car detail donated by Gail Skamfer, won by Adrienne Harmston.
- Mum plant donated by Caring Ministries, won by Bill Olson.
- Who gives a crap toilet tissue donated by Peace & Justice mission, won by Cindy Theorin.
- Penzey's box of cinnamon, won by Gail Skamfer.
- A compost bucket donated by Peace & Justice mission, won by Toby Ellison.
- And, if you signed up at the Faith Formation table for workshops your name was entered in a special drawing for a guitar, won by April Cody.

Thank you to everyone who donated prizes and thanks to all participants for being such good sports! If you were thinking of signing up to help but didn't, the Time and Talent clipboards are located in the parlor. The calendars that were shared can be found throughout the church.

October Worship Volunteers

	Flowers	Coffee Servers	Readers
October 5 th	Naomi Cummings		Kim Blomquist
October 12 th	Sally Conklin Lisa and April Cody		Kristen Billingsley
October 19 th	Margi Stauss	Connie Flug Cathy Weissman	Sally Conklin
October 26 th			Marian Ellison

Signup sheets are by the west entrance & near the coat closet

Announcements



BRAVER ANGELS WORKSHOPS 2025



Skills for Disagreeing Better

Saturday, October 4, 2025

10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

First Congregational United Church of Christ

420 Wilson Avenue, Menomonie

Registration Required

The Skills for Disagreeing Better workshop helps participants understand the values and concerns of those who differ from them politically and teaches essential skills for communicating across differences and finding common ground.

Workshop Goals:

- Grow understanding of the values and concerns of people who differ from you politically
- Learn skills for listening in a way the other person feels heard
- Learn skills for sharing viewpoints in a way the other person might hear even if they disagree

Registration Required:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/skills-for-disagreeing-better-first-congregational-ucc-menomonie-umc-registration-1505962828359?aff=oddtcreator&discount=BRAVER>

Or use the QR Code:



Tour of Homes and Women's Fellowship Meetings

You are all invited to meetings being held on **October 15th** in the Fellowship Hall. The first meeting beginning at 11:00am will be to discuss the Tour of Homes. This should last about an hour and then we invite you to the Women's Fellowship meeting at 12:30pm, again, about one hour. If you come to both we would suggest you bring a brown bag lunch and a treat and coffee will be provided. Hope to see you all at the meetings. The Tour is getting close!

Reminder to all – We need your help – sign up sheets will be available Sunday, November 2nd in the Parlor for you to select how, where, and when you can help for the 2025 “N’ Old-Fashioned Christmas” on Saturday, December 6th. And, do not forget to check for tree decorations and craft items from the past tours to be used for our display at the Rassbach Museum in December. We will collect items from Wednesday, October 15th through Sunday, November 30th. For more important information about the display – contact Judy Fry at 715-235-5846.

If you have questions regarding the Tour meeting you can contact Deb W. or Bonnie T. If you have questions regarding WF meeting you can contact Peggy K. Thank You!

Craft Group for the Tour

There will be a weekly gathering of people who would like to work on crafts for the Tour. We work on items that we might be making individually or there will be some items that the group will work on too. All are invited. We will have some things to work on that don't take a specific skill so if you feel that you aren't crafty you are certainly still invited. It's just a nice time to gather and visit with one another. We will start meeting on **October 2** in Room 1 and then will meet each Thurs morning thru November 20th. The time will be from 9:00am - 12:00pm. You can come the entire time or just for a bit. There will be a couple of times when we need to be in a different room. Please come to one, some or all of the dates, would love to have you there and a great way to help out for the Tour. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Peggy K. at 715 772 3399 or email peggykraemer@msn.com

October is Pastor Appreciation Month!

October is Pastor Appreciation Month, let's show Pastor Rene how much we appreciate her.

How can we do that? Tell her, cards, little treats from the Farmers Market, let your imagination run free.

We are grateful for all she is doing in the church, so let's show her our appreciation.

The Foster Closet

In October Care Ministries will start a new project to get donations for the Foster Closet. The Foster Closet is an organization that supports children in Foster Care. In an emergency, babies and children are taken into foster care without anything. The Foster Closet has items for foster families for these children. They are constantly in need of supplies. We would like to help them with their mission in October.

They are collecting items for babies like diapers, diaper cream, baby wash and baby lotion. For older children they need personal care items. They are also looking for new or gently used clothing.

Older children who transition from Foster Care need items to get started like clothing, personal care items, and gift cards.

Let's help this organization help foster families and the children they serve, meet their needs.

- Care Ministries: Margi Stauss, Deacon

Name Tags

The Worship and Membership/Fellowship Committees encourages everyone to wear their name tags again. It's an easy way to make visitors feel more comfortable and welcome, to continue helping Pastor Rene' learn peoples' names, and offer gentle reminders to those that have trouble remembering names.

If you need a name tag, you can call (715-235-5838) or email (office@menomonieucc.org) the church office. You can drop a note in the offering plate or stop in office. A name tag will be waiting for you on the table in the west entry the next week. We also have some stick-on name tags if needed on that same table.

Different Voices... Sharing Perspectives...

From July 2024 until March 2025 our congregation actively searched for a new, settled ordained minister. During that time, we continued to worship, with the leadership of ordained and licensed ministers, and also members and friends of our congregation. People like you and me. People that had a message, a story, a reflection to share with us. Such different messages and a wide variety of points of view kept us inspired during an uncertain time. Have you ever considered sharing a reflection you've been thinking about, maybe for years? Did you miss your chance? No, you didn't. Pastor Rene' welcomes your participation. If you would like to share that special message you have inside of you, you can email Pastor René at pastor@menomonieucc.org, call the office at 715-235-5838, or speak to her in person.

Also, if you have a question or wonder you'd like Pastor René to preach on, pass that onto her also. "You ask, Pastor René answers!" may be an upcoming worship/sermon focus. We welcome your story and your wonders. Kathy Colvin - Worship Deacon.

Life Stream Change

Many of you watch our church services on Sunday via live stream which has also automatically been on YouTube as well. This will be changing by September 30th. Vimeo (our live streaming software) will no longer support our worship service videos going to YouTube so this option will not be available. The best way to continue with our live stream is to go to our church website [Online Worship | Uccmenomonie](#). There are also archives at [Worship Archives | Uccmenomonie](#) to watch previous services. The tech team apologizes for this inconvenience and will be working towards a solution in the future. Contact Amy Riddle-Swanson or Pastor René with any questions or concerns.

Membership/Fellowship Updates

The Membership/Fellowship Committee would like to announce a couple changes to coffee hour beginning the first of October. Bridge Sunday will change to the second Sunday of the month. That will allow our Choir members to enjoy Bridge Sunday. The Church Council has approved this move.

The other change will be we are adding a bin of snacks located next to the coffee in the pantry. You can still make or buy a snack for coffee hour if you prefer but also provide snacks if you prefer to use the bin. If you would like to buy a snack for the bin, that would be appreciated.

Small Group Fellowship Dinner forms are available at the entry table. If you would like to connect or reconnect with members of our Church, this is an opportunity to meet in small groups to share in delicious dining and conversation.

Again, thank you so much to all who sign up for coffee hour and participate in our potluck lunches. We are in need of a coffee makers/servers for the October. A new sign on how to be a coffee maker/server is on the bulletin board in the kitchen for those who haven't participated before. Thank you,

Luci Black, Membership/Fellowship Deacon

Neighbors In Need Offering on October 5th

Neighbors in Need is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ to support ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. This is collected once a year. The date for this collection is Sunday October 5. One-third of this offering supports the Council for American Indian Ministry. Two-thirds are used by Justice and Witness Ministries to provide grants to UCC churches and organizations as well as supporting a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

Envelopes are provided at the west entrance. Donations can also be made online, using the "Neighbors in Need" button.

Dear Church family, It's time for a New Directory!





*Celebrating faith.
Connecting families.
Sharing hope.*

When people enter the doors of our church they are looking for a place to belong. Our directory brings us together to develop new relationships, connect with our own families, and reconnect with those we haven't seen in a while. Join us for this "Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at our church!

Directory Committee

Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Join us to celebrate faith and family with our new church family album.

- Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at the church or simply go online and follow the instructions below. If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!
- Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at our church! You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Set your appointment with Universal today!

*Gathering families,
Connecting generations.*

**UNIVERSAL**
CHURCH DIRECTORIES



Please be included in our New Pictorial Directory! It won't be the same without YOU!

Our Photo Dates are: Thursday - Saturday, October 23 - 25

Schedule your photography appointment online! Just scan the QR code to the right → → →

Or - go to www.ucdir.com & click the "Photography Session Sign-Up" button.

The "Church Code" is **wi438** The "Church Password" is **photos**

Online signup may not be available on Saturday & Sunday so we can have paper sign-ups at church on the weekends.

You will receive a free 8x10 portrait and a free copy of our directory just for coming in for a portrait!

Appointments fill up quickly, so schedule soon to get the best time that works for you!



Thank You



The Care Ministries committee would like to thank all of the people who contributed to our winter clothing drive for school age children. We collected: jackets; snow pants; boots; hats and mittens; sweat pants; leggings; underwear; and socks. \$ 610 in cash donations were raised that purchased additional items. The clothing was taken to River Heights, Wakanda, and Oaklawn schools who appreciated the help for their students.

Thank you from the Merkel Family

Dear UCC Congregation,
This is a sincere Thank You for your gifts, memorials, wellwishes and prayers. This support from the church of my youth (UCC) is truly unexpected which makes your support special. I appreciate that I am remembered and you care about my family. Fletcher will be carried in the hearts of our family forever. As much as we will miss Fletcher we feel blessed to have a good life with God, friends, family and three other children that need our attention.
God Bless All of You
Sincerely,
Joan Merkel

Dear UCC Friends,
This is in appreciation for the heartfelt support you have given my family. My son Jesse's family's lives have been put on a different course, not of their choosing. I ask for your continued prayers as we adjust to our new reality and learn to accept what we cannot change. This will be a lifetime challenge for all of the Merckels and we feel blessed to have the support you are giving us as we continue our journey. Sincerely, *Lynn Merkel*

An example of why and how we are all connected and live in community, throughout our lives.



"Gail Skamfer and Lori Anda did an awesome job of detailing my car....a prize I won on Rally Sunday. Thank you Gail and Lori for my wonderful gift!"

- Adrienne Harmston

Draft Minutes of Church Council Meeting
First Congregational UCC, Menomonie, WI
September 16, 2025

Roll Call: Luci Black (Membership/Fellowship), Kathy Colvin (Worship), Sherry Galetka (Stewardship), René Mehlberg (Pastor), Andrew Mercil (Past Moderator), Rick Nagler (Vice Moderator), Tom Schmelzle (Treasurer), Jill Schwebs (Clerk), Deanna Schultz (Music), Margi Stauss (Care Ministries), and Agnes Welsch (Mission). Melissa Kluge (Christian Education), Jeanne Rothaupt (Moderator), and Lee Theorin (Property) were not present.

The Council was called to order at 11:30 a.m. by the Past Moderator, Andrew Mercil.

The agenda was approved. (Motion by Agnes and seconded by Margi.)

Margi led the group in prayer.

The consent agenda, including the August 18th minutes, the August Treasurer's Report and Deacon Reports, was approved. (Motion by Tom and seconded by Luci.)

1. Action Items

- a. Margi moved that we approve the LTE IT position. Deanna seconded the motion. There was discussion. Targets and goals are needed in developing plans. Tom reported a cost of \$30/hour for 5 hours per week. It was approved.
- b. The Children/Youth Program Coordinator position description needed updating. Coordination with other deacons was added. The position will be updated as the number of children changes. The motion was approved. Rick abstained from the vote.
- c. Kim Blomquist and Lavonne Solem did an audit. There is a random \$24,000 which cannot be rectified. There has been a recommendation that we start with a fresh start in 2026. Tom noted that all the checkbooks were audited. Oxana is taking on more responsibility. Tom moved that we accept the audit and Deanna seconded the motion. It was approved.
- d. Agnes reported on the possibilities of adapting solar power. A committee of Lee Theroine, Lee Schwebs and Agnes will research the options and bring them back to the Council. There was discussion involving the need for a Capital Campaign if want to complete this project.
- e. There has been a request for an update to the Bylaws. Rick discussed the process at the Menomonie Library. He will be sharing parts each month. The Council will be able to review the material ahead and then discuss it. Changes will be considered by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
- f. Deanna moved we establish The Together for Tomorrow Ad Hoc Committee. Rick seconded it and it was approved.
- g. There was discussion about conflicts between Bridge Sunday and the choir. Deanne moved that after this month (September), Bridge Sunday be moved to the second Sunday of each month. Luci seconded the motion, and it was passed.
- h. The outside stairway on the east side of the building is being damaged by wash out. The proposal from the Property Committee is to approve up to \$2,000 from the Capital Campaign Funds to repair the situation. Kathy moved that we approve the repair and Margi seconded the motion. The motion passed.

2. Follow-up

- a. A photo of the full Council will be taken on October 21st.
- b. "Rally Around" Sunday was a success. There was discussion. The prizes were a very positive incentive.
- c. Deanna talked about an Arts Event in the spring and doing a good will offering for issues with the piano and organ. There was discussion about budgeted funds for the piano and organ maintenance, but how it never seems to be enough. The fall work on the organ will be postponed until after the vibrations from the Stout construction have ended.
- d. Congo Calendars are available. Activities need to be coordinated with the calendar. Luci and Andrew will create a check list for potlucks with a list of who is responsible for the tasks involved. Any committee that wants to add a potluck for the congregation will be responsible for completing the check list.
- e. Forms were distributed for recording committee goals.

The next Council meeting will be on October 21st.

Rick moved that the meeting be adjourned, Luci seconded the motion, and it was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Schwebs, Clerk