

## Growing Together

February 2022

### Cross Lutheran Church & School

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### Our mission:

**Bring people to  
Christ.**

**Teach Christians  
to be disciples.**

**Send disciples to  
reach the world.**



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From the Pastor's desk at Cross Lutheran Church-NALC,



*“And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’” (Luke 13:6-9)*

About 15 years ago, LuAnne and I planted three apple trees in our front yard. Each species of apple was different. Of the three bare root plants, the tallest and healthiest looking plant was planted in the front yard by the street. A few years later, we noticed that the tree started to lean as it continued to grow. Of the three trees, it continued to be the best looking and most promising. Even though it seemed to lean more and more each year, we decided to wait and see if it self-corrected.

Last year, this tree, “the apple of our eye,” continued to bend over so much that if there were a bumper crop of apples in the future, the weight of its fruit could possibly uproot the tree and it would destroy itself. Besides that, it was apparent to all that passed by that there was something wrong with this tree. It was also difficult to mow around it, and its branches were so close to the ground on the one side that I would occasionally snag my hat when I worked around it. After talking about its future, we decided to call our son so he could bring his chainsaw over on his next trip to just cut it down. That seemed to be the quickest and easiest method for us deal with this tree that had become problematic and an eyesore.

As promised, our son came over with his truck and chainsaw ready to remove the tree, but before the work began, we walked around it and talked. He said, *“It is a nice tree, except that it is leaning. If I drive a large post in the ground outside the root ball and put a strap on the trunk of the tree about here, I may be able to put enough gentle pressure on it to help the tree over time, to straighten itself.”* I knew that this was not going to happen overnight. If a lot of pressure was put on the tree trunk too quickly without being able to slowly adjust to this new tension, something would surely

*(Continued on page 2)*

break. Since we were soon heading back to Michigan, I asked our son if he was willing to watch over the tree and continue to adjust the strap a little bit over time to straighten the tree. He promised that he would.

Today, those who pass by can see that the tree is still there. And for the first time in many years, it is standing tall and growing upward. But sight unseen, the tree is building a more solid root structure underground in the areas where it was nonexistent. It continues each day to experience newer growth in areas that in the past couldn't compete with the opposite side. The overpowering roots that although continued to grow and provide a solid foundation, didn't allow the weaker side to thrive, and threatened their future existence.

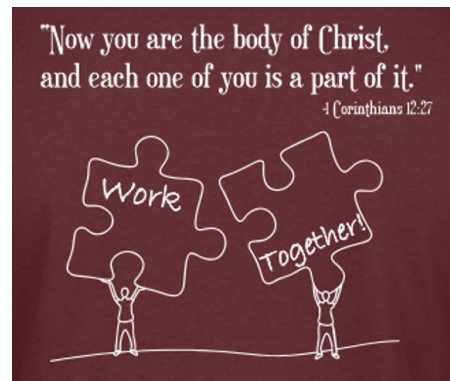
There are many churches that are like this apple tree. They have a bright future for new growth, but instead of growing together in all areas, one side causes a noticeable imbalance. Yes, it provides a firm structure in one area by itself, but other areas may be neglected causing them to wither and die. A proper foundation is necessary to support all areas of ministry. Working together in Christ will produce new and continued growth. It will also produce the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22) ***“And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.”*** (Mark 3:25)

Our apple tree could have been quickly cut down and hauled away, or just left to destroy itself, but there was a third choice that required some diligent work and a time commitment. It required patience, love, and faithfulness. If this apple tree were yours to watch over and care for, what would you promise to do?

Warmer weather and a new season for growth is just around the corner!

***“Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.”*** (Luke 6:47-48)

In His Service, Pastor Glenn Sokolowski



### Preparing for Worship

#### February 6 - Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

1R – Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13), P – Psalm 138, 2R – 1 Corinthians 14:12-20, G – Luke 5:1-11

#### February 13 - Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

1R - Jeremiah 17:5-8, P – Psalm 1, 2R – 1 Corinthians 15:(1-11)12-20, G – Luke 6:17-26

#### February 20 - Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

1R - Genesis 45:3-15, P - Psalm 103:1-13, 2R - 1 Corinthians 15:21-26, 30-42, G - Luke 6:27-38

#### February 27 - Transfiguration Sunday

1R - Deuteronomy 34:1-12, P – Psalm 99, 2R – Hebrews 3:1-6, G – Luke 9:28-36

# Celebrate



## Birthdays

- 1 Jeanne Sting
- 3 Brenda Kretzschmer
- Eileen Johnson
- 4 Charles Buchholz
- Matt Zimmerman
- 6 Kimberly Sears
- 7 Connie Eden
- Alex Cucinello
- Mike LePage
- 9 Greta Elston
- 10 Shelly Baur
- 13 Kirk Yackle
- Lucy Thepsourinthone
- 14 Muriel Hurdelbrink
- Grace Trost
- Travis Roestel
- Christina Cucinello
- 16 Jacqueline Finneren
- 19 Tim Fritz
- Chase Gardy
- 20 Dorothy Thuemmel
- 24 Paul Kunisch
- 26 Lily Yackle
- Gwyn Zimmerman
- 27 Sara Schadd

## Anniversaries

- 13 Robin & Ann Buschlen, 40 years

An illustration of a blue mailbox with a gold cross on it. Several yellow envelopes with gold crosses are scattered around it. The text "New Offering Envelopes" is written in a stylized, grey font to the right of the mailbox.

**Please remember to pick up your 2022 offering envelopes from your mailbox in the overflow area.**

**The Annual Meeting at Cross Lutheran Church will be on Sunday, February 13th, immediately following the church service.**

A graphic featuring a blue megaphone on the left, with green lines radiating from it. To the right is a yellow speech bubble with the words "ANNUAL MEETING" written in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters. The background is a light blue gradient with a purple shape behind the megaphone.

## Remember Those at Home...

Delores Elftman, Elaine Licht, and Martin Knost

## Those in Need of Extra Special Prayer...

Michelle Walsh, Anna House, Janet Schumacher, Susan Beller, Kyle Walker, Noah Adams, Bill Hurdelbrink, Delores Johnson, Inez Buchholz, Whitney Peyerck, Kay Schuette, Roberta Danks, Posie Tuckey, Corey Messing, Marvin Trost, Kevin Faupel, Ezra Sturm, Deann Lewis, Hope Kittel, and Robert Krzeszewski.

## Those in Honorable Service Our Country...

Nathan Schulz and Ryan Schulz, U.S. Marines, sons of Lonnie Schulz & grandsons of Bonnie Schulz, Nicholas Swanson, U.S. Air Force, son of Randy & Suzie Swanson & grandson of Nancy Schuette. Michael Cox, U.S. Navy, son of Kim Sears.

## From the Desk of...Gwynne Barry



### February Calendar

2/7	Basketball Home vs Rural 5 pm
2/18	No School
2/21	No School

Our staff gathers each morning near our classrooms in the hallway for devotions and to pray for our students, families, and staff. Last week, one of our devotions was titled "Give While You Live". The focus verse was "As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me." John 9:4. Lo and behold, the reading for my classroom devotions also was related to giving. Taking that as a sure sign we needed to "do something", I led a discussion about our wild weather topics in Science and how people are affected by the weather and natural disasters and...how can we help? That led to a brainstorming session on fundraising and contributing to the NALC Disaster Relief Fund. Third, fourth, and fifth graders have lots of ideas!

During February, we are going to have a "Friday Fair" selling items for 25 cents. The project will require selecting products from our brainstorming list, advertising, making the product, selling the product, bookkeeping, and many other Life Skills. The proceeds from our Friday Fairs will be donated to the NALC Disaster Relief Fund. We will definitely "work together" as we learn to give while we live.

Other happenings in February will be the Cross Winter Olympics! (Some of you may remember paper medals with my picture on them.) Students in grades 3-8 will be placed in teams, construct a team flag, have an opening ceremony, and participate in many "games" over the next few weeks....going for the GOLD! Mrs. Ward's and Mrs. Eberly's classrooms will be spectators and may even participate in a few of the games. It's always fun and we are hoping for enough snow! No matter what we are doing at Cross, we think about our school's 2021-2022 theme of "Work Together". What a joy we have when God's children do His work!

In His love, Gwynne Barry

### YOUTH EVENTS

On FAT Tuesday, March 1, our congregation's youth will gather at Cross Lutheran School gym for a fun filled event featuring food and tons of fun. Some of the activities planned are making doughnuts, pretzels, and pancakes. We will also have prayer partners for the Lenten season. This event will be from 5-6:15 PM. Information will be sent to Cross Lutheran Church families by mail. If you have any questions, contact Gwynne Barry or Jean Sturm.



# memorials & gifts

These gifts were received to the glory of God in memory or honor of the following people:

**In memory of Don Arndt for Cross Benevolence fund:**

Dorothy Thuemmel  
Norm & Tonja Nelson

**In memory of Don Arndt, for Cross Building fund:**

Nancy Schuette family

**In memory of Lois Geppert, for Cross Building fund:**

Don & Nancy Heck  
Lydia Decker

**In memory of Lois Geppert, for Cross Lutheran School:**

Tom & Bernice Shupe

**In memory of Eunice Richmond, for Cross Lutheran School:**

Tom & Bernice Shupe

**In memory of Eunice Richmond, for Cross Lutheran Church:**

Carol Bridges  
Lydia Decker

**In memory of Eunice Richmond, for Cross Building fund:**

Carol Diener

## Special Dates

Valentine's Day,  
*February 14*



Presidents Day,  
*February 21*



Transfiguration of Our Lord,  
*Feb. 27*



**Transfiguration**  
SUNDAY

## Sunday School

Sunday School will begin for all youth ages 3-8th grade on Sunday, March 6 **promptly beginning at 8:45 AM.**

Everyone will meet in the gym for our opening and then go to meet as a class. Children ages 3-Kindergarten will meet in the Preschool room. Second-Fourth graders will meet in the gym, and youth in Fifth - Eighth grades will meet in the Family Room. Most students will be able to meet their parents just prior to church starting, but if it's an especially engaging lesson, teachers will make sure children get to their parents if church has begun.



Teachers are needed! Contact Gwynne Barry or Jean Sturm. Curriculum is available and can be distributed at any time. Teaching children God's Word is a great way to become even more familiar with it yourself! Be ready to sign up for a date(s) you would like to teach and let's work together!

At the end of May, we will evaluate the session and prepare for the fall, considering concerns, comments, and celebrations!

In His Love,  
Ministry of Education.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

# CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

## CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, December 14, 2021

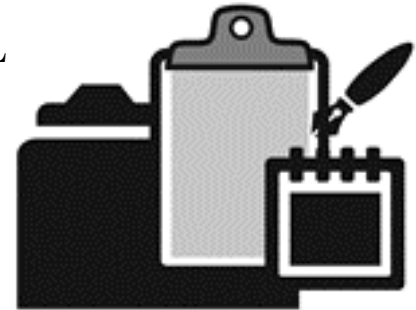
(Proposed Minutes to be approved at January Council Meeting)

The meeting was called to order by Church Council President,  
Michael LePage, at 5:40 p.m.

Present: Pastor Glenn S. Sokolowski, Krisie Fritz, Nancy Heck,  
Nancy Schuette, Norman Nelson, Dick Koehler, Matt Zimmerman, and  
Steve Schulze.

Absent: Pat Azarovitz

Guests: David Faupel



Church Council  
Minutes

### DEVOTIONS:

*“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look (wait?) for another?” (Luke 7:19)*

Advent is a time of waiting. Perhaps then these Sundays of Advent are “training “in how to “wait.” Pastor closed with prayer.

**AGENDA:** Dick Koehler made a motion to approve the agenda with corrections by removing two items from the proposed Agenda, seconded by Matt Zimmerman. Motion carried.

**MINUTES:** Nancy Heck made a motion to approve the proposed November Minutes, seconded by Matt Zimmerman. Motion carried.

**GUESTS:** None

### OFFICER REPORTS:

#### **Mike LePage, President**

Mike requested that we send \$200.00 to the Michigan District of the NALC.

**Motion was made by Steve Schulze to send \$200.00 to the Michigan District of the NALC, seconded by Matt Zimmerman. Motion carried.**

- Mike received a letter from Rev. Daniel W. Selbo, Bishop, North American Lutheran Church, requesting support in making it possible for our pastor to attend the upcoming Pastors’ Conference on February 15-17, 2022, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Orlando, Florida. Discussion followed. Pastor will pass on the Florida retreat. Pastor will attend the Convocation this summer.

#### **Krisie Fritz, Secretary – Communications:**

- Thank you received from Scheurer Auxiliary for the use of Cross gym for the Fall Fashion Show.
- Letter received from Huron County Sheriff’s Office requesting support for a donation to Reach the Forgotten Ministries. Discussion followed. Cross will pass on a donation at this time.

**Nancy Heck, Treasurer –** Nancy Heck gave her monthly report as presented.

**Motion was made by Dick Koehler to accept the Treasurer’s Report as presented, seconded by Krisie Fritz. Motion carried.**

## **GUESTS PRESENTATIONS AND REQUESTS:**

**David Faupel** gave his School Report as follows:

- School was closed December 2-3 and remote (virtual) teaching/learning took place December 6-10 due to COVID.
- School resumed on 12/13/2021, with all 60 students in attendance.
- Christmas Fair was postponed to 12/16/21.
- Christmas Palooza was postponed to next year.
- Christmas break 12/18/21 through 1/2/22.
- School will resume 1/3/22.
- Robotics tournament was held on Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Cross took 1<sup>st</sup> place and will be attending State finals in February 2022, in the Grand Rapids area.
- Tile floor work will be completed during Christmas break. Steve Schulze will paint lines in gym on Saturday morning, December 18, 2021, gym won't be accessible on Monday, December 20, 2021.

**David Faupel and Mike LePage** gave the Early Childhood Center Report as follows:

- Mackenzie Roestel completed her credentials that was needed to place her in the new position. She will start attending Council meetings in January 2022. A contract is being prepared that will cover from 1/1/2022 through 12/31/2022.
- Oxford shooting was a topic at a recent Day Care board meeting. School currently has three lockdown drills per year. The door by office remains unlocked during the day. It may make sense to use a buzzer system to let individuals into the office and day care. It would be a good time to revisit the plans in place and change, if necessary.

## **ADVISOR'S REPORTS**

### **PASTOR'S REPORT:**

- NALC Michigan Mission District Online Meeting
- (1) Funeral service-Lois Geppert

**SCHOOL BOARD REPORT:** Dick Koehler reported there was no meeting held.

### **MINISTRIES REPORTS – TRUSTEES:**

**Property:** Matt Zimmerman gave an oral report as follows:

- Overflow Speakers have been installed and there is a white switch on the wall to regulate. If this works well in the overflow area we could do the same for the Family Room.
- Repaired some outside lights.

**Music & Worship:** Mike Sting and Beth Elston will provide an organ presentation in January 2022.

**Stewardship:** Norman Nelson reported on the upcoming mission disbursements.

**Mission Outreach:** Krisie Fritz/Nancy Heck – Minutes were provided to council. They presented a proposal request to recover the church benches, cost to be covered by Mission Outreach.

**Motion was made by Nancy Heck to proceed with the project of recovering the church benches, cost to be covered by Mission Outreach, seconded by Steve Schulze. Motion carried.**

**Parish Life:** Nancy Schuette questioned whether coffee hours should continue at this time or be cancelled. Discussion followed. Coffee hours will be cancelled until the January council meeting. It will be further discussed at our next meeting.

**Youth:** Steve Schulze had nothing to report.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. Wednesday Church Service** – Nancy Heck made a Motion to resume Wednesday church services in January 2022. Discussion followed. Nancy retracted her motion after discussion was held. Mike LePage and Dick Koehler will attend Worship and Music meeting in January and bring it to them for discussion.

**B. Esch Snow Removal Contract** – Contract has been signed per the unanimous vote taken by email.

**Motion was made by Krisie Fritz to accept the snow removal bid and sign the Esch Snow Removal Contract, \$65.00 per occurrence and \$55.00 for reoccurrence in the same day, seconded by Dick Koehler. Motion carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Pat Azarovitz Resignation Letter** – Mike read the communication received from Pat Azarovitz. Discussion followed. Krisie will contact Haist Flowers to have a poinsettia plant sent, amount not to exceed \$50.00.

**Motion was made by Nancy Heck to accept Pat Azarovitz’s resignation with regret, seconded by Krisie Fritz. Motion carried.**

**B. Cabinets hung over holidays – Daycare** – Neil Herford is leading up this project.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A. Funeral Dinners** – Cross will continue as we have in previous months.

**B. Christmas Gifts for Staff** – Full-time to receive \$100.00 scrip gift card of their choosing and part-time to receive \$50.00 scrip card of their choosing.

**Motion was made by Dick Koehler to give scrip gift cards to full-time staff in the amount of \$100.00 and \$50.00 to part-time staff, seconded by Matt Zimmerman. Motion carried.**

**Next Council Meeting** – Tuesday, January 11, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

Good things around the table were shared by all.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Krisie Fritz, Secretary





## Worship and Music Ministry

January 4, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Members present: Barb Degg – chair, Mike Sting, Peg McCrimmon, Beth Elston, Pastor Glenn, Karen Schuette, LuAnne Sokolowski - guest

Pastor Glenn opened with a devotion and prayer,

Mike Sting moved to accept December 2021 minutes. Karen Schuette seconded. Motion carried.

\*LuAnne Sokolowski asked Worship and Music to evaluate the formats for the existing worship bulletin used each service and the PowerPoint of the services viewed on the screens. Discussion was held. Mike volunteered to put together an informal survey to be given to the congregation to consider. We are to send him ideas to include in the survey.

\*Discussed possible bylaw revisions.

\*Ash Wednesday worship service with communion will be March 2, 2022.

\*Beth Elston reported that the two pianos in church have been tuned.

\*Mike gave an update on an organ refurbishing presentation he and Beth will give to council this month.

\*Mike moved to adjourn. Karen seconded. Motion carried.

\*Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting – February 1, 2022 at 3 pm.

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!**



The Fish Fry at Cross will be Friday, April 8, 2022. We will need lots of volunteers! We will be doing a drive through only. Watch and listen for updates, needs, and how you can serve! There will be flyers for distribution on the welcome desk along with sign-up sheets. If businesses or individuals would like to donate please contact Leanne at 989-553-4241. Looking forward to working together on this Thrivent sponsored project.



**COMBINED GENERAL AND OTHER FUNDS:**

Dec 2021

BALANCE ON HAND 12/1/2021	TNBT COMBINED		96,829.67
<b>INCOME:</b>			
CHURCH/SCHOOL INCOME/ALL SOURCES		22,812.39	
SCHOOL REGISTRATION & PAYROLL TAXES		163.45	
TRANSFERS FROM CD BEQUEST		3,042.61	
THRIVENT MATCHING FUNDS		500.00	
CEMETERY FUND		-	
Memorials		1,680.00	
FUND RAISERS		588.27	
LEAF		-	
DONATIONS		5,342.00	
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND		-	
TOTAL INCOME:		34,128.72	34,128.72

**EXPENSES:**

CHURCH AND SCHOOL EXPENSES	(46,301.19)		
		(46,301.19)	
NET INCOME		(12,172.47)	

BALANCE ON HAND 12/31/2021 84,657.20

**GENERAL FUND SEGMENTED:**

CEMETERY PERPETUAL CARE FUN	19,006.03
SPECIAL EVENT ACCOUNT	9,757.98
LEAF FUND	1,378.59
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND	500.77
ORGAN REPAIR FUND	12,260.74
GENERAL FUND-TNBT	(468.07)
TBT PAYROLL ACCOUNT	28,983.01
School Funding EE Offerings	13,238.15

<b>CD-BEQUEST</b>	<b>7,404.07</b>
<b>CD # 35210</b>	<b>5,354.75</b>

TOTAL: 84,657.20

**BUILDING FUND & PARSONAGE BUILDING FUND:** Combined Parsonage & Building Fund Balance 3,756.62  
 BALANCE ON HAND 12/1/2021

DONATIONS, PLEDGES & MEMORIALS	6,532.00	
FUND RAISERS	-	
TRANSFER FROM GENERAL FUND	-	
TOTAL INCOME:	6,532.00	6,532.00
<b>EXPENSE EXPENSES</b>		
MORTGAGE RENEWAL FEES	-	
INTEREST ON MORTGAGE LOAN 2.50%	325.54	
PRINCIPAL ON MORTGAGE	2,395.31	
TOTAL EXPENSE	2,720.85	
NET INCOME/EXPENSE		(2,720.85)
BALANCE ON HAND 11/30/2021 (COMBINED FUND BALANCE)		7,567.77

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT TO THE BUILDING FUND & PARSONAGE BUILDING FUND - MONTHLY NEED \$3,000.00**



<b>GENERAL FUND</b>		
BUDGETED NEED-DEC-ALL SOURCES	(39,443.46)	
RECEIPTS - SEPT - ALL SOURCES	34,128.72	
UNDER BUDGET	(5,314.74)	
Total (Shortage/Overage) -	(5,314.74)	

DEBT OWING 12/31/2021  
 PARSONAGE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION LOAN 153,868.60 Interest rate 2.5%  
 (INCLUDES BALANCE OF PRIVATE LOANS - SCHOOL BUILDING FUND)

**HOPPY VALENTINES DAY**



**February 2022**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<b>1</b> Music & Worship 3 pm	<b>2</b> Chapel 8:05 am Mission/Outreach 6:30 pm Music Rehearsal 6:30-8:30 pm	<b>3</b> Jean Quilts 1 pm School Board 5:30 pm Properties 7 pm	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
Comm Serv. 9:30 am <b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Music Rehearsal 6:30-8:30 pm	<b>8</b> Council 7 pm	<b>9</b> Chapel 8:05 am Quilters 1 pm	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
Comm Serv. 9:30 am <b>13</b> Annual Meeting	<b>14</b> Stewardship 5:30 pm Music Rehearsal 6:30-8:30 pm	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Chapel 8:05 am	<b>17</b> Jean Quilts 1 pm	<b>18</b> NO School Office closed	<b>19</b>
Comm Serv. 9:30 am <b>20</b>	<b>21</b> NO School Office Closed Newsletter deadline	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Chapel 8:05 am Quilters 1 pm	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
Transfiguration Sunday Comm Serv. 9:30 am <b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Krispy Kreme Delivery Music Rehearsal 6:30-8:30 pm			<b>NOTE: Annual Meeting is Sunday, February 13th, following the service.</b>		



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*Don't underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind  
word, or the smallest act of caring.  
All have the potential to turn a life around.*