**Yikes! I’m on Church Council! ToolKit 2/11/23 1st LC Col. Hgts.**

I go out to church now     workin’ my committee for the LordI go every second Tuesday night     workin’ my committee for the Lord

Jesus called disciples     workin’ that committee for the Lordyeah he went down to the lakeshore     workin’ that committee for the Lord

Luther took his hammer     workin’ that committee for the Lordyeah he walked up to the front door     workin’ that committee for the Lord

Mildred goes to church now     workin’ her committee for the Lordshe got her needle and her thread now     workin’ her committee for the Lord

Thanks to Pastor Jonathan Rundman- serving in our synod at Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran. <http://jonathanrundman.com/music>

**The Plan this morning*: Introductions, Scripture, Effective meetings,***

***5 Axioms for Church Councils, Q&A, Evaluation.***

Name/Church/Role & a Joy, Junk, or Jesus moment this past week

Lectio Divina on tomorrow’s 2nd Lesson in the RCL

**Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9**

*Human leaders in the church are not the ones who control ministry. Rather they are coworkers who belong to God, the one who truly controls and continuously empowers the ministry of the church.*

1Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. 2I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, 3for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? 4For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not merely human?  
 5What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. 6I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. 7So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. 8The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. 9For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

*Share a word or phrase where the Holy Spirit nudged you.*

Do you want worshippers to be

**Disciples Participants Members**

belong participate attend

lead follow observe

worship frequently worship regularly worship occasionally

come to church go to church visit church

“we” “you” “they”

offerings contributions donations

convictions beliefs opinions

visionary teams committees short-term tasks

**Effective Meetings focus on Strengths and Strategies**

Our Strength is in our relationships

Effective meeting need to have a Strategy that includes being

INTENTIONAL agendas

COMMITTED how many are really coming?

ACCOUNTABLE tasks, debriefing

“Iron Rule of Organizers” ***Never do for others what they can do for themselves***

Is your role as a congregational leader to do things?

**or…** to teach, lead, train, stimulate, and agitate each other, your team, your congregation

**The reason to have Effective Meetings is**

not just to get something done

but to build up the Body of Christ while you are on the hunt for more leaders

**Powerful organizations (committees, councils, teams) are built:**

by one-on-one meetings, building relationships

by presenting a vision of where you are going and moving toward it

through leadership development

effective meetings

and of course…. *prayer and spiritual practices!*

**Bad Meetings**

**no agenda, no organization, no action, no chairperson, no defined issue, no resolution to an issue, no collaboration, monopolized conversation, distractions, no prayer, no relationship building, no tension**

**Good Meetings**

**agenda & time, make decisions, concise presentations, respect, relationship time, prayer, clear roles, courageous leadership, collaborative effort, clear focus and purpose, good turnout, evaluation, tension, pre-meeting, meeting with yourself, debrief what happened**

**Misc.**

joy/junk/Jesus, Lectio Divina, Sunday scripture/prayer, ice-breaker

**Evaluation:**  in a word/phrase: How was this meeting? (everyone answers, check-in with negative responses)

Do you want worshippers to be

**Disciples Participants Members**

belong \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ follow \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

worship \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ worship \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ worship occasionally

\_\_\_\_\_ to church go to church \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ church

“\_\_\_\_\_” “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” “they”

offerings ­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ beliefs \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ short-term tasks

**Effective Meetings focus on Strengths and Strategies**

Our Strength is in our relationships

Effective meeting need to have a Strategy that includes being

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ agendas

COMMITTED how many are really coming?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tasks, debriefing

“Iron Rule of Organizers” ***Never do for others what they can do for themselves***

Is your role as a congregational leader to do things?

**or…** to teach, lead, train, stimulate, and agitate each other, your team, your congregation

**The reason to have Effective Meetings is**

not just to get something done

but to build up the Body of Christ while you are on the hunt for more leaders

**Powerful organizations (committees, councils, teams) are built:**

by one-on-one meetings, building relationships

by presenting a vision of where you are going and moving toward it

through leadership development

effective meetings

and of course…. *prayer and spiritual practices!*

**Bad Meetings**

**Good Meetings**

**Misc.**

joy/junk/Jesus, Lectio Divina, Sunday scripture/prayer, ice-breaker

**Evaluation:**  in a word/phrase: How was this meeting? (everyone answers, check-in with negative responses)

***Pastor John’s made-up Axioms for Church Councils***

**Church Council Axiom #1: You are all a small group of Jesus’ followers doing what Jesus’ followers do: Pray, support, learn, and follow Jesus together.**

Everything you do is Christ-centered. The church is not yours, it’s God’s. The bank account is not yours, it’s God’s. Please pray together. Please support each other. Please learn together. Please lead together.

AND… Remember the 3 Great Listenings: God, Congregation, Community

**Church Council Axiom #2: If you are on the church council you are a church leader.**

So you ~~have to~~ get to lead. Find out what you are supposed to know. Does the church have employees? a building? a day care? a foundation or endowment? renters? other property? loans? a cemetery?

ELCA polity: Congregational autonomy—almost all the time. Synods walk along. Bishop can step in to deal with a rostered leader.

**Church Council Axiom #3: ~95% of the time, worshippers trust what you are doing and will support your decisions.**

They know you want the best for your congregation. When something good happens, rejoice! Build on it!

And the other 5% of the time?

**Church Council Axiom #4: The Church Council leads through conflict.**

When something bad happens, get out in front of it. Lead. Call the synod office for advice/help. Get a lawyer if you need one (the lawyer for the synod can’t represent your congregation). Which leads to the next axiom...

**Church Council Axiom #5: The constitution is your friend.**

The constitution is often ignored until there is a conflict. If you are in conflict consult your constitution (and call the synod staff). If you are not in conflict, update your constitution (contact Pr. Craig Pederson [c.pederson@mpls-synod.org](mailto:c.pederson@mpls-synod.org) for help).

Do you have any Axioms to share?

Questions? Comments? Smart Remarks?

**Evaluation:**  in a word/phrase: How was this meeting?

(everyone answers, check-in with negative responses)

[j.hulden@mpls-synod.org](mailto:j.hulden@mpls-synod.org)

**ELCA Model Congregation CONSTITUTION**

[elca.org/constitution](http://www.elca.org/constitution) [mpls-synod.org/our-synod/governance/](https://mpls-synod.org/our-synod/governance/)

**C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.

b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.

c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.

d. To maintain supportive relationships with the rostered minister(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.

e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.

f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.

h. To emphasize support of the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

**C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be respons

ible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of [trustees] [directors] of this congregation and, as such, shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and managing its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, except as otherwise provided herein.

b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of this congregation.

c. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for items not included in the budget.

d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations of more than $ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation’s full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in collaboration with the synod and churchwide organization.

e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod.

f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation’s investments and its total insurance program.

**C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution[,] [and] its bylaws[,][and the continuing resolutions] are carried out.

**C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.

**C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect this congregation’s responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.

**C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.

**C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president[[1]](#footnote-1), and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

**C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the [senior] pastor or interim pastor, except when the [senior] pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the [senior] pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synod bishop.

**C12.13.** The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

*from Paul Walters’ MAS toolkit 2022,* [*https://gsbfundraising.com/*](https://gsbfundraising.com/)

**10 Commandments for Congregation Council Members**

1. You shall be actively engaged in the worship life and ministry of the congregation.
2. You shall share your opinions and perspectives freely and respectfully during meetings.
3. You shall listen carefully to others.
4. You shall do your best to manage your anxiety and remain calm.
5. You shall commit to pray for the pastor, staff, and other members of the council.
6. You shall publicly support the decisions of the council.
7. You shall invite other church members with concerns to bring those concerns directly to the council.
8. You shall invite people to speak or write directly to the council and not bring anonymous concerns to the council.
9. You shall be open to the bold and creative work of the Holy Spirit.
10. You shall strive to be generous according to your means.

*Which commandment is most important for you and your congregation right now?*

*If you lived up to all of these, how would it change your life together?*

1. *If the pastor is the president of the congregation, the congregation may consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting*. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)