



Country Chronicles September 2026

Cannon River and
Cross of Christ Lutheran
Parish, ELCA

“Nature is a mutable cloud which is always and never the same”
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Siblings in Christ,

As the summer months wane along with the light our minds turn invariably toward brighter colors, cozier clothes, and for many of you, pumpkin spice. As the summer draws to a close the school and programming year begins. Work schedules pick up and even classes and groups for retirees resume once more. As things are ending, there are new things beginning.

It is something we are paying attention to particularly at Cross of Christ these past few months with our Vision and Vitality Task Force formed in response to our recent anniversary and our flurry of building projects. We wonder together what does it mean to be a lasting presence? What is lasting is of course a tricky thing because it doesn't mean static or immutable. On the contrary, it's something much more dynamic and involves recognizing and embracing what is ending and what new things are beginning.

Though not begun as a formal process at Cannon River, it is a thing worth considering for both congregations as we enter the final quarter of the year and wrap up the first quarter century of the new millennium. What things, what way of doing things might be ending and what newness lay on the horizon? As we look out at our world today, we are invited to wonder... What color are the leaves? What is the temperature like? What clothing is called for? What activities are going on around us? Which ones do we recommit to and what might we let go to make space for something else?

These aren't simple binary questions with straightforward answers. We as God's people are tasked with parsing these things and finding purpose in and meaning in the midst of it. This could be challenging and often is, but it's also satisfying and rewarding because it's a faith that's far from static. It's a faith that leans into God's promise of presence and care and expects God to show up in those moments of embracing and of letting go.

I've always enjoyed the fall months. As a child I think it was because of my October birthday and the better-quality fishing. Those things are certainly still top of mind each year. However, there is something about this liminal time, this period of blazoned trees and longer nights that what is lasting doesn't always stand still, it's dynamic, mutable, always and never the same.

As Ever in Christ,

Pastor CJ

Contact Information for Pastor CJ Boettcher:
Church Phone: 651-388-3464 ***Cell Phone:*** 920-858-7066
Email: pastor@cccchurch.com

WCG-August Recap



Brooklyn Fox delivered an excellent presentation at the August Women's Connection Group on using human creativity and skills to create music, rather than relying on AI to generate melodies. Artificial intelligence is here,

and as a society, we should understand its capabilities while remembering that humans remain the users of these tools. Hannah Fox provided Cell Phone Safety Tips like Medical ID, Emergency SOS and how to change the font size for all three types of cell phones. Everyone enjoyed learning from our younger generation members and engaged in open discussions on the various digital topics.

Janet Daley shared reflections on the ELCA Triennial Gathering in Des Moines, Iowa, which was attended by five women and centered on the theme "I'm Worthy." She also led a short devotion based on Isaiah 44:19 about worshipping idols. In biblical times, idols were made of wood; today, they are often made of electronics. Don't miss out next summer if Brooklyn is available to present again.

Thank you to the presenters and hospitality team members Ann Kulla and Julie Peterson for helping make this event a success!



WCG September Event



Churches, Cathedrals & Abbeys

...OH MY!

AN EVENING WITH

Jackie Martin

World Traveler & Storyteller

Tuesday, September 22

6:30 PM Dahlen Hall

Jackie Martin, one of our very own world travelers, will share a beautiful presentation titled “Churches, Cathedrals, and Abbeys... OH MY!” Wherever Jackie and Dennis travel, they make a point to visit local churches — from grand cathedrals to small countryside chapels. Join us for an inspiring visual journey through some of their most memorable stops over the years.

All ages and all genders from both churches are warmly invited.



Devotions and snacks will be provided by a member of the Women's Connection Group.

Cannon River News

Faith and Family first, helping others along the way.

Attendance

August 1 st	30
August 9 th	22
August 16 th	14
August 23 rd	13

Financial Report

	Income	Expenses	Net
Jan	\$2,153	\$4,174	(\$2,021)
Feb	\$2,095	\$4,346	(\$2,251)
Mar	\$3,005	\$6,878	(\$3,873)
April	\$4,055	\$3,548	\$506
May	\$3,028	\$3,366	(\$338)
June	\$9,955	\$7,515	\$2,439
July	\$2,085	\$3,702	(\$1,617)
Year to Date	\$26,376	\$33,533	(\$7,157)

Coffee Church

Join us for Coffee Church on
Sunday, September 20th
Fellowship will start at 8am and
service at 9am. Hope you can join
us.



September Council Rotation

September 6th -David
September 13th -Robert
September 20th -Ellen
September 27th -Les

Second Annual Joint Outdoor Worship Cross of Christ and Cannon River

Thirty people joined the joint picnic on August 1st. Larry and Ann sang a duet on a lovely evening and several folks stayed for a fire and s'mores.

Regards, Dawn Anderson





Cannon River will be serving breakfast at the Cannon Falls Breakfast Club on **October 20** and **April 20, 2027**. The Breakfast Club is for any students grades 7-12. It meets at 7am in St. Ansgar's church

basement. Besides breakfast, the students hear a spiritual message, enjoy music and play a quick game. As our serving dates get closer, we will be looking for a few people to provide food and serve.

Cannon River Lutheran Church
Church Council Meeting
August 13, 2026

The Cannon River Church Council met on August 13, 2026, at 5:00 pm at Cannon River. Present were Ellen Hartman, David Fremouw, John Niebur and Barbara Flynn.

Meeting was called to order by President Ellen Hartman.

June 11, 2026, Secretary's report was reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's reports from June and July 2026 were reviewed and approved.

PASTORS REPORT:

Pastor CJ was not present so no report available.

OLD BUSINESS:

Rick Anderson has been working with Cross of Christ on the split expenses and progress has been made but no statements have come to Cannon River yet. Rick has been paying by best guess.

The bonfire went well with a good turnout. It was about 50/50 attendance between the churches.

NEW BUSINESS:

Council reviewed a memorandum for Pastor housing that will be presented at the joint council meeting in September.

There will be a non-member wedding the last weekend of September – Maggie Larson and Tyler Mohr.

NEXT MEETING:

Next meeting to be Joint Council on Thursday, 09/10/26, at 6:30 at Cannon River with Cannon River Council meeting prior at 5:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Flynn

Cross of Christ News

We are called by the Spirit to be a lasting presence in our community, faithfully sharing the Word of God through worship, fellowship and service to our neighbors.

Faithful through Generations

Assistants for September 2026

Readers

September 6 th	Joan Slingsby
September 13 th	Jean Kehren
September 20 th	Doris Gruber
September 27 th	Contemporary Service

Greeters

September 6 th	Mary Fjetland
September 13 th	Doris Gruber
September 20 th	Bob & Sandy Luhman
September 27 th	OPEN

Altar Committee

September 6 th	Kelley
September 13 th	Cathy
September 20 th	Joan
September 27 th	Kelley

Council Person Darwin Fox

September Ushers Darwin & Cheryl, Duke, Joan

Kitchen Person Cathy Nemcek

July Attendance

July 5 th	17	July 12 th	43
July 19 th	16	July 26 th	21

Cross of Christ Financial Update

	Income	Expenses	Net
Mar	\$10,798.89	\$14,017.72	(\$3,219.83)
Apr	\$9,634.93	\$14,019.57	(\$4,384.64)
May	\$8,882.09	\$15,881.93	(\$6,999.84)
June	\$14,955.15	\$15,187.09	(\$231.18)
July	\$17,827.45	\$14,233.28	\$3,594.17

Thrivent Choice Dollars



If you are a Thrivent member, you can now direct your choice dollars at any time throughout the year. No need to wait, **those funds are available now.** Please consider Cross of Christ when directing funds. Head on over to [Thrivent Choice | Thrivent](#) and click on “Direct Choice Dollars”

Cross of Christ received \$2,277 in 2025.

Thank you for your continued support to Cross of Christ.

Tithe.ly

Thank you to those who have signed up with our new online giving with Tithe.ly. You can still sign up using the following link below or scan the QR code.

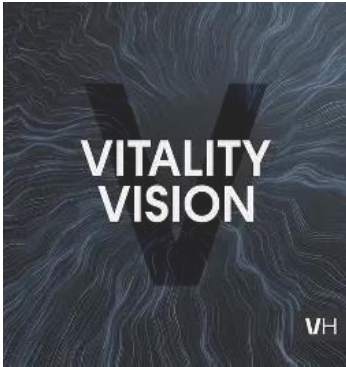
<https://give.tithe.ly/?formId=e8c862d8-2f30-4c52-b57e-e04ebe8e66e0>



Thank you!

Deanna

Vision and Vitality: Team August Update



The seven-member team has completed interviews with community leaders. Because of scheduling conflicts and computer crash, the next meeting is being rescheduled as soon as possible so the team can review the collected data and identify key themes.

Pastor CJ will continue helping us ground this work in prayer and reflection, both privately and within the congregation, so we can stay focused on what God is saying to us. Please keep the task force, our leaders, and our congregation in your prayers as this work continues.

LET'S GET TOGETHER AND LISTEN

September 27th you are invited to gather after church to enjoy a light lunch, provided by a Thrivent Grant, and to do some listening and sharing. The Vision and Vitality task force team will be sharing information from interviews conducted with a variety of local community leaders. Our hope is that we will be able to use this information to better identify ways we at Cross of Christ can have a positive impact on the communities that surround us. It's time to ask ourselves what is God calling us to be about in this place, at this time.

Hope you can join us!

Worship & Music Meeting

The next Worship & Music Committee meeting will be held on **Sunday, September 13th** following service.

Thanks!
Worship & Music Committee



Kwik Trip Cards Help support our Building Maintenance Fund by buying Kwik Trip scrip cards. **GROCERY ONLY CARDS** the church makes 15% on the purchase of these cards. The church makes 5% on the purchase of the usual gas and gift cards,

which can be used to purchase anything at Kwik Trip from gas, groceries, and car washes to anything else they sell. Both are available at \$10, \$20, \$25, \$50, and \$100. You pay the amount of the card being purchased. The next order will be put in on **Tuesday, September 8th** and will be available at the church by **Sunday, September 13th**. If you would like to order cards and are not on the regular order list, please email hjschreif@live.com or 507-990-7024. Thank you to those who have ordered Kwik Trip Cards. Julie Schreifels

Readers and Greeters

A new reader and greeter schedule has been created and posted on the bulletin board by Dahlen Hall (Sept-Feb 27'). We do have a few spots open, so if you are interested, take a look and fill in your name where there are openings.

Being a greeter or reader is a simple and easy way to share your time and talent with Cross of Christ.

Missions

Some call it Mission work . . . it's also called "Loving Others"

We continue our paper bag collection in the back of the church. These are taken to **Hastings Family Service** where they have a great need for bags for their produce delivery!



Food Shelf- Collection

We had a great collection in August for breakfast items, that will be going to hungry families just in time for the start of school.



We will continue to collect **breakfast items in September**, since this has been a high need. Thank you in advance for supporting this mission.

Learning & Youth

It is that time of year to welcome you back to Sunday School. **Sunday September 27th** will be our Sunday Funday welcome back party. We will introduce the ticket room, relive our favorite summer memories, and have some snacks. Don't forget your offerings we are still collecting for Gabby/Jacob John.



If you are not currently enrolled in Sunday School or any contact or dietary information has changed, please contact Deanna secretary@cccchurch.com to update our records. We also welcome back any "helpers" or confirmed 9-12 graders to join in on Sunday School.

We will also be looking for Substitutes at this time we will mostly be looking, toward the end of Sunday school in the Spring. If you are interested, please let Deanna know.

Dates we will be singing in church or changes to the schedule will be added closer to that time. Please watch weekly emails for updates on Sunday school related news, if you are not receiving the weekly news email, please contact Deanna to be added.

Schedule

September 27th Sunday Funday

October 4th Rejection in the Vineyard

October 11th The Wedding Banquet

October 18th After worship Sunday School 11:30am

October 25th Fall-o-ween Jesus Party

Thanks,
The Fox's

Confirmation Orientation is Wednesday September 30th at 6:30 PM at United for students in 7th and 8th grade.



**Sunday September
27th 9:30am**

Welcome back for another great year of
Sunday School!



The next **WELCA** meeting will be on **Wednesday, September 9th at 6:30 pm.** **Dahlen Hall.** We will continue planning the Taste of Welch and take care of any other business.

Planning for the Taste of Welch has begun!

Kim Chandler has graciously donated a beautiful tied quilt from her mother. **If you have items to donate to the raffle contact Kelley Mittelsteadt as soon as possible.** Ticket packets will be available starting **Sunday, September 6th.** You will also have the opportunity to sign up to help with this our biggest fundraiser: advertising, set up, **BAKE Sale Items**, craft items, help the day of TOW and *Sunday after church*). Lunch menu: chicken wild rice soup, vegetable soup, roast beef sandwiches, coleslaw, chips, desserts, and beverages. Please price any craft items donated. Make sure to note if your bake sale items have any allergens, such as nuts. Also, note if items are gluten free. We are excited to have Duff's Meats 2 and Coborn's both in Hastings donate generously with items to make our lunch items. Also to Thrivent for Action Grants. Red Wing Shoe has donated a \$200.00 gift certificate!

SAVE THE DATE January 15-17, 2027-Annual Women's Retreat Maiden Rock Retreat

Enjoy the return of Pr. Emily Carson as our Saturday Presenter. Stay the weekend or come for the day on Saturday. More information to come. Contact Julie Schreifels if you are interested in coming &/or helping to plan the retreat.

Future Events:

Taste of Welch: October 10, 9am – 2 pm

Red Cross Blood Drive: Thursday, Oct. 29 12:00 – 6:00 pm and
Friday, Oct. 30, 8:30 am – 2:20 pm

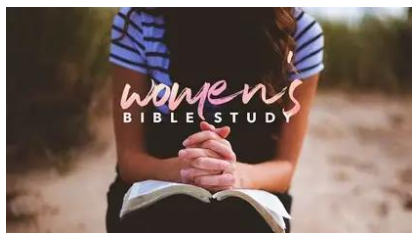
2027 Women's Retreat: January 15-17 Maiden Rock Retreat

Cannon River Spring Event: April 24, 2027 First Lutheran Church, Red Wing

Officers: *President: Julie Schreifels Secretary: Joan Slingsby
Treasurer: Jean Kehren*

Julie Schreifels cell phone: 507-990-7024 email
hjschreif@live.com

WELCA Bible Study



WELCA Bible study will resume in September. We will meet in Dahlen Hall on **Tuesday September 8th, 9:00 - 11:00.** Our study will be “*Bold Faith on an unexpected journey.*” In this 3-session

series we will journey with Hagar, Ruth, and Mary Magdalene - women whose bold faith transformed their stories. Study guides will be provided. Please join us for this morning of learning, sharing, and laughing together.



35th Annual Taste of Welch Bake Sale Lunch



Homemade Chicken Wild Rice Soup
Homemade Vegetable Soup
Roast Beef Sandwiches
Coleslaw
Assorted Desserts
Hot and Cold Beverages

Raffle

Beautiful Hand Tied Quilt 92"x 84"
Many other items including:
Handmade wooden kid's table & bench
Gift Cards and Gift Certificates
Sign up for FREE drawings! Some Crafts available

Cross of Christ Lutheran Church

24036 Co. Rd. 7 Blvd., Welch, MN

Saturday, October 10th, 2026

9:00 am – 2:00 pm



Cross of Christ
Council Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2026

Present: Anthony Nemcek, Jim Gustafson, Sherril Bjornson,
Ross Nelson, Hans Schreifels, Barb Peiffer, Jeff Meyer
Members Absent: Darwin Fox and Pastor CJ Boetcher

Meeting was called to order by Anthony Nemcek and the mission statement was read.

The meeting agenda was approved, and the June meeting minutes were approved as written.

Unfinished Business

* **Pastor's Report** Pastor was absent from the meeting, and his written report was provided to Council for review.

* **Accessibility Task Force** - No updates at this time. Information from prior activity has been received and research into potential companies to install the lift has begun by some Council members

New Business

* **September Council person** - Darwin Fox

* **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** – Council is reviewing an MOU between CC and CR regarding each congregation's share of expenses related to the parsonage. This will be discussed and approved at the joint meeting with CR in September.

Committee Reports

* **Finance** – Council reviewed the financial reports received from Clergy Financial Resources. Council sought answers to a couple clarifying questions related to line items in the report. Council approved the financial reports as provided.

*Property Management – Council heard a recap of the Dahlen Hall siding project. Ross will look into having someone patch the holes in the concrete that remain.

*Worship & Music – There is interest in updating how contemporary worship is conducted, and the committee will discuss what that might look like in the next month or two.

*Learning & Youth – Confirmation will be done collaboratively with United Lutheran again this year. There are three students, one of whom will be confirmed in the spring.

*Service & Witness – The Vision and Vitality task force has met twice and will be meeting again in August. The committee is speaking with community leaders to help identify ways in which CoC can remain vital and relevant to that community.

*Missions – Breakfast foods are being collected in August.

*Stewardship – The committee is meeting this month to discuss the fall drive for 2027 giving. Simply Giving is no longer active and all automatic giving and tracking has migrated to Tithe.ly. Deanna remains available to help people get set up with that system.

***A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. -
Motion Passed.***

The next meeting will be on September 10 at Cannon River Church immediately following the 6:30 p.m. joint meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
James Gustafson
Council Secretary

A Prayer Team for Our Young People

Our children, youth, and young adults face many pressures that can confuse, discourage, and isolate them. As Rev. Al Erickson shared at the July Triennial Gathering, “our young people are being attacked in many ways”—yet the church is not helpless. One of our strongest gifts is prayer. We invite the congregation to join a simple, self-directed prayer team focused on lifting up young people, families, schools, and church leaders.

Why This Matters

Prayer invites God’s guidance, protection, and strength. It also shapes us into compassionate people who notice needs and respond with care. A prayer team allows the whole congregation—not just parents or staff—to surround young people with spiritual support.

How It Works

Participants pray on their own schedule: at home, during walks, before meals, or as part of daily devotions. Occasional prayer prompts or themes may be shared in the bulletin or newsletter.

Focus areas include:

- ☐ Children, youth, and young adults
- ☐ Parents, grandparents, and caregivers
- ☐ Teachers, coaches, mentors, and youth leaders
- ☐ Young people facing loneliness, anxiety, bullying, or confusion
- ☐ Our congregation’s readiness to welcome and support families

Who Can Join?

Everyone—children, teens, adults, longtime members, and newcomers. A multigenerational team becomes a powerful witness of care and unity. A Small Commitment, A Deep Purpose You might pray once a week, once a day, or whenever a prompt appears. The structure stays light; the impact grows deep.

If this stirs something in you, pray about joining. Let church leaders know you’re interested by signing the clipboard at the back of church or leaving a voice message at the church office, 651-388-3464.

Our young people deserve our attention, courage, and prayers. Let’s begin.

-Janet