

**Desert Cross Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026**

Minutes taken by: Marie Ihlefeld

Meeting start time: 7:02 PM

Meeting end time: 7:50 PM

Attendees:

Council – Present	Absent	Pastors/Staff - Present
Gail Dempsey	Sharon Butcher	Pr. Andrea Cain
Vicki English		Pr. Thadd Book
Marie Ihlefeld		
Tony Tainter		
MaryBeth LaMont		
Mark Farrell		
Mari Johnson		
Sue Smith		
Sue Eberle		

Devotions: Vicki English

Approval of June Agenda

- **First:** Tony Tainter
- **Second:** Gail Dempsey
- **Unanimously Approved – Motion Carried**

Approval of May Minutes

- **First:** Tony Tainter
- **Second:** Gail Dempsey
- **Unanimously Approved – Motion Carried**

Team Updates:

1. **Director of Operations and Property Report:** No report due to PTO

2. Financial Committee Report: No Financial Report due to PTO & out of town

- **Tempe Land Sale Update** MaryBeth Everything has been signed for the land sale & waiting on the City of Tempe.

3. President's Report MaryBeth LaMont

- **Refresh Update:** The Refresh Team is getting bids for the ceiling remodeling above the altar – they plan to start in July.
- **Thank You to Vicki for all her hard work and the lovely last meeting & gifts.**
- **Business Cards:** The business cards are ready for both campuses --- they look nice, great job to Wendy and everyone involved in their creation.
- **iHelp Dinner:** Tuesday June 23rd is the I-Help dinner in the Fellowship Hall at Tempe. Could consider rotisserie chicken, sides & dessert. Last year's taco bar was a hit. Please be there at 4:30pm to prepare sack lunches and dinner.
- Requesting written Endowment, Stewardship and Chamber reports be sent to council prior to meetings in the future.

4. Pastor Reports:

- **Pr. Andrea: June 14, 2026 --- Senior Pastor Report**
 - June began the season of Pentecost and a focus on growth in faith as disciples of Christ. One way we are exploring this in worship is with "Why I Serve" mission moments at all services that I created based on council discussions last month. We will hear from our members about why they serve, how they serve, and the difference it makes for their faith, their lives, and our church. We've already had a few that were very inspiring and it was fun to learn some new things about our friends!
 - July worship services will bring a summer preaching series on the book of Acts called Acts, Part 2: Greatest Hits. We will pick up where we left off last summer and finish the book of Acts with some pivotal stories of how the earliest disciples lived out their faith. More inspiration!
 - We had a wonderful week of VBS – my favorite thing each year is helping check the kids in on the first day – they are so full of excitement, anticipation, and a little fear sometimes, too. I'm sure Pastor Thadd will have more to share about VBS coming up!
 - Synod Assembly was themed "Rooted in God's Story" this June and held at Love of Christ in Mesa. We had 4 delegates join us for all the assembly business, worship, bible study and events. It is good to gather with all the congregations in the Synod and hear all about the wonderful mission and growth happening in our churches.
 - Memorial Garden upgrades – the shade sails are installed just in time for the summer heat! We give thanks for the donors who made this possible and those who serve on the team to arrange the work. We are in process of having lighting installed to upgrade according to the city requirements so we can pass final inspection on the shade sails. Landscaping with desert plants will begin in fall when it cools down enough to plant.

Feedback from the church has been very positive and especially for folks who have loved ones interred in the niches. Thanks be to God!

- Our Gilbert worship leader, Keziah Miner, is moving to TX at the end of June, so we are conducting a worship leader search. Joni is helping get the process started, and we have received a few resumes.
- We are so very thankful for our retired pastors who belong to Desert Cross. They bring their wisdom and faith to us in special ways especially when they “supply preach” when the pastors take a little time away. We have about 7 retired pastors in our midst which is such a wonderful blessing!
- Personal note
- **Pr. Thadd:**
 - Vacation Bible School (VBS) took place last week at the Tempe Community Center. There were almost 80 kids and 60 volunteers. It ran like a well-oiled machine. Shannon does an incredible job encouraging the youth & others to take on the leadership roles at VBS. Each VBS station leader is a schoolteacher this year. We are thankful they volunteer a week at VBS after a full school year. Check out the pictures on Facebook. 21 kids were new to VBS.
 - The Synod Assembly went well & Desert Cross was very involved. Pr. Andrea was thanked for being a Dean. Evie Oster spoke on a youth panel. Laura Book played the flute. Lincoln Book played the flute & shared his yo-yo skills. Tim Brown was a speaker; he went to college with Pastor Thadd.

We are so thankful for the retired Pastors in our church. Pastor Glen will cover on Sunday and Pastor Kreuger will be covering in July.
 - Enjoyed officiating a wedding last week in Flagstaff for Mari’s daughter.
 - The Memorial Day Breakfast at the park was fun. A great gathering with church members. Also celebrated Lincoln’s birthday with many other tween boys. A picnic is planned for Labor Day too.
 - The Pastor Class has ended – great food and conversation. Thought-provoking conversations on the books of the Bible we don’t spend as much time on.

5. Endowment: Vicki/MaryBeth See Addendum

6. Gilbert Chamber Report: Mari/Tony

- Sue Kyle & Claudia Haus met with June Bowman to talk about school supplies for local schools. Gilbert donates to Concordia & Tempe donates to Kyrene.
- Reviewed the new business cards at Chamber
- Refresh team will need to coordinate with Doug on covering expenses for Refresh Project. Get paperwork from Doug to request ahead of expenses or after.
- Tony & Mari will be gone in July.

7. **Stewardship** Pr. Thadd No new update

8. **Project Updates:** MaryBeth/Pr. Andrea

- **Memorial Garden:** Update was in Pr. Andrea's report.

9. **Program (Staff) Reports/Questions:** No questions

10. **Old Business:** MaryBeth/Vicki

- **Cookbook Update:** Gathering a few more recipes & then can get them printed. Need more side dishes and min dishes. Have a lot of desserts & salads. The communion bread recipe is included.

11. **New Business:** MaryBeth

- **Tempe Parking Lot Committee:** A Committee is being put together to plan a 2027 capital campaign for the Tempe Parking lot. A presentation is being planned for the December 2026 Budget Congregational meeting. This meeting is planned for December 6th at 1pm in Tempe. Starter funds have already been donated by a member of the congregation. Parking lot will have to be dug out, ground down & resurfaced, possibly costing at least \$200K.

Prayer Concerns & Praises were shared

Closing Prayer: Pr. Andrea

Adjournment:

- **First:** Vicki English
- **Second:** Sue Smith
- **Unanimously Approved**

Addendum:

On June 24th 2026 an emergency request was made to council to approve a grant from the Endowment committee. Camp Aloma lost their walk-in refrigerator & food. The Endowment committee approved a \$4,000 grant to Camp Aloma to help replace their walk-in cooler & replenish their food supply as they see fit. Council voted and approved via email.

Motion to approve Endowment grant of \$4,000 to Camp Aloma to help replace their walk-in cooler & replenish their food supply as they see fit:

- **First:** Gail Dempsey
- **Second:** Vicki English
- **Majority Approved – Motion Carried**