

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 8, 2025

Council Members Present:

Diane Boscarino, Pastor Scott Cady, Vinni Carey, Pamela Little, Judy Ludwig, Dana O'Brien, Kathy Olkowski, Valerie Vega

Members Absent:

Beth Brower

Others Present:

Robin Potwora, Julie Brewster

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Council President Diane Boscarino at 7:00 pm

Devotions and Prayer –

Pastor read from a New Zealand prayer book on a variation of the Lord's Prayer

Celebrations, Appreciation and Thank You

Thank you to Christine Dickinson for coordinating the Thanksgiving pie with the Columbia Club.

Thanks to Diane and Ralph Boscarino for all the work they do around the church.

Thanks to those that led worship during Pastor's vacation.

Privilege of the Floor – None

Approval of Council Minutes

M/S/P Pamela Little, Vinni Carey to approve the minutes of November 10, 2025.

Pastor's Report – Scott Cady

Pastoral Acts

- 3 hospital visits
- 2 home visits with communion
- 7 pastoral conversations
- 3 pastoral phone calls
- 1 funeral

St. Paul's meetings, classes, events, etc.

- 2 TAFA meetings
- 3 zoom Bible studies
- 3 in person Bible studies
- Contemporary music rehearsal
- Worship and Music Committee
- Insurance information meeting
- 5 A Capella choir rehearsals
- 3 regular worship services
- 2 Confirmation classes
- Men's Breakfast
- Advent workshop
- Ecumenical Thanksgiving Worship
- Tree Trim and meal
- Evangelism Meeting

Other

- Hilltop picture day
- Hilltop Holiday Feast
- Surviving the Holidays griefshare meeting at Trinity
- Reading to Hilltop x2
- Naugatuck Valley lectionary studies
- 2 days vacation
- Swearing in Rachel

Discretionary Fund balance \$420

Reflections

A very blessed Advent/Christmas/New Year/Epiphany season to you all. It's a busy time. We have the Annual meeting, the Pageant, the Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve, and Lessons and Carols. The Evangelism team is forming after yesterday's meeting. We'll get together soon after the turn of the year to begin serious work on ways to get the invitation out to the area about St. Paul's in new and creative ways. We have some new visitors who seem interested in membership, so we'll soon set up a time to do that. Diane is talking about a History Day, which would be very interesting. The Puppets should make an entrance on Epiphany, and our ecumenical partners were excited about Thanksgiving, so I hope we can carry that forward to Lent in some form. It's early for this, but I'd love to talk to anyone who might attend the Synod Assembly in early June in Worcester. I do have some openings for helpers for worship on Christmas Eve if any of you would like to step up to do some of those rolls. None of them are hard, and all are very helpful. If you would need some instruction, we can provide that. One new and very interesting event is the Torrington Area Families for Autism (TAFA) using our hall the evening before Valentines Day to host a prom type event for young folks on the spectrum. We will need several volunteers to pull this off. The jobs will not be hard, but vital. It's a 6-9 pm event if I remember rightly. Please consider doing that and/or applying for a Thrivent Action Team card to support it.

You have been a very good Council in the face of some important issues. I appreciate your diligence and thoughtful consideration of the opportunities. I look forward to some exciting new possibilities in '26! God's peace, SC

Had a quick, but good meeting about the new Evangelism meeting. There will be another meeting on

January 3, 2026, to go over all kinds of great ideas to market the church.

The Thomaston Lutheran church has closed.

New members showing up for church.

Pastor is enjoying his confirmation class. They are good kids. Council members are encouraged to 'drop in' to a class.

Treasurer's Report

M/S/P Judy Ludwig, Val Vega to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, pending audit.

Women of the ELCA donated 35% of the fall fair proceeds to the Church operating budget.

Use of Facilities:

Unico requested to use the Fellowship Hall and usually meets once a month on Wednesday, Quilters meet from 1-4, they would need to start cooking around noon, and their dinner would start around 6:00. Have not discussed fee for usage. Council will discuss the fee once we hear back from them.

Updates:

Land purchase- no update

Solar project- change order has to be signed

Met with another insurance company, waiting to hear back from them.

Insurance audit- solar might have to replace breaker boxes waiting to see.

Community fundraising letter- letters being sent but none back however some funds from FB, starting to hear from people that were sent letters. Funds that come in are going to the building and restoration account.

Cell tower- waiting on info from Jo Ko. He said he sent a contract, but nobody had received it. Diane will check with him to find out where it went.

Items in fireproof safe- everything is the in Fellowship Hall. We are just waiting on the safe to be moved to downstairs storage. Diane will go through it and hopefully have a "History Day" once everything is organized.

Website- update from Judy – Please check out the website, give feedback.

Autism group- Christina might be going in a different direction but the church is still an option she will keep us updated.

Old Business:

Committee working relationships- agendas, people's opinions, etc.- on going, a Review liaisons and chairs- take back to committees-

all liaisons should meet with committee chairs for updated list of members, get them to Rachel,

Diane will send out suggestions as to who might be a liaison. Diane talked about that the liaisons are the bridge between the council and the committee. Get to know what your committee does, you can even go to the meeting.

Finding new council members and officers - eight openings. We have six coming and need two more people.

Emergency line - new protocol will happen in Jan after election of new officers, Jim Jones from Visionary Electric will look at setting up the phones, can we do it, or does he need to do it?

Mobile food truck request- haven't heard from him, Pastor talked with him and he is having trouble with permits from the city of Torrington.

New Business:

Extra office almost finished- extra office should be finished by end of week. Paula can start moving in.

Committee Reports

Administration – Liaison: Diane Boscarino

I need some guidance about bulletins, I have been, for the past year, making 25 full bulletin copies, 15 slide supplemental bulletins and 25 LP songs. Margaret sent an email asking me to make more full-length bulletins because we are consistently running out. My worry is that people are taking the full bulletins who really do not

need a full bulletin (they are supposed to be for those who cannot see the slides clearly). As you see from the numbers below, the numbers from one year to the next are consistent. How do we keep people from taking full bulletins that do not need them? If people are going to keep taking bulletins, then why do the slides? The point of the slides was to not print as many bulletins, but it does not seem to be working that way! How can we rectify this problem? Next week I will make 35 full bulletins and see what happens.

We are in the process of getting the IT stuff updated and cleaned up in the cabinet behind my desk. Items are being ordered for installation in January.

Reminder that I will be off the week between Christmas and New Years.

We received a phone call from a gentleman who received a Thanksgiving meal delivery and was so thankful. He said it made his day happier even though he was alone, just having the delicious food made him feel better and thankful. Always nice to share the positive!

November 2025	Attendees	Last Year	Season
2	84	103	All Saints
9	89	85	Pent 19
16	95	80	Pent 20
23	101	104	Christ the King
30	90	54	Advent 1

Altar Guild – Liaison: Beth Brower - No Report

Christian Education – Liaison:

Sunday School is going along well; we need to regroup at the beginning of the year to over staffing. We only have one teacher in one class and three in another(although one hasn't been attending since early fall due to family commitments). I have had the privilege to teach younger grades a few times this year, which I have enjoyed. Pastor has had a group of volunteers who have been sitting in with his class of three adolescent boys each Sunday.

Bill & Michelle Skibesky got a Thrivent Action Team grant for our Advent project. On Christ the King Sunday, families gathered to make Holy Family pieces using wooden cookies and terra cotta pots with wooden balls for faces. The kids seemed to enjoy the project, although in the future we have to move to the other side of the room to make for a quieter space in which to work. (Coffee Hour can get pretty noisy!)

We are trying a new approach to our pageant this year. Casaundra Abeling found a book of "one rehearsal" pageants that I ordered immediately. There are two main

speaking parts in the pageant, we chose and our two oldest Sunday School students will be reading the parts of the “shoppers.” Kendhyall Abeling and Brooklynn Dickinson will be reading. I also have to speak with both the A Capella and Contemporary Choirs to ask for their help in singing a few carols when children “knock on doors.”

I am also in search for a Santa Suit for the pageant. He doesn’t have any words and is sitting off on the side of the altar. Toward the end of the pageant, Santa goes and kneels at the manger, along with the animals and other characters. I would even settle for Mrs. Clause to kneel at the manger if we can’t find the jolly red elf. Can anyone help out with either Santa or Mrs. Clause? I do think this could be a powerful moment for young kids when he/she kneels at the manger.

We will not be having SS on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year’s. The following Sunday we will celebrate the Epiphany. The Sunday School children invite the congregation to bring gifts to Jesus like the wise men did all those years ago. We will collect clothing such as sleepers, Onesies, tee shirts, top & pants, diapers/baby wipes, socks and booties, blankets, hats, mittens, books, toddler toys, new stuffed animals, baby food, formula, and snacks (nothing expired, please!).

Congregational Care – Liaison: Kathy Olkowski – No Report

Eucharistic Ministry – Liaison: Pamela Little

Eucharistic Minister	<i>Congregation Member Name</i>	<i>Visited</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Took Communion</i>	Comments/Concerns	Request Pastoral Visit
Bonnie Schaff	<i>Gloria Thibault</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>11/6, 11/13, 11/20</i>	<i>Yes</i>		
Pam Ewing	<i>Eleanor Klonoski</i>	<i>Not visited</i>				
	<i>Betty Hilton</i>	<i>No Reported</i>				
Leah Seleman	<i>Renate Reise</i>	<i>Not Reported</i>				
Pamela Little	<i>Helen Winzler</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>11/13</i>	<i>Yes</i>	We had a nice visit	
	<i>Ernie Marquard</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>11/25</i>	<i>Yes</i>	Audrey and Ernie both took communion	
	<i>Denise Gammon</i>	<i>Not visited</i>				
Need someone to visit	<i>Wallace Gangell</i>	<i>Not visited</i>				
Need someone to visit	<i>James Wolfinger</i>	<i>Not visited</i>				
Cynthia Rose	<i>Midge Rosenbeck</i>	<i>Not Reported</i>				

Evangelism – Liaison: Dana O’Brien

A new and improved Evangelism committee is in the works.

Family Ministry – Liaison: Diane, Val, Pamela, Judy– No Report

Fellowship – Liaison:

Our Fall Pork dinner was a good success. Much of the food was donated through a Thrivent Action Team grant as well as by a gracious member of our committee. I am awaiting financial totals so we are able to report to the congregation how we did. All money is for the general fund.

The next event is the Super Bowl Grinder/Chef Salad in February coinciding with the day before the Super Bowl.

Finance – Liaison: Val Vega – No Report

Garden of Memories – Liaison: Vinni Carey – No Report

Hilltop – Liaison: Pamela Little

Registration 2025-2026

T/Th 2	7
MWF 3 & 4	18 (mixed – full and parttime)
M-F Full Day	18 (mixed – full and [parttime)
M-F SR	14

We are happy to have two substitutes that we can call on. They have been a great help with field trips and allowed our staff to attend workshops during the school day. We will be using them this coming week for picture day help and feast help.

Barbara will meet with each teacher to go over professional goals for the year the week of Nov 17-21

Early Start CT (ESCT) updates 2025/2026 – There is talk that we will receive an 8% increase in funding starting January 1, 2025. We need to wait for the updated contract.

Barbara has a custom-built computer and it's working wonderfully. The old computer is housing cameras so that she can see them all at once. Nice feature.

Hilltop Thankful/Grateful Feast was Nov 14th.

Classroom Christmas Celebrations will take place on Dec 19th.

Fall fundraiser - Nutmeg Spice Co. Approx \$1,600 profit! Thank you to all who supported.

Art Show has been scheduled for April 24th 2026

Bingo is scheduled for March 6th, 2026

IT/Website – Liaison: Judy Ludwig

IT met in November and reviewed the IT Audit completed by DataHal. We are replacing the Wi-Fi access points throughout the entire building, this will give us better Wi-Fi. The wiring cabinet behind Rachel's desk will be cleaned up and updated. This will be completed in January. BitDefender, a virus protection software program, has been installed on all computers, except for Pastor's personal computer. We are also looking into improving the streaming, the phone system, and the door locks. Some equipment will be ordered from this year's budget, and more will be ordered as the budget allows.

The Web page is progressing. It's almost complete, please check it out and give us your feedback.

Property – Liaison: Diane Boscarino/Pamela Little – No Report

Puppettude – Liaison: Judy Ludwig

Working on a short puppet presentation during the Children's Sermon for Epiphany using two puppets.

Safety – Liaison: - No Report

Scholarship – Liaison: Val Vega – No Report

Sharing Garden – Liaison: Kathy Olkowski – No Report

Social Concerns– Liaison: – No Report

Soup Kitchen – Liaison: Beth Brower – No Report

Staff Support – Liaison: Judy Ludwig– No Report

Stewardship – Liaison: Pastor Cady – No Report

St. Paul's W/ELCA – Liaison: Vinni Carey

The annual Fall /fair was a big success when it was held on November 1st. At the November meeting the membership decided to donate 35% of total intake from the fair for the General Fund. We also decided to invest one thousand (\$1,000.) into our Thrivent account, with the hope of eventually to provide our annual scholarship using only the interest each year. That will probably be several more years before we can use it for scholarships. Meanwhile, we provide a scholarship each year from our treasury.

Angel Project

There are still quite a few angels that are left unchosen on the table. I am thankful for the small treasury we have from fundraising we did during the year with Palm Sunday candy sales and the Scandinavian Almond Cake sales on Palm Sunday. The proceeds were earmarked for the Angel Project. St. Paul's Women also have given up to \$500 toward AP expenses. Sincere thanks to all who chose an angel or more than an angel this year! We were able to take off one family due to better circumstances, but we added on another family who had been experiencing better times in recent years but asked to be added back to the recipient list this year. I will do my best to provide all wishes, but we may need to cut down on some due to no money being left. Tom and Leah Seleman and Beth Brower secured Thrivent Action team grants for the Angel Project, Fall Fair, and Fruit Baskets. These grants are each for \$250 to help defray expenses for each project.

Use of Facilities – Liaison: - Diane Boscarino, Rachel Harrel - No Report

Worship & Music – Liaison: Pastor Cady – No Report

Other Discussion

Prayer and Dismissal

M/S/P Pamela Little, Vinni Carey to adjourn at 8:04 pm

Next meeting will be January 19, 2026, at 7:00pm on Zoom

Judy Ludwig, Congregational Secretary

Council Terms

<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>
Judy Ludwig	Dana O'Brien	Diane Boscarino
Kathy Olkowski	<i>Vacant</i>	Beth Brower
Val Vega	<i>Vacant</i>	Pamela Little
Vinni Carey	<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Vacant</i>

2025 council meeting dates

1/13/25, 2/10/25, 3/10/25, 4/14/25, 5/12/25, 6/9/25, 7/14/25, 8/11/25, 9/8/25, 10/13/25, 11/10/25, 12/8/25