

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

JUNE 9, 2025

Council Members Present:

Diane Boscarino, Beth Brower, Pastor Scott Cady, Pamela Little, Karen Ness, Dana O'Brien, Kathy Olkowski, Valerie Vega

Members Absent:

Judy Ludwig, Vinni Carey, William Skibesky

Call to Order

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

Devotions and Prayer –

Pastor read a piece from *Credo* by William Sloane Coffin

Celebrations, Appreciation and Thank You

Thank you card from Karen Ness to thank Diane and Ralph for taking care of the handicap bathroom that was discussed at Council previously .

Thank you to Phillip for taking care of the wire and other things to take care of the office makeover and the moving of the microphones in the sanctuary.

Pamela thanks the people who helped for the picnic (in particular the Boscarino's and Adam). The kids had a blast!

Privilege of the Floor – None

Approval of Council Minutes

M/S/P Beth Brower, Karen Ness to approve the minutes of May 12, 2025.

Pastor's Report – Scott Cady

Pastor's report for May 2025 to be submitted June 9

Pastoral Acts:

- 8 pastoral phone calls
- 3 counseling sessions
- 2 funerals and receptions

St. Paul's classes, meetings, activities, and events:

- 4 zoom studies

- 4 in person studies
- Worship & Music Committee mtg
- 4 a cappella rehearsals
- 4 regular worship services
- Picnic
- Confirmation Dinner
- IT mtg
- 2 coffee hours
- Meeting with Diane
- 1 to 1 rehearsal with Bonnie
- Conversation with a member re: evangelism
- Confirmation and reception

Other:

- 2 days' vacation
- Final grief group at Trinity
- Intro remarks for CYC
- Memorial Day prayer in Cornwall
- Synod Assembly
- Meeting with Synod Secretary
- Pride Day Prayer at Town Hall
- Phone call re: Tower proposal

Discretionary Fund balance: \$802

Reflections: Synod Assembly and Bishop's visit

The Assembly was well done and had some very moving moments. There were 2 keynote speakers, one the ELCA Bishop of Washington D.C., the Rev. Leila M. Ortiz, and the other, the Rev. Dr. Lisa E. Dahill, a faculty member from Hartford International University for Religion and Peace (HIU). Both were insightful and thought provoking.

The Bishop's report was anything but dry, being more like an inspirational sermon than a typical report. It was a stirring call for us to tell people that Jesus loves them. While that might sound like a sort of standard message from a Bishop or pastor, it was delivered in a truly uplifting way. We also have a date for Bishop Piphio to come visit us for worship. It is Palm Sunday '26. We'll work out details later, but that will be a great day. I think you'll appreciate him and his ministry. He was elected last year to a 6 year term.

I also had time to talk to another faculty at HIU, Scott Thuma, whose expertise is trends in American Christianity. He's soon to publish a new study on the state of American churches after COVID. As he described what trends he sees, he could have been describing St. Paul's almost exactly. Somewhat lower attendance, many old faces now missing, many new faces in the pews, those who did not disappear demonstrate a higher level of commitment, including a noticeable bounce in giving.

We passed 2 resolutions. One asks the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, which meets later this summer, to encourage national ELCA leadership to join other ecumenical bodies when appropriate in lawsuits that seek to safeguard the sanctity of church spaces and services from threats of arrest or deportation. In the past, agencies like the FBI or ICE refrained from entering churches, schools, and hospitals. That policy has changed, but many Christian bodies see this change as a kind of interference with our basic role as welcome, safe spaces for all. The second resolution asks the Churchwide Assembly to communicate to our elected officials our desire to end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, also known as Palestine. A Two-State solution to the longstanding tension in the Holy Land has had consistent bi-partisan support over many decades, but the military and settler occupation of Palestine by Israel makes progress toward that goal almost impossible. There is more info on the Synod website for those interested.

The finances of the Synod are in pretty good shape, and a budget was passed with virtually unanimous support.

Marlene Batistoni was our voting member. She enjoyed going and is open to going again next year. I hope we can send 2 voters next year. I also hope we can find some good folks to fill in the gaps in our Council roster for the coming year.

We have the opportunity to host the ecumenical Thanksgiving service again this year. I'm game. OK with you all?

Yesterday we confirmed the two Thurlough boys. You'll notice that we've simplified and shortened the ritual a bit to take their circumstances into account. I'd welcome feedback afterwards.

The Pride Flag raising was a good experience. Only about 30 people were there, but those included the mayor, with some strong words supporting the event, a city Council member, a State Senator, the Police Chief, and some members of Trinity Episcopal Church. It's good to see the city standing strong with all its citizens. Juneteenth is coming soon and will also have a flag raising celebrating the abolition of slavery in our nation as emancipation was finally declared in Galveston 2 years after Lincoln made it official.

As always thanks for all you do. Yours in Christ, Pr. Scott Cady

-8/10 & 8/17 Pastor will be out. Pastor downloaded the Bishop's service from the assembly (15 min. long). Also 2 good keynote speakers. He will decide on which one of these to play for the 8/10 service.

-The bishop has agreed to come here to preach on Palm Sunday 2026.

- The Thomaston church is struggling; no pastor, some leadership conflict, may need to sell the building. It is close enough that a handful of members might choose to come here.

-There will be a transition at Trinity Episcopal. Their part time priest has been offered a full time job.

-Thanksgiving service - Pastor is suggesting we host the ecumenical service here this year due to the transition at Trinity Episcopal. Council members were in agreement with that.

-Diane had a conversation with Pastor about the flag raising which is why Pastor put out information to Council about the flag raising. The Juneteenth flag raising will happen on 6/19 at 1:00. He will be present but has no official "part."

Treasurer's Report

-Year to date P & L shows that we are in fairly good shape right now. The slides don't always reflect this. The slides just show the regular envelopes v. the budgeted amount. We don't want to show the "extras" because those aren't things we can count on. Both numbers are currently going in the right direction. We haven't had to take any money out of investments. The May power and gas bill not paid until the first week in June due to the extra week of payroll in May. No late fees were incurred when they were paid the first week in June. The May report shows no payments for this reason.

-The hot water heater has been completely paid for. Donations we received paid for a little less than half and then a couple wrote a check for the remaining balance and paid off the rest of it.

-Waiting to hear from Property Wednesday night if we have a project that we can start campaigning for. The jug will go back out when we know what project we are going to work on.

-Barry Cohen got the AC working today - it was a bad panel. Hoping to hear more about this from Property.

-Pamela has been dealing with Quick Books and the bank because there is a \$4000 dispute. Pamela was on the phone for 4 hours today. The \$4000 charge was the direct deposit withdrawal for payroll. Margaret has to run it on Thursdays now in order for them to get their check on Monday. Neither Margaret nor Pamela realized what the Intuit ID number was. Quick Book associate explained that the money was the direct deposit withdrawal for the payroll and not a subscription fee that it seemed to be.

-Pamela's resignation was NOT accepted and she didn't swear!!!

-A broker for a solar company reached out - Pastor spoke with him. They are looking for good sites to put up new cell towers. They would like to give us a proposal for if we put additional carriers on our tower. We would get 50% of what they would pay, and the broker would get 50% of what they would pay. We would have to be cautious of the actual appearance. They would want a copy of our present lease before proceeding. Pastor doesn't see this as a problem to let them come out and give a proposal. Diane would like to look at the current contract first and give them just the part of the contract that they need and not give them the entire contract. Diane will get his information and will follow through on this with the Council's approval to do this (look into it only). No motion needed because Diane is just going to look into it.

M/S/P Beth Brower, Kathy Olkowski to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, pending audit.

Old Business:

Discuss membership, giving units and how to get the word out.
Committee working relationships-
Website update-
Continuing resolutions -

Updates:

CYC had their concert, and we received \$238.00. I was asked to lock purses in the choir room, but I declined due to liability concerns. Anyone else should do the same.

Safety non-slip strips were installed to altar steps and the council will get the word out to not dim lights as much. An accident report was filed in the office with detailed steps taken.

IT decided it is too costly to do wireless mics at this time. The equipment was moved to the back of the church. They will see if it works end of the month.

Bathrooms are all set for handi-cap accessories. Everyone seems happy.

Through email council decided to change out copier-

Rachel and I met with the rep from Prism, our copier vendor. They are offering to change out our copier for a smaller machine. We aren't doing the volume of copies we have done in the past and by going to a smaller copier we will save \$55 a month on our contract which equates to \$660 annually, and \$3300 over the course of our contract which is 60 months. Our current contract is not up for another 10 months but they are offering to do this now. This new machine will have all the same functionality plus newer technology. We should also see a slight savings in electricity. The only thing we will be giving up is speed. We will see a reduction in the number of copies per minute from 55 to 35. With our current volume, this will not affect us. I spoke with Diane, and instead of waiting until the next council meeting, we would like to know if you are in agreement with us so we can start receiving these savings now. There is also a slight risk that due to the tariff situation, the price can go up if we don't lock in. Please

respond to all with a yes or no response. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to myself or Rachel. Thanks. **All ten yes.** New copier installed on Thursday May 29th.

- CYC - did agree to the 10% plus the use of facilities - \$238 was paid to us

- Strips on the steps are in.

- IT - wireless mikes - no money at this time - this is why they put them in the back - they will now be in the back when they are playing - next week that they play will be 6/29

- Handicapped bathroom is all set. The women still want the toilet seat still done.

- Discussion about Synod coming back to us about the constitution - 1 issue with it - they want a % put in for a quorum for the annual meeting. Diane and Pastor started investigating our actual membership numbers, the numbers are MUCH lower than we all thought. 256 is the actual number at date. 47 of those are NOT active. Some of the 256 are no longer living so the number is not accurate and up to date. We discussed this at Finance about how to bring it up to the congregation in a fun way so that they are aware of our congregation numbers. Giving units are even a smaller number (household). 2024 year - giving units = 129

- Although our constitution was rejected for the one reason above, there isn't anything we need to do right away according to Pastor. Our bylaws specify that we need to have 50 members for a special meeting. The powers that be did not have our by-laws at the time. When considering those, it might work itself out. If they really do insist that we have 10% number, we can probably do that once we calculate our actual active membership.

- Can we put out the word that WE own this church, and we have to support this church. If we share some of the numbers that Diane shared with the number of giving units and how much we need to support the church. Being clear with the numbers may enlighten people and they may realize that they can give a little more. Everyone on Council is challenged to go home and think about ways we can share this with the congregation.

- Website update - Andrew has changed a few things and is adding in new things as they come up.

New Business:

Finding new council members and officers- 3 opening plus 4 people going off

Church picnic- Discuss picnic for next year-

Suggestion for coffee hour-

Accident reports and follow up-

Piano- humidity control unit- we only add water Randy Cassotto piano tuner services it.

Use of facilities-

-Diane read a letter from William Skibesky who is resigning as of today from Council, Safety Committee, and Ministry Safe for personal reasons.

- In relation to this, we had a discussion about possible people who might be willing to join Council.

-The language in the constitution is that we can have UP to 12 but we can function with fewer if we need to. No minimum number.

-Church picnic - would be beneficial next time for Council to provide the meat. For 2 years we have asked people to bring their own. Diane and Ralph bought hotdogs and hamburgers for the bike show and brought the extras to the picnic. Many people didn't realize they needed to bring their own and they ran out. Also suggested that we switch what people bring.

-Suggestions during the picnic:

-Coffee sign up - put names for set up, clean up, and who is going to donate the things. Rachel has already changed the sign-ups out.

-Accident Report from the fall is filed in the office, the steps we made to fix the problem are also filed in the office.

-IF the piano lights are ever flashing - we are to tell Rachel, and she will call the piano tuner - the only thing we are to do is to fill it with water.

-Use of Facilities - During a piano recital Ralph opened the door for the person. He sent Diane to go close up because there were some issues. The woman had moved the piano to the center. She also told Ralph that they were going to leave when they were done and didn't care when we locked up. Diane nicely explained to the woman that the piano can NOT be moved. The woman also told Diane that a parent tuned the piano (that we had just tuned). Diane explained that it had just been tuned and that they should not tune it. The parent suggested a spider dolly to move the piano safely - Diane looked into it, \$1000! Diane will call Randy the piano tuner to see if he knows of one that is cheaper. Going forward this piano teacher will be asked to look for another place to have her recitals. If she comes back, we should have someone here the entire time to make sure she doesn't move the piano, or tune it, or unplug it. We will ask Rachel to write a letter to the teacher. It should also be addressed that she was planning to just leave before someone was here to lock it up.

- Solar proposals should be discussed at Property's meeting on Wednesday , 6/11 @ 7:00. Kathy suggests that we make sure with the insurance company that it is ok for us to put the panels on the roof. The solar company also owns the roofing company so they will let us know if we need to replace/repair any of the roofing before putting any solar on.

Committee Reports

Administration – Liaison: Diane Boscarino

Deceased members: Cheryl Corey, Jane Hornfischer

Baptized:

New Members:

Report:

The new copier has arrived and is lovely. We rearranged the office a bit to move the copier out of the leak zone. It operates just like the old one. And hopefully it will save the church some pennies.

The AC died in the office, after much research, it came down to the zone panel in the office ceiling having a short, Barry Cone replace panel and all is well.

If it is okay with everyone, I would like to take this Friday off, June 13. Freyja and I are going to see Ringo Starr on Thursday night and who knows how long that night will be!

I would like my next week of vacation to be August 10-16 as Freyja moves back to school on August 16. I would return on Monday the 18th. I would also like Friday Oct. 10 and Monday the 13th off as that is parents' weekend.

Thank you! Rachel

May 2025	Attendees	Last Year	Season
4	65	98	3 rd of Easter
11	81	86	4 th of Easter
18	110	114	5 th of Easter
25	80	70	6 th of Easter

Altar Guild – Liaison: Beth Brower - No Report

Christian Education – Liaison:

I would like a sort of “training” for our teachers and helpers. Perhaps include some topics such as personal growth in faith, planning, curriculum review, etc. Nothing planned as yet, but I am hoping to get a name and have something in late summer or early fall.

I’m still hoping to get something going for youth or youth & families! These younger kids (grades 4-6) want to have a youth group with fun activities and learning about the church.

At our meeting in March, we selected a date for VBS – August 4-8. Theme will be “Serving Our Neighbors” and will include such groups as PD (Officer Johnson was the first to respond positively), FD, EMS, Lifeguard & possibly a boat (from a dive team), and Friendly Hands Food Van or Meals on Wheels, etc. Casaundra Abeling has done a lot of investigating of projects and she found some “survival kits” for these professionals that we would like the kids to help make, as a means of “giving back to them for their service.” We have a meeting next Monday when VBS will be high on the agenda.

First Communion will be celebrated next fall on World Communion Sunday, October 5th for a group of 3-4th graders.

Confirmation/Affirmation of Baptism was celebrated yesterday. Thanks to Pastor Cady who found a different liturgy for the two boys to answer to. It was so much more reasonable.

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>5/1, 5/8</i>	<i>Yes</i>		
Pam Ewing	<i>Fredrick George</i>	<i>Not visited</i>				
	<i>Eleanor Klonoski</i>	<i>Not visited</i>				
Leah Seleman	<i>Renate Reise</i>	<i>Not Reported</i>				
Pamela Little	<i>Helen Winzler</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>5/17/2025</i>	<i>Yes</i>		
	<i>Audrey & Ernie Marquard</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>5/23/2025</i>	<i>Yes</i>	Ernie was moved to Valerie Manor. He has adjusted well.	
	<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 – No Report

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

Fellowship – Liaison: Karen Ness

Our Fall Pork dinner was scheduled for Saturday, October 4th, however that has changed due to a conflict with our chief cook and bottle washer, June Seiser. I am going to call a meeting for the committee on Sunday, June 29th following worship to set an alternative date, possibly Friday, October 3rd.

Fundraising – Liaison: Judy Ludwig – No Report

Finance – Liaison: Val Vega – No Report

Garden of Memories – Liaison: Vinni Carey – No Report

Grants – Liaison: Pamela Little -

Hilltop – Liaison: Pamela Little

Hilltop meets on 6.12.2025. Here are a few highlights:

The school year raps up today, 6/9/20025, for all students. The teachers’ last day is Friday, 6/13/2025.

We have three (3) teachers leaving. One (1) is moving out of the area and two (2) are retiring. We wish them all well.

Security

Mutual link has completed the installation, and Hilltop received the letter from the Torrington Police Department. It has been sent to the Grant holders, and we are awaiting our reimbursement.

Maintenance

Casaundra will be cleaning and waxing all the floors and shampooing the rugs in Hilltop over the summer.

The teachers state the classrooms need a new coat of paint. Pamela will discuss this with June Seizer and get a cost.

Hilltop's next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 12th at 4:30p.m. via zoom.

IT/Website – Liaison: Judy Ludwig

Wireless mics for Contemporary choir. There was considerable discussion about this. It's difficult for the choir to move the mic stands and wires after church on Sunday. Phillip is often left to do this. Pastor suggested moving the wired mics to the of church corner near the streaming table, and singing from there. Leaving the equipment set up all the time. Phillip gave a very detailed presentation about possible equipment, channels necessary and location of the units, cost for mics, cable, hook-ups, etc. He came up with an approx. cost of at least \$2000. Any change would require a complete reorganization of systems, and getting everything to work together. Adjustment of cables would be very time consuming.

Decision of the IT committee is that the purchase and use of wireless mics is not the best option. The equipment will be moved to the back of the church near the streaming table to be used back there.

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

Puppettude – Liaison: Judy Ludwig

Currently not meeting.

Safety – Liaison: – No Report

Scholarship – Liaison: Val Vega

2025 Scholarship Recipients

The Edmund and Olga Pfeffer Family Memorial

In loving memory of parents, Edmund and Olga Pfeffer, and their daughters and sons by the family

Freyja Harrel

The Ferdinand and Othelia Feffer Memorial Scholarship

In loving memory of Ferdinand and Othelia Feffer by their children

Abby Nardine

The Suzanne Seitz Memorial Scholarship

In loving memory of Suzanne Seitz, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alan Seitz by the family

Abby Nardine

The Arthur, Elsie, and Warren Hinchcliffe Scholarship

In loving memory of Dr. Warren Hinchcliffe by his parents, Arthur and Elsie Hinchcliffe

Ainslee Campbell

The Jene Family Memorial Scholarship

In loving memory of Albert and Lillian Jene by Arthur Jene
Freyja Harrel

The St. Paul's Memorial Scholarship

This memorial began in loving memory of Louise Thiede by her family and continues in loving memory of other loved ones by members and friends of St. Paul's.
Abby Nardine

The Frederick Feffer Memorial Scholarship

In loving memory of Frederick Feffer by Mr. Arthur Feffer
Ainslee Campbell

The Erik Feffer Memorial Scholarship

In loving memory of Erik Feffer by Mr. Arthur Feffer
Abby Nardine

The Jean and Bruno Arcoma Memorial Scholarship

In loving memory of Jean and Bruno Arcoma by the
Arcoma family
Ainslee Campbell

The Charlotte Frost Family Memorial Scholarship

In Memory of Charlotte & Robert Frost by Family and Friends
Emily O'Dell

The Tofield Family Memorial Scholarship

Established by Miss Bernice Tofield in honor of her parents and sister
Freyja Harrel

Saint Paul's Women of the E.L.C.A. Scholarship

Established to support women within St. Paul's Congregation seeking an undergraduate degree from a college or university
Ainslee Campbell

The Schlott Family Scholarship

In memory of Richard and Marge Schlott and their son, Richard Schlott, Jr.
2025 First Year Award Recipient: Abby Nardine
2024 Second Year Award Recipient: Freyja Harrel

Sharing Garden – Liaison: Kathy Olkowski – No Report

Social Concerns– Liaison: Karen Ness – 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

Our Annual Banquet is going to be on Monday evening, June 23rd at Pizza Palace, beginning at 6pm. We will have the (semi-private) room to the left as you go in the main door. Ordering from the menu. Please sign up in the Narthex if you can attend so we can tell them how many to set up for

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, Beth Brower to adjourn at 8:33 pm.

Next meeting will be July 14, 2025, at 7:00pm.

Val Vega, Substitute for Secretary

Council Terms

2025

Judy Ludwig
Kathy Olkowski
Val Vega
Vinni Carey

2026

Dana O’Brien
Vacant
Vacant
Vacant

2027

Diane Boscarino
Beth Brower
Pamela Little
Karen Ness

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