

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

COUNCIL MINUTES

JULY 14, 2025

Council Members Present:

Diane Boscarino, Beth Brower, Pastor Scott Cady, Vinni Carey, Pamela Little, Judy Ludwig, Karen Ness, Dana O'Brien, Kathy Olkowski

Members Absent:

Val Vega

Call to Order

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

Devotions and Prayer –

Pastor opened with prayer.

Celebrations, Appreciation and Thank You

Scholarships were awarded to Freya Harrel and Abby Nardine, Ainsley Campbell. Thanks to Val Vega for taking the June minutes.

Privilege of the Floor

Robin Potwora presented ideas for her 'Growing the Church' proposals. Three ideas, Promotional Video, Church Buddies, and Puppettude.

Church Video – The video would be small clips of activities around the church taken by Dawn Osterman. Dawn will put them together to show on the web page, possibly a loop at the Farmers Market, etc. It would give people an opportunity to see who we are and what we do.

Church Buddies – There are people who go to church alone, especially prospective and new members. They would be assigned a member who would meet them outside the church, sit with them, and introduce them to the Pastor and other members. (We have done this in the past, and called them sponsors)

Puppettude – Ideas to restart the program, Robin suggested contacting area churches and schools for potential candidates, advertise the hiring someone to be the director. Council felt that the director needs to be a member of St. Paul's. Contacting the schools is probably not going to work, we can't advertise having students come to church to participate in our ministry. Council said the director must be a volunteer

who is a member of St. Paul's, and we don't have the money to hire anyone. She should start with looking for a new director from our members.

Robin suggested putting a sign (billboard) on the church property. There was much discussion about placing additional signs on the church property. We are at our limit of signs, and she could look into it quietly, and we don't want Torrington Zoning to make us take them down.

Council told Robin to continue to explore these ideas and come back to the church council with specific ideas/plans and names of people interested in volunteering, before moving forward.

Approval of Council Minutes

M/S/P Pamela Little, Vinnie Carey to approve the minutes of June 9, 2025.

Pastor's Report – Scott Cady

Pastoral Acts:

- 1 pastoral email
- 13 pastoral phone calls
- 6 sessions pastoral counseling
- 2 funerals
- 1 wedding

St. Paul's classes, events, activities or meetings

- 5 zoom Bible Studies
- Meeting with a member re: evangelism
- 4 in person Bible Studies
- 1 mid-week choir rehearsal
- 5 choir rehearsals
- 5 regular worship services
- 4 coffee hours
- Christian Ed mtg
- Concert planning mtg
- Funeral planning with family
- Men's Breakfast
- Worship Committee
- 3 Meetings with Robin re: promo video
- Meeting with Diane
- Meeting with engineer/developer
- Short meeting with Pamela re: Portico
- 2 extra rehearsals with Bonnie
- Meeting with Property to update on land sale issue

Other

- Juneteenth Flag raising

- Naugatuck Valley Clergy lectionary study
- 2 vacation days

Discretionary Fund Balance \$158

Reflections: Along with all the normal flow of events here, we have a new project beginning to take shape. Robin Potwora, who will be with us this evening to give us an overview, and Dawn Osterman, are proposing a creative new approach to raising awareness of our parish in the wider community. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of people who visit here for worship, and join the congregation. It will be largely based on a video that can be used in many different ways and settings. Your input will be very helpful in making sure all the important ministries of St. Paul's are represented, and that the presentation reveals the most positive and engaging aspects. Yours in Christ, Pr. Scott Cady

Potluck and Praise attendance has been pretty small; council members were encouraged to attend. Anyone can lead it, very simple. Potluck meal.

Wednesday Bible Study has requested time during the service to stand up and share joys or sorrows at the beginning of the service. Usher will give a wireless mic to person speaking. Will be tried starting in September for a couple of months, and then be reevaluated.

Communion back at the rail, without putting the middle part in. Still use intinction. Starting in September.

Treasurer's Report

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

Trending in the right direction. Income wise we are up about \$17,000.00 from what we budgeted, and our expenses are down by about \$8800.00. The slide that goes up on the TV on Sundays only shows the giving from the offering plates and automatic withdrawals. Does not show income from cell tower, parking lot, etc.

Old Business:

Discuss membership, giving units and how to get the word out. How to get the word out – send a mailing out to everyone listing different kinds of membership and cross reference with our records, do it very gently. Pastor will create a slide listing what a 'voting' member of the church is. Already has been in the newsletter.

Diane has worked with Rachel going over the list of members who have given and communed and are voting members. Pastor suggested putting this list out several weeks in advance so that people know if they are a voting member. Question as to putting out the list for everyone to see, is it a privacy issue?

Committee working relationships- moving forward

Website update –

Continuing resolutions – they will be archived for historical purposes. Will not be making any new ones.

Land purchase- gave permission to Alan Borghesi to have someone walk and review land. We have talked to an appraiser, talked to Alan Borghesi, drawings were redone, initial one came too close to the church. Property Committee is working closely with this.

Pew in fellowship hall removed from far left front pew to move piano for exit access.

Trees by the St Paul's sign removed. They grew too big and started growing into sign, shrubs by the entrance garden removed because they grew too big and could not be trimmed.

Bathroom fans are now working. Thanks to Ralph and Anthony for repairing the motors and the switches.

New Business:

Finding new council members and officers- 3 opening plus 4 people going off. Pastor will contact a couple of people to see if they are interested.

Congregational meeting about Solar- Need to announce 4 weeks in advance. A packet to present to the congregation would have to be given out to the congregation at least one week before the meeting. There are 3 ways to pay for it, 1. Lease, 2. Finance, 3 Buy outright by taking out a loan. Roof would be \$185,000.00 if insulation has to be replaced \$110,000.00 if insulation does not have to be replaced. Solar cost \$243,000.00 before any reimbursement. Installing solar would completely pay our annual electric bill. All questions will be ironed out before the congregational meeting.

Air Conditioning replacement would be approx. \$18,000.00 but current bid has expired. Some money in the repairs/restoration account about \$11,000.00, so would have to take out of investment money, and look for congregation to replace those funds.

From the Property Committee Report: The initial cost of the solar, including all roofs be replaced, will need to be paid in full by St. Paul's. After installation we would be eligible for a 40% rebate on the solar and roof installation. The roofing company, owned by the solar company, needs to come out and do a cut to determine if the insulation also needs to be replaced. The issue is the rebate goes away if the project isn't started with the panels on site by 12/31/2025. Pamela recommended announcing a congregational meeting now for August to ensure we have enough time to proceed.

She also will look into loan possibilities as the upfront cost will wipe out our non-restricted investments.

Diane is trying to reach out to other companies who would do the work.

Congregational meeting will be Wednesday, August 20, 2025, at 7:00 pm. Company is Evergreen Solar.

Committee Reports

Administration – Liaison: Diane Boscarino

New Members: Joined June 22, 2025: Adam Bisi, John and Pat Homrok, and Robin Potwora

Report:

A member brought to my attention that TAFA, the community group using the garden, has left the old wood from the old, raised beds piled up in front of the garden shed and outside of the garden gates. The member feels that the wood should be taken care of and removed from the areas. I was not sure if that was something property should take care of, or if we should ask the TAFA volunteers to remove it.

For those interested, Howard Kreidwise will be visiting St. Paul’s on Wednesday July 16. Not sure of time. This is his first visit to the Garden of Memories this growing season.

Rachel’s Days off reminder- Friday July 25th (taking this as my birthday holiday)
August 10-16 vacation to return Freyja to school.

Thank you! Rachel

June 2025	Attendees	Last Year	Season
1	91	96	Easter 7
8	76	62	Day of Pentecost
15	96	89	Holy Trinity
22	81	75	Pentecost 2
29	110	85	Pentecost 3

Ursa just left. The fire alarm system is fine. He chalked it up to a fluke. I did ask him about the glue gun, and he said it could have absolutely trip it if it were directly underneath the sensor. They are sensitive to scents. Which brings us to the Hilltop painting. He said we should really have windows and fans going while painting, as

the paint fumes, if built up enough, could set the alarm off. Just a heads up on that one.

He also stated that the law is that the fire doors should be automatic when an alarm goes and the HVAC systems should be hooked up to the alarm system. He realizes we might be grandfathered in, but with the new AC system on the hall and the new fire alarm panels that might be a moot point now. He said we should consider having those things added to our current set up.

He will be writing a report of his findings, and we will get a copy.

Altar Guild – Liaison: Beth Brower - No Report

Christian Education – Liaison:

We are gearing up for VBS, set for August 4th – 8th from 9am – 12pm. Serving One Another Through Love” is the theme. On Monday the Torrington Police will pay us a visit; Tuesday brings the Torrington Fire Department; Wednesday, Trinity Ambulance will be on hand; Thursday brings Kaleb Kesl, a VBS & Hilltop Alumni, and a certified lifeguard, will come speak on water safety (we’re still trying to get a rescue boat to come but so far no luck); and finally on Friday, Friendly Hands will bring their van and tell the children how they help feed hungry neighbors. Each day the children will present our guests with “Survival Kits” that will also include a prayer for safety in their profession. The congregation and children are invited to bring small stuffed animals (new and with tags on!) to give to the police in case they have a case that involves small children.

Each day children will enjoy storytelling, singing, games, crafts, and a “Touch a Truck”-type experience. Thursday, weather permitting, will be water day where our games will focus on a water theme. This is always a favorite for the kids!

We have a Vacation Bible School Prep Day set for Thursday, July 24th from 3-6pm, or for as long as you are able to help. We welcome any and all help. A list of wish list items was published in the summer newsletter and is also posted in the Narthex. Thanks for your generous donations. IT IS STILL NOT TOO LATE TO REGISTER! Invite friends, neighbors, and others who might not have ever had a VBS experience!

Rally Day is set for Sunday, September 21st. A theme and activities will be decided upon at our August meeting. Stay tuned for more details.

First Communion will be celebrated next fall on World Communion Sunday, October 5th for a group of 3-4th graders. A class for parents and their child will take place on Saturday, September 20th.

Congregational Care – Liaison: Kathy Olkowski – No Report

Eucharistic Ministry – Liaison: Pamela Little

Eucharistic Minister	Congregation Member Name	Visited	Date	Took Communion	Comments/Concerns	Request Pastoral Visit
Bonnie Schaff	Gloria Thibault	Yes	6/5, 6/12, 6/19, 6/26	Yes		
Pam Ewing	Fredrick George	Not visited				
	Eleanor Klonoski	Not visited				
Leah Seleman	Renate Reise	Not Reported				
Pamela Little	Helen Winzler	Yes	6/14	Yes		
	Ernie Marquard	No			Audrey rescheduled to July due to heat.	
	Denise Gammon	Not visited				
Need someone to visit	Wallace Gangell	Not visited				
Need someone to visit	James Wolfinger	Not visited				
Cynthia Rose	Midge Rosenbeck	Not Reported				

Evangelism – Liaison: Dana O’Brien – No Report

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

Fellowship – Liaison: Karen Ness

Our Fall Pork dinner has been rescheduled to Saturday, September 20th. It will be a very busy weekend with preparing for the dinner on Friday and Saturday; Farmer’s Market & First Communion classes for children and parents on Saturday morning; dinner on Saturday night, and Rally Day on Sunday! I hope you will support as many of these activities as you are able.

Fundraising – Liaison: Judy Ludwig – No Report

Finance – Liaison: Val Vega – No Report

Garden of Memories – Liaison: Vinni Carey – No Report

Grants – Liaison: Pamela Little – No Report

Hilltop – Liaison: Pamela Little

Registration 2025/2026

Registration was going well however we lost students this summer due to moves, and winning lottery picks in their town's public school's preschool classes.

With changes to the OEC regulations, Hilltop may need to offer ESCT (Early Start Connecticut, formally known as School Readiness) slots in the Hilltop classrooms if we hope to keep our doors open. These changes affect teachers' pay along with raising the income qualifications.

Staff –

With the retirement of two staff members and another moving out of the area, we thought we would need to replace all three. As it stands right now, we are hoping to shift teachers' schedules and only need to hire one new teacher. Barbara is currently looking into this to see if it is feasible.

Grants –

We continue to look for grants that would benefit Hilltop.

Security grants –

We are waiting on the reimbursement check from Homeland Security. We received word that it is being reviewed for processing.

Maintenance

Quality Paint is painting Hilltop this summer. He will start the week of July 14th. Casaundra has completed washing the walls in preparation for the painting and as the room is completed, she will wash rugs and wax the floors.

New toilet paper dispensers are needed in Hilltop. Pamela will work with Rachel to order them and ask for property to install them once they arrive.

Hilltop's next meeting is Thursday, August 14th at 4:30p.m., via zoom. There is no meeting scheduled for July,

IT/Website – Liaison: Judy Ludwig – No Report

Property – Liaison: Diane Boscarino/Pamela Little

Property met on 7/9/2025. The following was discussed:

Solar Project –

The initial cost of the solar, including all roofs be replaced, will need to be paid in full by St. Paul's. After installation we would be eligible for a 40% rebate on the solar and roof installation. The roofing company, owned by the solar company, needs to come out and do a cut to determine if the insulation also needs to be replaced. The issue is the rebate goes away if the project isn't started with the panels on site by 12/31/2025. Pamela recommended announcing a congregational meeting now for August to ensure

we have enough time to proceed. She also will look into loan possibilities as the upfront cost will wipe out our non-restricted investments.

HVAC –

Property doesn't feel the HVAC is critical, however no one really knows how much longer it will function. Bids were received and Barry Cone came in the least expensive at approximately \$18,500. However, this price was only good for 30 days and we have passed that. It was noted by Diane that we could use the Repairs and Restoration saving money for most of this and ask the congregation to donate the balance.

Lights-

Greg reported the John has a lift. We are waiting on the size of three lights. It was recommended that Greg just buy a variety of sizes. We can return the ones that are wrong.

Land Sale –

It was agreed that Diane would reach out to the builder to see if he is still interested. If he is, she will drop off copies of our survey and reach out to an appraiser.

Next Property meeting is August 13th at 7pm

Puppettude – Liaison: Judy Ludwig – No Report

Safety – Liaison:

Scholarship – Liaison: Val Vega – No Report

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

We are on summer break for now, but hopefully women are reading our summer book, *The Mountain Between Us*, by Charles Martin. We will reconvene on the fourth Monday in September, the 22nd, at 6pm for our Fall Kick-Off meeting, pizza and salad, and a book discussion. All women are invited to come and enjoy fellowship with their Sisters in Christ.

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

Worship & Music – Liaison: Pastor Cady

Here is a summary of our recent Worship and Music meeting: In September we will do 3 things –

1. Re-introduce Potluck and Praise monthly mid-week casual meal and devotions. I'd love to have more of you volunteer to lead one as time goes on.
2. On third Sundays, we'll ask people to share either a special blessing they've received lately, or a burden they need prayer for, or some other concern they'd like to share. This will happen as part of the announcements. After a few months, we'll see what the response to this is and either continue it, expand it, or let it lapse.
3. We'll begin inviting people to the rail for communion again. The placement of the microphones and covering of wires now allows us to resume that tradition. We'll still use intinction rather than drinking from the common cup, and the blessing will be done after all have communed. Of course, we'll still take communion to those who need us to.

We also had a conversation about whether we should consider offering Saturday evening services sometimes, not weekly, but maybe monthly. We'll be thinking more about this in terms of details - time, music, overall style of worship, etc.

Other Discussion

Prayer and Dismissal

M/S/P Beth and Karen to adjourn at 9:03

Next meeting will be at 7:00pm.

Judy Ludwig, Congregational 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