

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 9, 2026

Council Members Present:

Diane Boscarino, Beth Brower, Pastor Scott Cady, Vinni Carey, Pamela Little, Judy Ludwig, Dana O'Brien, Robin Potwora, Jeanette Richard, Greg Weingart

Beth Brower on Zoom

Council Members Absent:

Julie Brewster

Others Present:

Peter Becket

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Council President Vinni Carey at 7:00 pm.

Devotions and Prayer –

Pastor read from a sermon by Martin Luther

Celebrations, Appreciation and Thank You

Notes of Thanks from Food Bank and Community Kitchen, and have been posted on bulletin board.

Thanks to everyone who helped with the grinder sale.

Pastor will write a thank you note to John Grunder thanking him for paying for the new piano dollie.

Privilege of the Floor

Peter Becket spoke on behalf of Torrington Toastmasters, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping individuals develop public speaking and leadership skills. The club meets in the evening twice a month and is affiliated with Toastmasters International. A significant portion of member dues is paid directly to Toastmasters International.

Currently, the group meets at the Chamber of Commerce; however, their rental fee is increasing from \$25.00 per meeting to \$150.00 per meeting, creating a financial hardship. The club anticipates needing to raise approximately \$1,000 annually to cover rent and basic supplies.

Torrington Toastmasters is requesting permission to use Fellowship Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month from 7:00–9:00 PM as a new meeting location.

M/S/P Judy Ludwig, Greg Weingart to rent the Fellowship Hall to the Torrington Toastmasters for a fee of \$25.00 per meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month. If the Fellowship Hall is needed for church use, they will meet in the double classroom. To be re-evaluated in 1 year. They will be given a couple of door cards to get into the building.

Approval of Council Minutes

M/S/P Pamela Little, Diane Boscarino to approve the minutes of January 19, 2026. Thanks to Val Vega for taking the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

M/S/P Diane Boscarino, Greg Weingart to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, pending audit.

Sunday envelopes are down due to no service because of weather. However, people made up for it in the following week. Snow removal has been more due to the weather. Utilities are more also because of the cold weather. Investments are going in the right direction.

Pastor's Report – Scott Cady

Pastoral Acts

- 3 hospital visits
- 1 pastoral conversation
- 1 nursing home visit with communion
- 9 pastoral phone calls
- 2 trips to help an ill man get food and meds

St. Paul's classes, meetings, events

- 3 zoom Bible Studies
- 3 in person Bible Studies
- 4 choir rehearsals
- 1 online worship service
- 2 Meetings with Robin re: Evangelism
- 1 Lent planning meeting
- 2 regular worship services
- 2 confirmation classes
- Christian Ed committee mtg
- Meeting with Toastmasters

Other

- Many emails and phone calls re: storm closure

Discretionary Fund Balance \$195

Reflections We're facing so many opportunities already early this year, and a few challenges also. I'm pleased to have this Council to address them. Right now, we cannot move on several because the other parties involved are evaluating their own needs and options. So, the land sale, the discussions with UNICO and TAFA, each of which could make a large difference for us, are on hold for now. The solar project seems to be moving forward. As I write this, I don't know what recommendation Finance has for us around the lease buyout offer. And as of tonight's meeting, we also have a proposal from Toastmasters. Each of these are opportunities. The building is still giving us some challenges: pipes that can freeze, a tower that can leak, lights that are difficult to replace, etc. Again, I feel confident that this year we can address many of them. We also have been seeing some new faces and new ideas for outreach. And FYI, our piano dolly has been installed and is a great improvement for that instrument.

As of right now, I have 2 households seeking official membership - the Peltons and the Bakers. I don't know yet if Mr. Becket from Toastmasters will go that route, but he seemed to like his visit on Sunday. Tony and Irene Nania are very regular and involved beyond worship, so I expect they'll sign on at some point. We could certainly use some new energy in several areas, which I hope we can find in our membership: Altar Guild, Sunday School teachers, Concert committee, IT, Fellowship are a few. I should mention that I've spoken to Paula and June, who do a lot of work with the Fellowship, about considering making one of them a true potluck to relieve the dwindling workforce of all the labor of putting on those large meals. We could still have the raffles, and put out a free will offering basket. With no expenses for food, I bet we'd do ok with income from such an event.

I'm also pleased that the Restream service works well from my home on snowy Sundays. But we might go beyond that and find a sustainable way to create a weekly reflection that is both live and recorded using that same tech. It's a great time for all of you to bring your best ideas about any area of our ministry to the table.

I've only received about 5 Christmas Eve surveys back so far, so it's too soon to gauge the sense of the congregation about that.

Next Worship & Music committee meeting is 6pm, Thursday, Feb 19, followed by the next IT meeting on zoom at 7. Ash Wed is pretty set - I hope many of you will be able to come by, either for individual ashes at 7am or noon, or the 7pm full communion service.

Thank you all for your good work, yours in Christ, Pr. Scott Cady

Pastor has a good feeling going forward, lots of irons in the fire, lots of good things going on.

Pastor got a call from an elderly man in the town, not a member, Pastor and Diane have been helping him out. Is there a way to put him in touch with social services in Torrington? Diane will check with the Town Hall to get information to give to him.

Use of Facilities

Nothing

Updates:

1. Land purchase – Greg has been trying to get ahold of Alan Borghesi.
2. Solar project – Greg spoke with the company, design has been approved by Eversource, they are drawing up how it will be wired, and are in discussion with the Torrington building committee. Need to still get their approval, will probably happen once the weather breaks.
3. TAFA-Autism group – their Prom is happening on Feb. 13. They may not be using our building for their school, looks like they may be going in another direction. Diane will check with her after the prom.
4. Insurance audit – circuit breakers in the electrical room, Diane took pictures and sent them to the company. Burns Electric looked at them, and they said they were fine, there has not been a recall on them. Light in the parking lot will be looked at in the spring. Greg will check into this once the weather gets better. Everything else has been completed.
5. Emergency Line – has been reconfigured and it seems to be working.
6. Cell Tower – waiting for referrals, Greg has called and left voice messages and have not heard back from him. Still have a lot of questions from Finance committee. Would have to have an attorney look at the contract and then have it taken to a congregational vote before anything could happen.

Old Business:

Fire Marshal visit – came and did an inspection, Greg's brother completed the whole list, still need to remove items on top shelf in the storage room.

A pipe burst in the stairwell leading down to the Hilltop door, which triggered the fire alarm system. Diane responded to the church after the alarm went off; however, the Fire Department had already left before she arrived. It was later determined that the Fire Department did not check the affected stairwell due to confusion caused by improper or unclear stairwell labeling. The issue was traced to one of the heaters located at the bottom of the stairwell, which had burst. The stairwell was filled with steam as a result. Barry Cone was contacted and completed the necessary repairs to resolve the problem. Diane also contacted the alarm company. They are

scheduled to come out on President's Day to test the alarm system and create a floor plan to provide to the Fire Department to prevent similar confusion in the future.

New Liaisons – all were assigned, they need to contact committee chairs for updated membership lists

New Business:

Water in Hilltop - small leak over the weekend, and will be repaired tomorrow.

Safety/Security – Vinni will reach out to former members. Vinni feels that the security cameras should be under the umbrella of the Safety/Security committee and moved out of the IT Committee umbrella. The Safety/Property/IT committees would work hand in hand to keep things running. Is there a list of who is trained in CPR and AED?

Fax Machine – working right now, will reassess in future if there continues to be a problem.

Communication/Transparency – Every committee meeting must have a written agenda to guide the meeting. Committee chairs are responsible for preparing the agenda and sending a copy to Vinni prior to the meeting.

Following each meeting, the committee chair will submit the approved minutes to Rachel, who will post them on the bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall. This process promotes transparency, keeps the congregation informed, and encourages collaboration.

All committee meeting dates and times must be placed on the church calendar.

For any displays or collections, the committee responsible is expected to oversee the entire process from start to finish. This includes:

- Coordinating and completing setup
- Providing clear dates for setup and removal
- Removing the display promptly at the designated time
- Ensuring the area is cleaned and returned to its original condition
- Ensuring timely delivery of any collected items to the appropriate recipient or organization

The responsible committee is accountable for full follow-through on all aspects of the display or collection.

Evangelism – Robin: Presenting for approval: Back of the business card. Display EC Poster in Narthex. Contact other committee chairs for the Committee Introduction Initiative, to create posters for them and arrange a pre-service introduction to congregants.

Robin requested an auto-play carousel slider be added to the About page on the web site. EC can supply photos after we have created posters for other committees. This will be addressed with the Web Designer.

IT Network – Rachel's report will be taken to IT for clarification.

Committee Reports

Administration – Liaison: Vinni Carey

Baptized: Lilliana Boscarino

Report:

On February 5, 2026, the piano dolly was delivered and set up in the sanctuary. The mover said it was in the nick of time as one of the original wheels was about to give out! Phew!

Attached is the committee list in its current state, can the liaisons please update the list for year 2026. Please include the day and time that the committee meets (i.e. Third Thursday at 6:30 pm) Thanks!

Currently listed on the thermostat up in the Fellowship Hall, Greg Weingart and Jim Clavette are contacts to adjust heat/AC if texted during off hour use of facilities. Can I get confirmation from property that the two are still able to do this, and maybe add a third person? I try to schedule it in the app ahead of time, but sometimes I forget. Thank you!

This probably is out of my jurisdiction, but I think it is time to bring back the counter rotation. Paula Rosenback and June Seiser have been counting weekly for at least 5 years and deserve a break (especially June Seiser!). In the past we had teams that would rotate. Other counters were Jeannette Richard, Diane Boscarino and Pamela Little. Perhaps it is time to find some volunteers and bring back a rotation. One suggestion would be Karen Marciano.

OOMJ part II, I have a suggestion, I have been thinking about the current I/T situation. My suggestion is that Phillip be the head of Church service/streaming related I/T and Datahal as the office/Hilltop I/T, I have had a working relationship with Datahal for at least 10 years, maybe a few years longer. 2 reasons for this: if I have a crash or a major malfunction at 10 am, Phillip is not available for hours, if I call Datahal, I usually get a call back and assistance within an hour. I also feel as a volunteer, he should not have access to the data that he could easily access, confidential member information and such. As employees/contractors we signed an agreement, and as far as I know this is not done with volunteers. This is nothing against, Phillip, it is just for ease of access. For example, the copier stopped working with all the computers printing capability. The gentleman came from Prism to set them back up and figure out what happened. I could not access Maragaret's computer as there are passwords in place so employees cannot add or

subtract software, which seems unnecessary in this environment. I did not have the password, and the gentleman had to wait for someone to answer me with the password so I could get him access. It should not be hard for an employee to do their job and get things done that need to be done during working hours. As an aside, the Hilltop computer cannot be easily set up to work with the copier as a back-up printer because it is not on the church network any longer. Hilltop was set up with their own network as part of the fiber/ camera system set up. The choices for back up printers are the fax machine (she can connect to that via Wi-Fi) or to email bigger jobs to me to print. Her printer was reset and connect-ability was checked so hopefully she will not have further issues.

Phone system update: Jim Jones reset the emergency line (EL), and it is all set with the new phone numbers. The 3 people listed on are Vinni Carey, Diane Boscarino and Pamela Little. They all have instructions on how to call in to the church to retrieve the message if they miss the call, so they do not need to wait for the EL to call them back. The fax machine was returned to the phone system and is set up to ring to voicemail on the 1st ring and not ring in the office, however, if we want to call out on it, the option is available, it will be labeled line 3. The cost of moving the fax machine into Hilltop's office would be roughly \$200. Mr. Jones would have to run a new line. It works perfectly where it is (Jim tested it with his office) but if it is too inconvenient for Barb, the choice is there to move it. The phone lines are all labeled but Mr. Jones asked if no one touches them as it will affect the emergency line.

Nothing but the numbers

January 2026	Attendees	Last Year	Season
4	110	55 OL	Epiphany
11	90	99	Baptism Of Our Lord
18	33	68	2 Epiphany
25	338 OL*	30	3 Epiphany

OL = online only * 43 views on YouTube and 295 views on Facebook

And since I know it will be asked:

January 2026	YouTube views	Facebook Views
4	58	308
11	14	164
18	50	152
25	43	295

Altar Guild – Liaison: Jeanette - No Report

Concert Committee – Liaison: Pamela Little

Christian Education – Liaison: Pamela Little

Chris Ed met on 2/1/2026. The following was discussed:

1. Sunday school Staffing – there was discussion that we need additional teachers. After discussion it was decided that the classrooms from downstairs would be moved upstairs to classroom fourteen and the nursery. This will go into effect on Sunday, February 8, 2026. Pastor suggested putting a volunteer sheet in the narthex for Sunday School “helpers.” He said it could be set up like the one he is using for the confirmation class.
2. Confirmation - There was discussion on the need for all confirmands to attend service as well as class. All agreed that it starts with the parents. Pastor agreed to send letter to the students and parents explaining the importance of attending.
3. Children’s Church – there were request from parents that children’s church start as soon as church is over. Pamela asked how the committee could help to ensure this happens. We will try to do a better job making sure all children and parents are in church right after service and making sure we are prepared to start. Paula said next month’s topic will be Abraham and Sarah following His commands.
4. Synod visitors – after discussion it was decided that the Sunday School children will make cards for our upcoming guest. Pastor Mark Lingell’s visit will be on the First Sunday in Lent, 2/22, and Bishop Nathan Piphon’s visit on Palm Sunday, 3/29. The children will also sing “Jesus Loves Me” on 2/22 during the Children’s sermon.
5. On Easter Sunday there will be no classes. We will hold our annual egg hunt after service.
6. VBS – is scheduled for 8/3-8/7/2026. The theme will be God’s Creation. The committee was asked to review a link to the ELCA World Hunger VBS Programs for ideas.

Next Meeting is 3/2/2026 at 6:30pm

Congregational Care – Liaison: Robin Potworan – 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	1/8, 1/15, 1/22, 1/29	Yes		
Jeanette Richard	Eleanor Klonoski	Not visited				
	Betty Hilton	Not Visited				

Leah Seleman	<i>Renate Reise</i>	<i>Not Reported</i>				
Pamela Little	<i>Helen Winzler</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>1/12</i>	<i>Yes</i>	We had a nice visit	
	<i>Ernie Marquard</i>	<i>No</i>			Visit was canceled by Audrey due to illness	
	<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: Robin Potwora

- **Donated:** Teleprompter, tripod, microphone, and display for posters.
- **Meetings:** With the Pastor, and email communications with EC members. The next scheduled in-person meeting is scheduled for Feb. 1st.
- **Created:** EC introduction flyer, Business card, survey, and Welcome to Torrington envelope.
- **In development:** YouTube shorts for website and Welcome to Torrington. Cable advertising campaign.
- **Other:** Acquired one welcome wagon sponsor.
- **New Projects:** Committee Introduction Initiative.

Farmer's Market: – Liaison- Julie Brewster

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

Fellowship – Liaison: – Dana O'Brien

We had our “Soup”er Bowl of Caring Grinder, Chili, and Chef Salad Sale on Saturday. The weather was our biggest obstacle, but we managed to get things finished up in time for folks to pick up at noon. Preparations were made on Friday (meat and cheese slicing, chili made, veggies prepped for grinders, etc.) and on Saturday grinders were made, salads assembled, and chili heated and packaged. Some folks brought non-perishable foods and a couple of folks gave \$\$ for Friendly Hands (\$26).

Our spring fellowship dinner will be held on Saturday, April 18th. It will be our popular Chicken Lombardy, rice pilaf, veggie, salad, bread, dessert, etc. affair! Please watch for tickets. For several years now, money raised, minus expenses, is put right back into the church budget to offset deficits.

Finance – Liaison: – Julie Brewster - No Report

Garden of Memories – Liaison: Beth Brower – No Report

Hilltop – Liaison: Pamela Little

Hilltop has not met since the last council meeting on 1/19/2026. Here are a few updates.

Registration for 2026-2027 school year is open, and Barbara has been busy with tours and registrations of returning students

Hilltop will be celebrating Valentine/Friendship Celebrations on Feb 12th & 13th.

Art/Literacy/Auction Family Event is scheduled for Friday, April 24th 5-7pm
Student artwork displayed with Auction items and raffle baskets. Each member of staff will submit an Auction or raffle item.

Bingo Fundraiser, March 6th - Teachers will be asked to share information about the Bingo Fundraiser on Facebook. Each classroom and the Hilltop committee will donate a raffle basket for the event. The Bingo prizes will be with a designer handbag or \$100 gift card. Please join us for a night of fun!

IT/Website – Liaison: Judy Ludwig

IT met on January 29, 2026, on Zoom. Two services were done remotely, due to the weather and on 1/25/26 there were 22 devices signed in. DataHal reworked the network cabinet in the office and installed a new switch, and new wi-fi access points were installed by Phillip. Need to set up a system so that DataHal, Phillip, Hilltop, and whole IT committee can communicate between each other to share information as to what is being done. Always looking for new members. Meeting date was changed to 3rd Thursday of month at 7:00. Next meeting is February 19, 2026.

Property – Liaison: Greg Weingart – No Report

Puppettude – Liaison: Judy Ludwig – No Report

Safety – Liaison: - Vinni Carey - No Report

Scholarship – Liaison: Judy Ludwig – No Report

Social Concerns– Liaison: – Robin Potwora - No Report

Soup Kitchen – Liaison: Jeanette Richard – No Report

Staff Support – Liaison: Vinni Carey – No Report

Stewardship – Liaison: Pastor Cady – No Report

St. Paul's W/ELCA – Liaison: Jeanette Richard

Game Night was sparsely attended due to the cold and wind, I assume.

Painting with June is on Monday, February 23rd at 6:30pm. We will be painting a dandelion, blowing in the wind. A sample picture is on display in the Narthex. Please sign up by February 22nd. June said she has some preparations to do so the day before should be fine for sign-up. (It is advertised to sign up by 2/18). We will meet at a special time, 6:30pm.

Use of Facilities – Liaison: - Diane Boscarino - No Report

Worship & Music – Liaison: Pastor Cady

Next Worship & Music committee meeting is 6pm, Thursday, Feb 19, followed by the next IT meeting on zoom at 7. Ash Wed is pretty set - I hope many of you will be able to come by, either for individual ashes at 7am or noon, or the 7pm full communion service.

Other Discussion

Prayer and Dismissal at 9:05 pm

Next meeting will be March 9, 2026 at 7:00pm.

Judy Ludwig, Congregational Secretary

Council Terms

2026

Dana O'Brien
Robin Potwora
Vacant
Vacant

2027

Diane Boscarino
Beth Brower
Pamela Little
Greg Weingart

2028

Julie Brewster
Vinni Carey
Judy Ludwig
Jeanette Richard

2026 Council meeting dates

1/19/26, 2/9/26, 3/9/26, 4/13/26, 5/11/26, 6/15/26, 7/13/26, 8/10/26, 7/14/26,
10/12/26, 11/9/26, 12/14/26