

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2025

Present: The Rev. Caleb Lee (Rector), Steve Bucci, Tori Cannon, Karen Day, Carol Field (Rector's Warden), Steve Haughey (People's Warden), Anne O'Dell (Clerk), Cecelia Peers, Scott Sheble (Treasurer), Denise Sheehan, Phillip Weiss, Frank Wolf.

Absent: Barbara Ellington Banks, David Tousignant.

Opening Prayer: Fr. Lee called the meeting to order and opened with prayers for absent vestry members and the Collect for Monday in Holy Week.

Approval of March Meeting Minutes: Fr. Lee asked for a motion to approve the March 10, 2025, Vestry Meeting Minutes. The motion was made by Denise Sheehan and seconded by Carol Field. The minutes were unanimously approved as written.

Rector's Report: On March 31, the staff moved to its new offices in the Ormond Center. The new space is bright, efficient, and beneficial to staff cohesion and productivity. Special thanks to Steve Haughey for managing the Ormond Center renovations and orchestrating the move. Additional thanks to Bob Crafts and Bob Belaustegui for their work before, during, and after the move.

Bishop Skirving visited St. Paul's on April 6, the Fifth Sunday in Lent. Prior to the 10:30 service, the bishop joined Fr. Lee in a brief service to dedicate and bless the Ormond Center to its new purpose. The bishop also entertained questions during Adult Formation and was very complimentary of the work that St. Paul's has been doing in the diocese. St. Paul's has four representatives involved in various capacities in the search for the IX Bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina: Fr. Singer, Fr. Lee, Leon Tillery and Allen Dolman. At the 10:30 am service, Bishop Skirving served as celebrant and preacher, confirming 11 individuals and receiving 3 more. Fr. Lee presented Bishop Skirving and his wife Sandy (in absentia) with Agnus Dei awards for their dedication and commitment to the diocese. It was a glorious day, capped off with a wonderful reception.

Attendance on Palm Sunday was 248 at the 10:30 service. Fr. Lee reminded the vestry of the multiple offerings during Holy Week and encouraged attendance. The Rector's Easter letter with an offering envelope will be mailed tomorrow, Tuesday, April 15.

The church offices will be closed on the Monday after Easter. The following weekend, there are two funerals: Saturday, April 26th at 1:00 pm for Mary Bradley, cousin of Melody Lewis, and Sunday, April 27th at 1:00 pm for Michelle Long, daughter of Dianne Stansbury. The Helping Hands Ministry will be organizing receptions for both. This ministry is a blessing to bereaved families and a great example of how St. Paul's lives out Christ's love in service to others.

On Saturday, May 3 at 10:30 am, Bishop Skirving will be returning to St. Paul's to celebrate the ordination of Cheryl Wagoner and James Green into the Sacred Order of Deacons. It is a wonderful opportunity to be able to host this diocesan event; the diocese will provide financial assistance to help cover the associated costs. On Sunday, May 4, Cheryl will serve at her first service as a deacon at St. Paul's. Her first assignment has not yet been announced, but it will not be at St. Paul's. It is possible that Cheryl will return to St. Paul's in the future.

The Parish Picnic is May 4 at Long Leaf Park. Details will be forthcoming, but the picnic will be similar to last year. The Church will provide fried chicken, and attendees will be asked to bring sides, salads or dessert based on the first initial of their last name.

The capital campaign is entering the second year of a three-year drive to raise funds to renew and restore St. Paul's. The move to the Ormond Center marks the first visible achievement of the planned initiative. We are looking for fun and creative strategies to maintain awareness of the capital campaign. Currently, funds raised/pledged are approximately \$400,000 short of the \$2.5 million needed to complete phases 1 and 2. The Design/Development Phase of the project is close to completion; the Construction Phase is next in the sequence. Vestry members are expected to be good ambassadors of knowledge. If asked, the proper response at present is "We don't anticipate construction to begin before Easter 2026."

Fr. Lee also noted that the organ console will need some work in the next year. Brendan Conner is in the process of identifying the specifics; he will submit a written report outlining options and costs.

Pending vestry approval, there are two fundraisers planned for June: The Yard Sale (June 5-7), and a fundraiser for Glory Ridge (June 18). Patsy Perhala has volunteered once again to organize the yard sale. Unsold items will be picked up by Inglesia Cristiana de Wilmington. Isaac McDowell is organizing the Glory Ridge fundraiser, which will take place at Bowstring Burgers & Brewyard, 1002 Princess St., Wilmington. Fr. Lee (on guitar) will be the featured act. The brewery will donate 10% of sales for a specified time period that evening.

Fr. Lee asked for a motion to approve the yard sale and the Glory Ridge fundraiser; the motion was made by Steve Haughey, seconded by Tori Cannon and unanimously approved. A second motion was made to approve the equal distribution of yard sale proceeds between the operating fund and the Rector's Discretionary Fund. Again, the motion was made by Steve Haughey, seconded by Tori Cannon and unanimously approved.

Fr. Lee asked for a motion to go into CLOSED SESSION. The motion was made by Denise Sheehan, seconded by Cecelia Peers, and unanimously approved.

Following adjournment of the CLOSED SESSION, the vestry meeting resumed.

People's Warden Report: The following was submitted in writing prior to the meeting.

Parish Hall and Church

- Met with Coach Thomas on Saturday March 1 to discuss conditions in the gym.
- Grease Trap in the Parish Hall was emptied on Thursday March 6.
- Lancaster Electric on site Thursday March 13 to review replacement bulb installation in the NAVE.
- Flores & Foley repaired the Parish Hall Roof the week of March 17-21.
- Meetings have begun to discuss how the church documents in the Archives Room will be handled and stored during the construction phase of the Capital Campaign.
- A second electrical engineer will be visiting SPEC on Thursday April 10 to review a potential route for the feeder to the elevator, and the service into the building for telephone/telecom services, and the fire alarm system.

Ormond Center

- Salt Rock Builders painted the interior of the OC the week of March 3 and DUKEELECTRIC installed the 20-amp outlet for the TOSHIBA Copier on March 14.
- Some computers were moved to the OC on Saturday March 29.
- The move to the Ormond Center was completed on Monday March 31.

Hospitality/Activities

- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper raised over \$800 towards the Glory Ridge Youth trip in July.
- Ash Wednesday Services on March 5.
- Pretzel Baking for kids/youth with Father Singer on Sunday March 16.
- Children, Youth and Family Bowling at Cardinal Lanes on Sunday March 16. From 2-4 PM
- The Schola Cantorum Choral Evensong on Sunday March 16 was postponed.
- The first meeting of the “Caring for Caregivers” Luncheon held Sunday March 23.
- Youth Spring Retreat held at Topsail Beach March 28-30

Looking Ahead

- Confirmation and Reception Service with Bishop Skirving and the Blessing of the Ormond Center on Sunday April 6.
- Hoggard HS Orchestra Spring Concert on Tuesday April 8 at 7 PM.
- Palm Cross Making Party on Thursday April 10 & 12.
- EYC Rock Climbing at Wilmington Rock Gym on Sunday April 13.
- Holy Week Services the week of April 13-20.
- Children’s Easter Egg Hunt following the 10:30 Service on Easter Sunday April 20.

Steve Haughey was asked about the engineer’s visit on April 10. He indicated the engineer was well prepared and spent approximately 1.5 – 1.75 hours at the church. The primary purpose of the visit was to determine how to power the elevator. While on site, the engineer also did an extensive review of the phone, security, alarm and fire safety systems. When asked about next steps, Steve indicated that all of the various engineers will submit their reports to the architect, who will then incorporate the information into the Design/Development documents for submission and approval by the vestry.

Treasurer’s Report: Scott Sheble presented the Monthly Treasurer’s Report, which compares the proposed annual budget for 2025 to actual month-end figures. For the month February 28, 2025, St. Paul’s reported total income of \$193,955, which is 19.8% of the total annual income budgeted for 2025 (\$979,000). Total expenses for the month ended February 28, 2025, amounted to \$145,911, which is 14.9% of the total annual expenses budgeted for 2025 (\$979,000). Net income as of February 28, 2025, was \$48,044.

Other account balances as of February 28, 2025, were reported as follows:

Wells Fargo Investments (Endowment Fund)	\$1,011,071
First Carolina Reserves	\$97,043
Wells Fargo Special Gifts	\$91,823

Scott also reviewed the status of the capital campaign as of February 28, 2025:

Total Pledges (2024-2027)	\$1,460,323
Total Gifts	571,180
Total Pledges & Gifts	<hr/> \$2,031,503
\$2.5M	81%

We have raised approximately 81% of the \$2.5 million needed for renovations, excluding the parish hall. Not all pledge commitments for 2024 have been fulfilled: a total of \$687,421 was pledged, out of which \$623,704 has been paid. After submitting the monthly report, a new pledge gift of \$44,000 was received and an adjustment of -\$25,000 will also be made to 2024 Pledge Payments Due to account for a life insurance policy assigned to St. Paul's that is payable on death of policy holder.

With no further discussion, the Monthly Treasurer's Report was unanimously accepted.

Committee Reports

Membership: The Membership Committee is co-chaired by Karen Day and Lisa Sanders-Park, working closely with Head Usher and Head Greeter. We welcome newcomers and guide them through the process to membership. As well, Membership plans events to help old-timers forge new connections and to embrace newcomers into the church family.

Transfers in since January 1, 2025: 8

Prospects

- Definition: Newcomers or visitors who have signed guest book or filled out a visitor card
- # of Current Prospects: 64
- # of Active Prospects: 16 (attend regularly and some even serve on committees)

Events

- Monthly dinner groups: 34 signed up, first dinners will be May 18 and the same 8-12 people will meet every month
- Occasional pop-up dinners: 61 signed up to meet 3-6 times a year, with different people each time; first dinner is April 27 and 21 have confirmed for this one
- Newcomers' Social – date to be determined

Capital Campaign/Building Update: see Rector's Report for update.

Stewardship: Nothing significant to report.

Community Ministries:

- Finalized Budget printed and to be distributed to the committee.
- St. Paul's participated in the Foster Pantry Easter Basket project again this year with Cecelia Peers and Michael Jonik doing a fantastic job heading things up and rallying the parish. In usual St. Paul's fashion 60 beautiful baskets were made, brought to the church and delivered to the Harrelson Center, Michael was told that not only had we done more baskets than any other church but also ours were the nicest ones they received!
- Contacted by 2Share about possible participation in a fundraising project. Cecelia Peers is on their Board and will keep us in the loop.

Human Resources: The HR Committee had an email quarterly meeting to review progress on the recent hiring. The Financial Manager and Parish Administrator positions both began in February 2025, the 10th and 20th.

The Financial Manager's 45-day review was held on March 26, 2025. The review was very positive on both employee and employer sides, both indicating that the work is interesting and intense and that the continued support of the recently retired staff helps significantly. Patience was requested as the learning process continues.

The Administrator position 45-day review was completed April 9, 2025. The review was positive with timeliness and the learning curve of the bulletin as the focal points.

The next reviews for both recent hires will be at the 90-day point.

Children, Youth & Family:

April events include:

- A Spring Retreat at Topsail Island was held on the weekend of March 28th
- A trip to Wilmington Rock Gym on April 13th
- EYC students will be helping hide Easter eggs for the Easter Hunt
- Nerf Gun Fun at St. Paul's on April 27th

Looking ahead:

- A Youth Week is being planned for this summer (date TBD). Different activities will be planned for each day that week.
- The annual Glory Ridge Mission Trip is being held July 20th through July 25th.

Volunteers to provide dinner on Sunday evenings for the EYC youth would be very appreciated.

There is a "Sign up genius" link that Isaac has created, if you are interested.

Updates on the Children's programs will be included in future reports.

New Business:

Convention Delegates: Given the need to name delegates to the 142nd Annual Diocesan Convention BEFORE the announcement of candidates for Bishop, Fr. Lee asked for a motion to approve the following four delegates from St. Paul's: Carol Field, Anne O'Dell, Scott Sheble, and Leon Tillery. Fr. Lee also asked for a motion to allow him to choose two alternate delegates. The motions were made by Carol Field, seconded by Denise Sheehan and unanimously approved.

Fr. Lee also asked for a motion to request from the Endowment Board a preapproved disbursement of \$40,000 from the Investment Account. The funds are to be used as follows:

- \$25,000 for salary support for the Associate for Youth & Parish Life
- \$15,000 for the Capital Campaign

Upon withdrawal, the funds are to be placed in the Disbursement Account per the Endowment Board's Policies & Procedures and drawn upon at the appropriate time.

The motion was made by Karen Day, seconded by Scott Sheble and unanimously approved.

Old Business:

At its next quarterly meeting in May, the Endowment Board plans to amend its Policies & Procedures to more clearly allow for the use of funds to support the development and advancement of programs that cultivate, solicit, and steward donors of philanthropic gifts. Once approved by the Endowment Board, the changes to the Policies & Procedures will need vestry approval. The Endowment Board will then be able to consider the vestry's request for \$1000 to cover the cost of shared expenses for the 1858 Circle Choral Evensong.

With no additional business before the vestry, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne O'Dell, Clerk of the Vestry