

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Vestry Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2025

PRESENT: The Rev. Caleb Lee (Rector), Barbara Ellington Banks, Steve Bucci, Tori Cannon, Karen Day, Mait DuBois, Carol Field (Rector's Warden), Steve Haughey (People's Warden), Anne O'Dell (Clerk), Cecelia Peers, Scott Sheble (Treasurer), Denise Sheehan, David Tousignant

ABSENT: Frank Wolf

OPENING PRAYER: Fr. Lee called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and offered two prayers: one by Thomas Merton and the second, a prayer for guidance, from the Book of Common Prayer.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER & SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES: A motion was introduced by Denise Sheehan and seconded by Barbara Banks to approve two sets of vestry meeting minutes: one from the monthly meeting on October 13, 2025, and the second from the special meeting on October 26, 2025. The motion passed unanimously, and both sets of minutes were approved as written.

RECTOR'S REPORT: Worship has been amazing. Attendance was 250 on All Saints' Sunday and 192 last Sunday (Nov 9). All Saints' Weekend was particularly notable with Rise Against Hunger on Saturday morning, the funeral mass for Mark Tedesco on Saturday afternoon, and the Vierge Messe solennelle on Sunday morning. Over 80 people participated in Rise Against Hunger, successfully packing over 12,500 meals. Thanks to Steve Bucci for coordinating this annual event. Mark Tedesco's funeral was well attended, and a meaningful send-off for a long-time member of St. Paul's. Sunday's Vierge Messe solennelle was beautiful and perfectly suited to this year's All Saints celebration. Many thanks to Brendan Conner and the choir for their hard work in preparing this music and presenting it within the context of the service as originally intended.

Fr. Lee spent the last week of October, touring the diocese and attending "Meet & Greets" as a candidate on the slate for bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina. The Diocesan Convention is this Friday and Saturday, November 14 & 15 in Goldsboro, NC. The election for bishop will be Saturday morning. Fr. Lee will be present, but he will not be on the convention floor during the election as set forth in the special orders of business for the day. On Saturday afternoon a brief announcement will be sent out via email and social media sharing the election results with the congregation. The Rector's Warden will speak from the lectern on Sunday morning and will deliver a brief, upbeat message regardless of the results. Fr. Lee will preach on Sunday morning.

In this Thursday's E-news, we plan to announce the decision to hire Chambliss & Rabil as the contractor for St. Paul's renovation project. The intention is to demonstrate that St. Paul's is moving forward with business as usual regardless of the outcome of the bishop's election. News of the \$250,000 Lehto Grant supporting the capital campaign will be shared after stewardship season and once more precise project cost estimates are available.

Parish Life approached Fr. Lee with a request to sell or donate several racks of flutes and wine glasses that are taking up storage space and have not been used in recent memory. After a brief discussion, there was no objection to deaccessioning the glasses. No official vote is required. The plan is to approach caterers and/or rental companies to determine their interest in purchasing the glasses.

The clerk circulated thank you notes for Layne Dupree and Teresa Singer; vestry members were asked to sign them. Both women were original members of the Long-Range Planning Committee and served for 6 years. We are grateful for their commitment to advancing, from concept to reality, the plans to renew and restore St. Paul's. As noted in last month's meeting minutes, the LRPC was disbanded, and the Construction Committee now serves as the vestry's primary point of contact for St. Paul's renovation project.

As reported last month, Fr. Lee met with Enrique Estrada of the United Latin American Pentecostal Church. IPUL is looking to plant a new church in Wilmington and was referred to St. Paul's by the rector of Holy Comforter Episcopal Church in Burlington, NC. We have reached an agreement with IPUL, and they will begin using our Chapel and Fr. Lee's old office on Monday evenings from 4-7 pm for worship, formation, and fellowship. Isaac McDowell will serve as the group's liaison and will be on-site Monday evenings.

The Wilmington Area Youth (WAY) retreat took place last weekend at Trinity Center. Isaac McDowell, along with other local youth leaders, successfully recruited 30 participants for the event. The idea for a youth retreat was born when we made the decision to cancel St. Paul's Parish Retreat originally scheduled for Labor Day weekend. Instead of losing our deposit, we found an alternative weekend at Trinity Center, and the WAY retreat began to take shape. The WAY program continues to expand, thanks in large part to the strong collaboration among local youth leaders.

The Caretakers Day planned for November 8 was cancelled due to low interest. As an alternative, Fr. Lee took the small group who signed up for the event to lunch on November 8. Fr. Michael Singer, the primary organizer of Caretakers' Day, was unable to attend the gathering due to illness. Please pray for Michael as he continues to recover.

Fr. Lee took a moment to compliment his staff and acknowledge the hard work and dedication that each of them brings to the job every day. He also shared news that Beth Richards will be stepping away from the flower guild for an extended period while she recovers from a medical emergency. Michele Ryan has volunteered to step in and is receiving additional support from other flower guild members.

Fr. Lee shared the following update: James Green will be ordained on Sunday, November 23 at 7:00 pm at St. John's Church in Wilmington. There will be a reception following the service. St. Paul's has no direct planning in the ordination, but the congregation is invited to attend and support James. His first Eucharist will be at St. Paul's on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and he will be the celebrant on the first Sunday of Advent.

Alice Calder's funeral will take place on Saturday, November 22, which is also the day St. Mark's will host its annual community Thanksgiving meal. On Sunday, November 23, following the 10:30 service, our annual Fall Potluck will be held in the parish hall with fried chicken and barbecue provided; parishioners are invited to bring side dishes and desserts. The Crafters Silent Auction begins that same day and continues through the first Sunday of Advent.

On November 30, the first Sunday of Advent, intergenerational Advent wreath making will replace Sunday school, and later that evening at 5:30 pm, Advent Lessons & Carols will be presented. The

Angel Tree will be set up on November 30, with gifts scheduled for pickup on December 14. Please keep watch for upcoming Advent activities and participate as you are able.

PEOPLE'S WARDEN REPORT-OCTOBER 2025 (*Submitted in writing prior to the meeting.*)

PARISH HALL & CHURCH

- SILKWOOD completed the touch-up work on the windows of the Parish Hall on Thursday October 2.
- Handicap decals were repainted in the parking lot. Handicap direction signs will be installed in November.
- New Caution tape was applied to the kitchen steps.
- Bottomland Services (new Landscaper) started work the week of October 7.
- Southeastern HVAC re-balanced Unit 10 on Tuesday October 21.
- Replacement freezer delivered and installed on Tuesday October 28.
- Due to lack of turnout, Caregivers Luncheon has been cancelled for November 8.
- The PA System has been upgraded during the month. It will be adjusted/balanced over the next few weeks.
- Work continues on the phone system.
- A soap dispenser was installed in the South Wing lower Bathroom.

ORMOND CENTER

- The bottom of the door to the Finance Office was sanded for easier opening on Thursday October 23.

HOSPITALITY/ACTIVITIES

- Silent movie with Dorothy Papadakos on organ October 10 at 7 PM.

GRANT UPDATE

- Tom Warren inspected the Market Street Doors on Tuesday October 28. A grant decision will be reached and communicated to SPEC in early December.

LOOKING AHEAD

- SERVIRE CHORUS on Saturday November 15 at 7 PM.
- In-Gathering Sunday on November 16.
- Advent Lessons & Carols on Sunday November 30 at 5:30 PM.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Scott Sheble presented the Monthly Treasurer's Report, which compares the proposed annual budget for 2025 to actual year-to-date figures.

For the ten months ending October 31, 2025, St. Paul's reported total income of \$765,668, which is 78.2% of the total annual income budgeted for 2025 (\$979,000). Total expenses for the same ten months amounted to \$748,109, which is 76.4% of the total annual expenses budgeted for 2025 (\$979,000). Net income as of October 31, 2025, was \$17,559.

Other account balances as of October 31, 2025, were reported as follows:

Wells Fargo Investments (Endowment Fund)	\$1,035,991
First Carolina Reserves	\$100,149
Wells Fargo Special Gifts	\$85,413

Scott also reviewed the status of the capital campaign as of October 31, 2025:

Total Pledges (2024-2027+)	\$1,684,462
Total Gifts	\$636,307
Total Pledges & Gifts	\$2,320,769
\$2.5M	93%

We have raised approximately 93% of the \$2.5 million needed for Phase 1 & Phase 2 renovations. The outstanding pledge payments were as follows: \$1,848 for 2024; \$144,235 for 2025; \$404,174 for 2026; and \$16,667 for 2027+. Efforts to collect outstanding pledges from 2024 continue; pledges for 2025 are being paid as anticipated.

Since its inception in 2023 through October 31, 2025, the capital campaign has collected gifts, pledges and interest totaling \$1,666,941; total expenses amount to \$185,864 for net income of \$1,481,078. Recent donations to the capital campaign in memory of Nancy Bobo and Mark Tedesco amounted to approximately \$10,000.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS: *(submitted in writing prior to the meeting)*

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: 19

PROSPECTS

- Definition: Newcomers or visitors who have signed guest book or filled out a visitor card
- # of Current Prospects: 55, needs to be culled again based on usher/greeter input about attendance
- # of Active Prospects: 16 (attend regularly and some even serve on committees)

EVENTS

- Monthly dinner groups: 40 signed up and assigned to 4 dinner groups. The season kicked off at the Erways' on May 18. The four dinner groups have leaders and have met in June, July, and August. Next dinner dates have been set. These groups run themselves with each group deciding date and who hosts next at conclusion of each dinner.
- Occasional pop-up dinners: First pop-up dinners were held April 27 in three homes (Karen Day, Lynda and Ron Miller, Brian and Lisa Sanders-Park). We did not get enough hosts for the August 17 dinners to be held in homes, so instead 26 people met in four restaurants: Covey, Henry's, Caprice, and Cape Fear Seafood/Leland.
- Newcomers' Social: October got away from us and now we are in holiday season; need to plan a social in early March.

Capital Campaign/Building Update: Mona Clites reported the following: All 3 of the contractors who were interviewed were contacted and Chambliss & Rabil (CR) are appreciative and excited to have the job. We had a meeting November 4 with representatives from CR, the Construction Committee members and Gray to talk through the project and the timeline. Gray/engineers and CR/subcontractors will be working together over the next several weeks to make sure the contractors/subs understand the project and then CR will put together a cost estimate to be given to the committee/Gray December 2. The same group will meet again on December 3 to discuss the

cost estimate. It is hoped that it will be within our budget and then we can bring that information to the Vestry for their December meeting. If it is out of budget, then we will have information to share with the Vestry to determine direction. Either way, we should have our information together by December 4 to distribute to the Vestry. After that time, there will be a several month process of refining the drawings, finalizing the costs, signing a contract with CR for the actual work, and defining a timeline for construction.

Stewardship:

In-gathering Sunday is November 16.

As of the end of business today, we have received 81 pledges to the 2026 stewardship campaign totaling \$396,770, with 12 new donors accounting for \$19,300. Last year at this time, we reported 74 pledges totaling \$341,000. We are up 16% in a year-over-year comparison of dollars pledged, with 10% more donors.

Thank-you notes will be sent to pledgers from vestry members again this year. Note cards have been ordered and will be handed out at the December vestry meeting. The thank-you note from the stewardship team is being drafted and will be sent by Karen Day.

Community Ministries: October

1. Contributed a check for \$750.00 to Snipes to purchase a series of books for participation in a book rodeo competition with other schools.
2. Processed a check for \$5300.00 for Rise Against Hunger food payment.
3. St. Paul's, with 80+ Parishioners participating, conducted a packing event for Rise Against Hunger. Approximately 12,500 meals were packed in about 1 hour and forty minutes!
4. Contacted Nourish NC and arranged for St. Paul's to participate in a food packing event on December 3rd at 5:00pm.

Human Resources: Nothing significant to report.

Children, Youth & Family:

November events include:

- November 2nd: Be the Light! An Evening of Gratitude. In partnership with the Harrelson Center, the youth group will pack Baskets for Family Promise and Holiday Bag Packing for Coastal Buds. Other local youth groups will also be involved. Donations are requested.
- November 7th-9th: Wilmington Area Youth Fall Retreat at Trinity Center--an event that will include St. James, St. Andrews on the Sound, Church of the Servant and Christ Church in Elizabeth City
- November 16th: EYC Outing
- November 23rd: EYC attend James Green's ordination at St. John's.

2026:

- Winter Ski Trip is scheduled for January 22nd-25th at Winterplace Ski Resort in West Virginia. Total cost is \$590.00 per person for transportation, cabins, lift tickets, rentals and meals.

Ongoing Events:

- Coffee & Conversations continues on Sundays from 9:30-10:15am in the Gym Conference Room for students in grades 6-12. This is an opportunity to study God's word and to explore ways to apply it to our lives.
- Children's Sunday School from 9:30-10:15am in the Children's Wing.

- “Touch & See” is offered to Preschool and Kindergarten children.
- “Weaving God’s Promises” is available to students in 1st through 5th grades.
- Children’s Choir is at 11:45am. This choir is open to children of all ages and experiences.

Nominating Committee Report: The four outgoing vestry members (Carol Field, Steve Haughey, Denise Sheehan, and David Tousignant) continue the work of finding qualified and interested parishioners to fill the positions they will vacate in January 2026. The committee has met several times and expects to finalize a slate of nominees within the appropriate time frame. If anyone has suggestions for vestry nominees, please contact Carol Field.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

With no additional business before the vestry, the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne O’Dell,
Clerk of the Vestry