

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

Date: January 18, 2026

Time: 9:02 AM

Prepared by: S. Schnare

Attending:

Marshall Robar, Acting Chair
Sandra Schnare

Andre Brideau
Lucille Wentzell

Karen Field
David Zwicker

Ann Joudrey

Regrets:

Peter Oickle

Karen Corkum

1. Call to Order / Opening Prayer

- M. Robar called the meeting to order and S. Schnare offered the opening prayer.

2. Approval of Agenda

- **Moved** by S. Schnare, seconded by A. Joudrey, to approve the agenda as amended.
Decision: *Carried unanimously.*

3. Approval of Minutes

- **Moved** by S. Schnare, seconded by L. Wentzell, to approve the minutes of December 14, 2025 as amended. **Decision:** *Carried unanimously.*

4. Financial Report December 2025

- December general fund surplus: + **\$5,854**
- 2025 general fund deficit (Jan.1 – Dec.31): - **\$94**
- Accumulated general fund surplus: + **\$57,457**

Income Statement Highlights:

- General fund offerings were down \$1,303 from December 2024. \$1,010 relates to memorials. Having no angel tree may have been the reason for fewer memorials.
- Room rentals: \$10,386. \$9,300 of that relates to SSODA. \$726 is Rogers Communications.
- Pastor Salary: \$3,780 relates to South Shore Lutheran Shared Ministry. St. Paul's is paying for 6 services x \$630/service. Service rate increasing to \$661 effective January 1, 2026. Monthly cost to St. Paul's will increase by \$186.
- Repairs and maintenance: \$1,413
 - \$481 CKG Elevator Ltd. for elevator inspection
 - \$299 Province of Nova Scotia elevator license fee
 - \$50 Town of Bridgewater development fee for outside electronic sign
 - \$358 Amazon electronic sign
 - \$225 Cumings Fire & Safety fire extinguisher inspection fee

- Power \$3,549 actual usage for April 23 – December 22, 2025. Actual costs up \$2,300 from 2024. This is mostly attributed to SSODA now operating laundry machines
- Employee appreciation gifts: \$500. Christmas gifts for staff, pastors and Sarah VanderWal
- Synod Benevolence double normal amount due to St. Paul's missing a payment during mail stoppage. This was discovered at year-end.
- Miscellaneous: \$92 for van rental for Choir concert in Halifax
- Crisis fund: \$104 for congregational member support due to family illness
- Salvation Army: \$366 was 50% of Christmas envelopes
- Christmas families: \$1,297. \$860 of cost offset by donations. Remaining \$437 covered from general funds.
- Fellowship: \$49 for coffee pods
- Worship supplies: \$208
 - \$51 Judy Wile wreath bows
 - \$46 NSLC communion wine
 - \$37 Amazon flameless candles
 - \$73 Broughton's communion cups

Moved by A. Brideau, seconded by D. Zwicker, to approve the financial reports for December 2025. **Decision:** *Carried unanimously.*

5. Correspondence

- Letter of concern, regarding SSODA from B. Carver. The council discussed the concerns brought forward by B. Carver. M. Robar to respond to B. Carver with a plan of action.
- A. Joudrey reported that the Interchurch Council has now been dispersed.

6. South Shore Lutheran Shared Ministry (SSLSM)

- K. Field, reporting on behalf of the SSLSM Committee, advised that two surveys have been developed: one for council members and one for congregation members. She encouraged all council members to complete the survey. It was also noted that the Bishop's Table will take place on February 14, from 2:00–4:00 p.m., at St. John's Lutheran Church, Mahone Bay. All are welcome to attend and greet Bishop Carla Blakley, Pastor Adam Snook, and Pastor Katherine Gohm. In closing, she noted that this year's Bishop's Retreat will be held in Halifax.

7. Old Business

- Use of Church by Non-Members (Deferred)
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8. Ministry 'Team/Committee' Reports

8a. Property Team

M. Robar reported that the new electronic sign is up and running. L. Wentzell gave some suggestions regarding the text on the new sign noting that service times and special events should be a priority.

It was determined that a 'clean the attic' day should be scheduled, and a dumpster should be rented for item disposal. S. Schnare to investigate cost of a dumpster.

M. Robar also reported on the repair of the large fridge in the upstairs kitchen, as well as the need for a new stove. He noted that the replacement cost, of a smooth top stove with an Air Fryer function, would be approximately \$4000.

Moved by A. Brideau seconded by L. Wentzell, to approve the purchase of a new stove, not to exceed \$5000. **Decision:** *Carried unanimously.*

8b. Worship Ministry

K. Field reported that the Worship Team has requested that those responsible for livestreaming services focus on a window or another static image during Communion, rather than the screen or the congregation. When there is a reader, the camera should focus on the reader, and during choir anthems, on the choir. She also noted that a note of thanks was sent to John Veinot for the donation of Christmas trees, and a general thank-you was included in the weekly bulletin recognizing all who assisted with the Christmas Eve service.

She further advised that the Week of Prayer begins today, with a service at Holy Trinity; all remaining services will be hosted at the Salvation Army, concluding next Saturday with a breakfast service at the Baptist Church. Black History Month will be acknowledged and incorporated into February services. Zion in Lunenburg will be hosting the Lenten Café, on Wednesdays from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. The Ash Wednesday service will be hosted here at St. Paul's at 4:00 p.m. on February 18. Palm Sunday will be held in Mahone Bay on the fifth Sunday in March, and Maundy Thursday will take place here at St. Paul's at 7:00 p.m. on April 2.

8c. Stewardship Team

- A. Joudrey reported that L. Wentzel will be taking over as Stewardship Team Chair.

8d. Music Team

- D. Zwicker reported that we have changed the liturgy to setting three.

8e. HR Ministry

- No report.

8f. Esthetics Committee

- L. Wentzell noted that the team will be meeting in the days ahead to discuss the downstairs kitchenette.

8g. Connections Committee

- L. Wentzell the Connections Team met this week to plan upcoming outreach activities. Nursing home visits, usually held before Christmas, were postponed this year and are now planned for the second week after Easter at Ryan Hall, Pineview Apartments, and Shoreham Village. Suzanne Jodrey will provide guitar accompaniment, and spring greeting cards will be delivered.

The team also proposed an outreach project with Verge House, which supports young people aged 18–21 and is located next to the elementary school. After exploring other community needs, Verge House was identified as benefiting from pantry and hygiene supplies. A collection is proposed, pending Council approval, to run until February 15, after which donations would be delivered. A sign-up sheet and project summary are available.

Council approval was requested to proceed.

Moved by L. Wentzell seconded by S. Schnare, that council approve the Verge House outreach project. **Decision:** *Carried unanimously.*

9. New Business

9a. AGM

- Due to scheduling conflicts and the uncertainty of the weather, it was decided that the AGM will be held on March 8, following the 9:00 a.m. service.
- S. Schnare to construct an email for G. Tracey to send to the congregation regarding the nomination of additional members to council.

9b. Council Email

- S. Schnare reported that a Church Council email account has been created for all Council-related correspondence. P. Oickle, A. Brideau, M. Robar, S. Schnare, and G. Tracey have access to the account. stpaulslutheranchurchcouncil@gmail.com

9c. 2026 Budget

- Brideau presented the proposed 2026 budget, projecting a 5% revenue decline, with a notable decrease in general fund offerings (approximately \$25,000 from 2024–2025). Rental revenue was projected at \$123,000, with total revenues of approximately \$200,000. Previously approved expense increases, including the updated SSLSM service fee, were incorporated. Property and capital items included \$5,000 for a replacement kitchen stove, approximately \$10,000 for a downstairs kitchenette (old library) to support fellowship, and discussion of a potential \$10,000

sanctuary door replacement, possibly funded through GIC interest. Council approved an increase to the Treasurer honorarium to \$7,900 for 2026.

Moved by A. Brideau, seconded by S. Schnare, that Council approve the 2026 budget as amended. **Decision:** *Carried unanimously.*

Easter special offerings will be directed to Friends of Creation/CLWR.

10. Closing Prayer and Adjournment:

- A. Brideau ended the meeting with a prayer; meeting adjourned at 10:25 A.M.