Allegheny Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
916 Hickory Street, 1st Fl., Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
814-942-1042

MISSION: *Inviting people to love each other.*
VISION: *All creation living in harmony with Christ.*

SYNOD COUNCIL Meeting Minutes August 8, 2026, at Sequanota Conference Center and Camp

1. The meeting was called to order by VP Ann Ferry at 9:10 am.
2. Devotions – Responsive Prayer, Commemoration of Dominic, renewer of the church
    A. Psalm 85:8-13; Matthew 16:1-4
3. Introductions – name, congregation, office
4. **Consent Agenda:** *with one motion, all items can be adopted/approved; or, any item can be removed from the consent agenda for further conversation and consideration.*
    A. To adopt the August 8, 2026 agenda.
    B. To approve the minutes of the May 16, 2026 meeting.
    C. To affirm the retirement of The Rev. Ronald Miller, effective July 1, 2026.
    D. To affirm the retirement of The Rev. Ruth Jensen, effective August 1, 2026
    E. ***SC26.08.01*** **– Motion to adopt and approve the Consent Agenda, motion made by Ken Weschler, seconded by Mark Hoover, motion carried.**
5. **Mission Conversation**
    A. How do we better implement our Mission and Vision throughout the Synod? What are some goals that we would like to see as outcroppings of our Mission and Vision statements?
        1.) Worship gathering on the synod wide scale or by conferences
        2.) Inviting all ages and finding times that work for folks
        3.) Not ostracizing – taking phones during class or activity may not come across as welcoming or appreciated
        4.) How do we learn about who our neighbors are and accept them?
        5.) The mission and vision statements are countercultural – welcoming and inviting is not a standard of expectation
            a) How do we provide training for our people to be more hospitable?
                a. Role play
        6.) We think we are welcoming, but are we really? What is the reality – do we build relationships; how do we better build relationship?
        7.) Encourage self-awareness of the congregation – what are the issues/challenges/etc. (restrooms, order of worship, hymnal, etc.)
        8.) Have a group visit other congregations to experience being out of the "know" and take notes of what could be applied to our own setting.
        9.) Friendly is not necessarily welcoming and we may not even come across as friendly.
    B. For next meeting: actual examples of how to better live into our mission and vision
        1.) Table questions for potlucks, gatherings, etc.
6. **Reports of Staff and Officers**
    A. Bishop:
        1.) Congregational Worship and Visits—St. Paul's, Pine Grove Mills; Living Waters Parish, Laurel Highlands; Trinity Sidman 125 Anniversary Worship and Celebration; Sequanota Staff Meeting and Installation Worship; Penny Koontz Ordination; Trinity, State College 60 Anniversary and Retirement Worship and Celebration; Tend Festival at Sequanota (June 25-28); Christy Harford Installation; Ice Cream Fellowship at St.

Mark, Snydertown; Rev. Ruth Jensen Retirement Worship and Celebration at Trinity Somerset; First, Portage; Rev. Sharon Erb Funeral; Horner, Stoystown; VBS at First, Johnstown

2.) Meetings—Synod Council; KELC Check-in; KELC Delegation Visit (May 20-27); Breathing in Christ Event; Staff Meeting; DEM Check-in (x3); Deans Meeting (x2); Executive Committee; Assembly Worship Committee; Transition Check-in (x7); FCTE Planning; Assembly Committee (x2); Formation Check-in (x3); VPoll Training; Synod Assembly; Synod Endowment Committee; ALSM Executive Committee; Bishops Formation (June 28 – July 1); GTIITM Bishops; Communications Check-in; GTIITM Steering Committee; ALSM Golf Outing; COB CCL Committee; ALSM Board; GTIITM Director Check-in; KELC Debrief; Class of 2026 Prayer; Staff Meeting; Synod Investment Committee

3.) Visits—In-person: 11 Rostered/9 Lay; Remote: 8 Rostered/7 Lay

4.) *Vacation*: Aug 31—Sep 6; Oct 15-24

5.) Oral Report

a) Lot of unexpected deaths – rostered leaders and active lay leaders → grieving, feeling the team is being decimated

b) Will find time for Spiritual Direction – it is now a priority

c) How much is this ministry and how much is work to prop-up/build-up the institution?

d) There have been many difficult conversations

e) Also joys – told story of how the opportunity to invite, share about ministry and build relationship

f) The 3 foci

a. Listening

b. Team Building

c. Fundamental work will take time, find time for teaching and catechetical opportunities (TEND is a helpful tool)

B. Assistant to the Bishop for Formation – Rev. Deacon Alicia Anderson

1.) Candidacy

a) Psychological Evaluator for Candidacy→ We have entered into a relationship with a new clinician who will work with our candidates for rostered ministry providing Psychological Evaluations. Dr. Debra Doubrava is a licensed professional counselor based in York, PA. Bishop Kevin and I each met with her last week when she visited our area. She is very professional and seems quite approachable and committed to the work of preparing candidates for rostered ministry as well as providing the Candidacy Committee helpful and relevant information for the candidacy process. I believe our candidates have every reason to enjoy their time with her. Typically, candidates will travel to her York, PA office for their initial meeting and evaluation testing with Dr. Doubrava. Their follow-up meetings will be conducted on Zoom.

2.) Candidates

a) In process

a. Jennifer Bobolsky - Approved for Ordination in May

b. Josh Spangler – on Internship – will finish in 31 August

c. Claudia Plows – on Internship – will finish 31 December

d. Ryan Custead – endorsed and taking classes at United Lutheran Seminary

e. Anne Whitney – endorsed and taking classes at Wartburg Theological Seminary

b) Applicants awaiting entrance

a. Cindy Doherty – has begun classes at United Lutheran Seminary

b. Rebecca Rabb – has begun classes at Lutheran Southern Theological Seminary

c) Worship leadership at Living Waters Parish, Johnstown
   a. On May 31, I joined the people of God at Living Waters Parish in Johnstown to preach and help with a ritual to mark the start of Cindy Doherty serving in leadership there as she begins her seminary work. She is working with Pastor Jim West there as she begins her seminary study and formation.

d) Inquirers
   a. In recent months, in addition to meeting with Cindy Doherty and Rebecca Rabb as they completed their application materials, I have met with four inquirers, people who are interested in learning more about candidacy and rostered ministry in the ELCA. They are at different points in their discernment, and each has a unique and particular journey. There are four other inquirers on my list who have talked with Bishop Kevin. It seems that there is a surge in interest in rostered ministry in our area at the moment.

3.) Candidacy Committee
   a) The Candidacy Committee will meet again on October 7, 2026. We join with the friends and family of Pastor Sharon Erb in grieving her death. Pastor Sharon was a treasured colleague and leader in our synod, and served in a number of roles through the years, including as chair of the Candidacy Committee. Bishop Kevin and I will take on the leadership she provided as chair in advance of the meeting and during it as we work to identify the next chair, and seek out additional committee members. Our prayers are with Paul Erb and his family and we offer thanks to God for the life and ministry of Pastor Sharon Erb.

4.) Education Events
   a) Bishop's Convocation – September 14-16, 2026 at Camp Sequanota
      a. Rostered leaders and vicars will gather at Camp Sequanota for a time of learning and renewal in mid-September. We are glad to use our synod's camp for the location and appreciate the hospitality and help of the Sequanota staff. Our speaker is Dr. Leah Schade, Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky. Her presentations and conversations with participants will include "Ministry and Preaching in a House Divided," "Discovering Our 'Theories of Conflict," "Can We Talk? What the Bible Can Teach Us about Dialogue in a Divisive Time, " and "Clergy Stress and Resilience in Demanding Times. "

5.) In addition to working with Dr Schade, we will hear from Bishop Kevin, worship together, have free time to explore the camp or talk with colleagues about the upcoming lectionary texts and "Conscience and Conversation" from the ELCA Task Force on Human Sexuality Reconsideration. As of today, there are 20 people registered.

C. Assistant to the Bishop for Transition – Rev. Tyler Graham –Period of May 2026 – July 2026

1.) Since my last report, I have been more engaged with congregations, clergy, and candidates supported by greater understanding of the processes and resources and expanded contacts. Primary tasks of focus are communication (via phone, email, and text), meetings (via Zoom and in-person), and accompaniment – all of which is surrounded with daily prayer and active listening. I am connected with the Preacher 2 Pulpit supply administration and Authorized Lay Worship Leaders as support for worship leadership within vacant congregations.

During these initial months of service, I am confident that I have helped to support the partnership of the Synod and congregations through presence and engagement that is open, respectful, and honest. Recognizing that the tasks and conversations are not always joy-filled, it is a blessing to share in conversation and accompaniment with candidates and congregations as I learn about the ministry, joys, and concerns being experienced and afforded opportunity to witness to God's work within His people, the Allegheny Synod, and the Church.

Thank you for your continued to prayers; to God be the glory!

The Rev Tyler J Graham, *STS*

2.) ***Notes / highlights:***
   a) Routine / weekly meetings with Bp Shock to share conversation of questions, concerns, and status of candidates / congregations in transition
   b) On-going bi-weekly review of active / new RMPs (Rostered Minister Profiles) within the database to seek potential candidates for the Allegheny Synod
   c) Development of Synod Congregational map that can be accessed online
   d) Evaluation of best practices / needs re: Info sharing w/ Synod Staff

3.) ***Meetings:***
   a) Synod Staff Mtgs: May 6th; June 3rd
   b) Lutheran Letter Mtg: July 7th
   c) A2B Gathering (Indianapolis, IN): July 9th ~ 11th, 2026

4.) ***Clergy / Candidate Contacts:***
   a) (12) within the Allegheny Synod
   b) (14) outside of the Allegheny Synod

5.) ***Contacts (Congregational Council / Call Committee; Other as noted):***
   a) (78) à Mt Calvary Lutheran (Johnstown) x7; Laurel Mountains Lutheran (Rockwood) x2; St David Lutheran (Davidsville) x7; St Paul Evang Lutheran (Johnstown) x7; Trinity Lutheran (Confluence) x6; First Evang Lutheran (Altoona) x2; Trinity Lutheran (Somerset) x5; St John Lutheran (Summerhill) x10; Trinity Lutheran (State College) x6; First English Lutheran (Tyrone) x8; First Faith Lutheran Co-op (Houtzdale – Philipsburg) x6; Cassville Lutheran (Bedford) x3
   b) Preacher 2 Pulpit / ALWLs x7
   c) Dean of Johnstown Conference x2

D. Assistant to the Bishop for Communications – Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte
   1.)

E. Assistant to the Bishop for Life Together – Rev. Traci Marriott
   1.) <u>Finance Committee:</u>
      a) The May 21 Finance meeting was cancelled because of a family emergency on my part. Finance will meet on July 27th. We have feedback from a member at Assembly requesting that we create an online calculator for congregational treasurers to use for compensation. We will also review accounts, the audit, and the work of the Endowment Committee.
   2.) <u>Endowment Committee:</u>
      a) Endowment met on Tuesday, June 23rd. Please see notes recorded from that meeting here and note the motion recommended to Council:
      b) Review of Members:
         a. Andrea Paul ("first term", 1yr, expires 2027)
         b. Douglas Shrader (first term, 2 years, expires 2028)
         c. Al Ilgen ("first term", 3 years, expires 2029)
         d. Paul Tomkiel ("first term", 3 years, expires 2029)
         e. Vacancy: one (check Life Together Surveys)

f. Paula Nihoff, Synod Treasurer
g. Traci Marriott, Staff
h. Kevin Shock, Bishop
i. Ann Ferry, Synod Vice President

c) *Election of Chairperson: Paul Tomkiel*
d) Review of Accounts:
    a. Seminarian Fund (Ameriserve) $577,744 as of May 31st
        i. Recommend: 0-10% Cash, 20-25% Fixed, 0-5% International Equity, 65-70% Domestic Equity
    b. Reserve Account (1st Summit) $509,697 as of May 31st $160K moved in from Investment in April
        i. Recommend: 5-15% Domestic Equities, 40-50% Fixed Income, 40-50% Cash Equivalents
    c. Investment Account (1st Summit) $1,334,389
        i. Recommend: 0-5% Cash, 25-25% Fixed, 0-10% International Equity, 60-70% Domestic Equity

Motion to Council: Provisional update to investment policy to reflect the above allocations, to be reviewed at least quarterly (Al moved, Doug seconded) *(see below in Treasurer's report any related actions)*

    d. Lily Account (1st Summit) $982,983 as of May 31st
        i. We will invite John Kratz to speak with the committee about goals
        ii. Doug will do some research on lower fees, looking into Vanguard or Fidelity

e) Review Al's documentation: Traci will ask Michelle to forward 2022 Policy writeable document to Al
f) *Synod Council approved the two task forces we requested:*
    a. Members to Be Appointed to Task Forces
    b. Gift Policy: Al
    c. Seminarian Fund Use: Paul
g) Other Concerns: None
h) Future Meeting Date: Wednesday, August 5th, 3PM

3.) <u>Audit Committee:</u>
a) The Audit Committee met on July 14th. Please see notes recorded from that meeting here and note the summary (in bold) for Council:
b) Attendance: Traci Marriott (staff), Paula Nihoff (Treasurer), Jim Lakso, Al Ilgen, Barry Brumbaugh
c) Review of Audit Process:
    a. Beer Ream asks Paula and Michelle Bossler to gather materials, and they come in October to meet and work on the audit in the office for a day or two; Paula answers questions while they're working. Beer Ream sends the report a couple weeks later. There is no formal exit interview with them. Paula is asking for the audit to be performed a little earlier this year when she is still in town.
    b. In the normal course of accounting, Paula rarely if ever makes posts into the accounting system. Michelle posts deposits; Amanda McClain with CPA Associates posts everything but the deposits.
    c. Paula's recap of last year's audit: Most of the issues last year had to do with Go Tell It, which operates on the calendar year, not the Synod's fiscal year (which is February 1 to January 31). The main hurdle is lag time waiting for the Visa bill to be reconciled each month. No major concerns were reported from last year.

d) How does the Lilly (Go Tell It) money work?
    a. Their funds pass through the Synod. All GTI bills are paid by Allegheny because Allegheny manages the grant money even though the grant covers three synods. Paula transfers money from GTI's account into Allegheny's checking account to pay those expenses.
e) October letter from Beer Ream:
    a. Most of their concern was making sure things were posted in the right place. They recommended ways to make sure the same errors don't happen in the future, and Paula is following those instructions.
f) ***Beer Ream performed the audit according to accepted procedures with the help of the staff and treasurer. Their conclusion was that they found no significant problems. The report was clean, although they made recommendations about reporting for the Lilly grant money. Those recommendations are now being followed. The committee agrees with engaging Beer Ream for next year as well, although every several years a change is good practice.*** *(see below in Treasurer's report any related actions)*

4.) Nominations & Related 'Human Resources':
    a) We had a number of vacancies for required committees on the ballot this year for Assembly, so not all of our committees are fully populated. We have 15 responses to the Life Together survey so far, which can begin to help us connect willing volunteers with opportunities to serve. The surveys were distributed at the spring conference caucus meetings and at Assembly, and each church should have a poster with a link to the survey on the Synod website.
5.) Stewardship:
    a) We have not yet revived a Stewardship Committee. I will be attending the Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference in Baltimore in September with Deacon SueEllen.
6.) Youth Event:
    a) The event was advertised at Synod Assembly; registration opens September 1st.
7.) Synod Assembly:
    a) I used my presentation time to talk about the Life Together surveys and to introduce assembly Bingo as a way for people to make connections across the synod. I presented the budget and fielded one question, specifically about the fact that this is a deficit budget. I helped host our Churchwide representative, Rev. Sara Cutter. I attended the debriefing meeting with the Assembly committee.

Respectfully Submitted, July 22nd, 2026

F. Director for Evangelical Mission – Rev. Deacon Sue Ellen Spotts
May/June 2026
1.) Work with Congregations
    a) Exploration of a model for shared leadership in the Nittany Conference continues. June 1, pastors and representatives from the seven interested congregations met. The representatives agreed to talk with their congregations about the possibility of a shared leadership model. They also asked that the pastors involved be instrumental in shaping the model. The pastors and I have met twice to discuss concerns and possibilities. We are working on a proposal that the congregations can discuss soon.
    b) All of the congregations in the Nittany Conference continue exploring ways they can get to know each other better, support each other's and share in common ministries.
    c) I continue to support the work of several congregations on their strategic planning.

d) I continue to check in with Josh Spangler and the Laurel Mountain Lutheran Parish on the development of their ministry with a bi-vocational leader.

2.) Synod Initiatives

a) The assembly raised up the belief that God is doing a new thing among and through us. The responses from spring caucuses were posted at assembly. Congregations are now encouraged to select an ambassador to participate in quarterly summits (on Zoom) where congregations can share what they are experiencing, to support and inspire each other. To date, six people have signed up as ambassadors. We will continue to push this invitation out through social media and The Lutheran Letter. I am encouraging people to sign up by August 15, in time to participate in an initial summit in September.

3.) Beyond the Synod

a) There is a retreat for all ELCA church wide staff in Chicago in July. I continue to serve as dean for the Region 8 DEMs, and on the board for Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State. Pr. Traci Marriott and I will be attending the Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference in Baltimore in September. We are able to use the DEM funds from ELCA to cover the cost for this.

July 2026

1.) Work with Congregations

b) Exploration of a model for shared leadership in the Nittany Conference continues. June 1, pastors and representatives from the seven interested congregations met. I have registered for a course offered through the ELCA called "Meetings Reimagined." I will use this as an opportunity to work on the agenda/meeting flow for the congregations to discuss the model. I have invited the four pastors to take the course with me.

c) The congregations in the Nittany Conference have a conference picnic planned for August 15.

d) I continue to support the work of several congregations on their strategic planning.

2.) Synod Initiatives

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3.) Beyond the Synod

a) I attended the ELCA church wide staff retreat in Chicago in July. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with people from various areas of the ELCA ministries. Some areas I think we could explore in the synod are awareness of/strategy for Asia Pacific Island and Arab/Muslim people living in our territory, as well as young adult outreach.

4.) Calendar

a) July 20-23 Churchwide staff retreat in Chicago
b) July 24-Aug; Aug 12-14 Vacation
c) Aug 12-14; Sept 10-13 Vacation
d) Sept 14-16 Allegheny Bishop's Convo
e) Sept 21-23 Stewardship Kaleidoscope, Baltimore

G. Director of Go Tell It IN The Mountains (GTIITM) – Rev. John Kratz

1.) Goal 1: Ordained and lay preachers will be equipped to utilize traditional and non-traditional techniques including different modes of delivery to develop skills and practices that will communicate the Gospel message in more compelling ways.
    a) The Large group Cohort with Dilip Abayasekara ended July 14th. The graduates are: Bill Bradley, Randy Britton, David Klavuhn, Doug Knupp, Margaret Thatcher, and Brenda Zock.
    b) Small group cohorts have been formed for 2026/27 with a sign-up genius link sent to all synods for inclusion in their promotional work. The majority of our existing trained coaches agreed to continue in this ministry. Our coaches are: Shawn Clerkin, Regina Holliday, Jean Kuebler, David Pencek, and Jim Vitale.
    c) The Pastors Workshop contract has been engaged for up to 100 people. We have come very close to that mark and likely will hit 100 soon. This is a one-year contract but the owner is in conversation with me about long term "Lutheran curated" version.
    d) The ULS Kindling Faith event August 9-13 titled "A Festival of Lutheran Proclamation" has 60 registrants. Six (as of 6/30/26) are from our synods
    e) The Zeteo: Lutheran Edition has been promoted throughout our synods. This continues to be available to be linked onto existing church websites. Zeteo recently promoted this tool throughout their communication network. How might we promote this to a larger group such as Region 8 or Churchwide?
    f) A.I. is coming to the forefront of development and engagement tools for clergy. Jessica reviewed a training and her notes are forthcoming. A.I. likely is an area we need to explore more in depth.
2.) Goal 2: Aspiring preachers will be recruited and engaged in a variety of compelling preaching strategies that educate, empower, and support competency in their ministry.
    a) We continue to add trainees to the Faith+Lead program for ALWL certification. A list of trainees has been generated with notations as to their synod. This is available to our synod partners.
    b) The ULS organized preaching training featuring Angela Zimman on preaching in divided times was held in May. This event was online and in person with less than 10 people participating.
    c) The quarterly pericope training with Dr. Allison DeForest (United Seminary) held its final session in May. This will not continue but conversations with Dr. DeForest are being held as to the future work int his area and how to best promote it throughout our synods.
    d) The Preachers to Pulpits online tool was engaged by Allegheny Synod. It is being prepared to send out to a larger market.
3.) Goal 3: Existing members of congregations and new community audiences within our 3 Lutheran partner synods will respond to compelling preaching opportunities and content by integrating the gospel message into their attitudes, actions and ministries in daily life.
    a) "Mission Insite" contextual awareness tool will not be available after 3/1/27. We are not renewing that contract with ACST.
    b) The three Pilot Sites continue with studies and discussions on Listening. Continuing formation resourcing has been provided in the area of preaching. The three are Faith in Erie, 1st in Warren, and Zion in Williamsburg.
    c) The "Ready for Worship" one-minute videos continue to be promoted. In addition, "evergreen" videos of theological reflection are being created for our social media platforms. I believe we should consider funding people to fill in the gaps of these videos.
    d) The Go Tell It IN The Mountains surveys were shared at each synod assembly.

a. Responses per synod are: Allegheny Synod 30 lay and 10 rostered, NWPA 7 lay and 6 rostered, USS 9 lay and 9 rostered, WV/AMD 4 lay and 13 rostered. These surveys will continue to be distributed and are being collated. My goal is that top 3 lay and top 3 rostered requests will be addressed in 2027.

e) I continue to explore the Listener Formation resources available and have been put I touch with Karla Bellinger-Director of Dallas Institute of Homiletics who has done work in this area.

4.) OTHER:

a) The "Everyone Together" event for us in August is moving forward with plans and registration. Duane Kelderman will be our consultant from Lilly. Lilly funds all of his expenses to run this meeting which will have sustainability as our primary emphasis.

b) Sustainability directions should bring clarity of focus for our Task Forces. In addition, we will discuss options/ideas for increasing Rostered Leader participation in the Initiative resources.

c) I noted and corrected a draft directly from our investment fund for a normal Go Tell It expense. I am working with the Allegheny Synod treasurer to make sure all expenses flow through our standard designated expense numbers. This is essential for my end of the year reporting.

d) As approved by the S.C, we changed Jessica Claycomb's title and pay to be "Assistant Director of the Go Tell It IN the Mountains s Initiative.

e) We would like to collect statements or videos of testimonials as to how this ministry has been a blessing. For future meetings, please bring reports in written or video form of people's positive reflections of programs or event held through Go Tell It IN the Mountains nitiative resources. "Success stories" are an important part of our sharing with Lilly at this time and at the conclusion of our grant.

f) We completed and submitted the proposal to Lilly Endowment for "By Rivers of Grace" Full document is available on request. I have heard that there are 3,000 applicants with 60 grants to be given.

g) In response to a question from the Steering Committee: On 5/20/26 I received email affirmation from Alexis VanZalen who is the Compelling Preaching Program Manager that our inclusion of the 4th synod would not violate our grant. It would be up to Allegheny Synod to authorized such an expansion as the grant is in their name and funds are expensed at their authorization.

H. Synod Vice President

I. Secretary

1.) Need to appoint people to committees – specifically Nominations and Constitution & Bylaws Committees

J. Treasurer

1.) Balance Sheet and Income, Budget – see submitted reports

2.) Working on moving the Audit

3.) Discussion question: Is there any objection to moving budget year to calendar year. Yes, it cannot be changed as it is a daggered provision in the constitution.

4.) ***SC26.08.02*** **– Motion to accept the submitted reports as provided by the Treasurer, Paula Nihoff. Motion made by Rev. Nathan Pile, seconded by Peggy Thatcher, motion carried.**

5.) ***SC26.08.03*** **– Motion to approve the recommendation from the Audit Committee to retain Beer Ream for next year's audit. Motion made by Paula Nihoff, seconded by Rev. Nathan Pile, motion carried**

6.) ***SC26.08.04*** **– Motion to approve the recommendation from the Endowment Committee to have provisional update to the investment policy to reflect the below allocations, to be reviewed at least quarterly. Motion made by Paula Nihoff, seconded by Ken Weschler, motion carried.**

a. **Seminarian Fund (Ameriserve)**
   i. **Recommend: 0-10% Cash, 20-25% Fixed, 0-5% International Equity, 65-70% Domestic Equity**
b. **Reserve Account (1st Summit)**
   i. **Recommend: 5-15% Domestic Equities, 40-50% Fixed Income, 40-50% Cash Equivalents**
c. **Investment Account (1st Summit)**
   i. **Recommend: 0-5% Cash, 25-25% Fixed, 0-10% International Equity, 60-70% Domestic Equity**

K. Office Manager
   1.) No report

7. **Reports of Partner Ministries**
   A. ALSM –
   B. Camp Sequanota – camp wraps up in the next couple of weeks
      1.) Goal to hire a fulltime retreat director, but will need to hold off for another year due to financial restraints from lower camper attendance than hoped for.
      2.) Learning how to best support a low-tech approach for kids and youth to encourage independence and confidence.
      3.) ***SC26.08.05*** **– Motion to sponsor a "hole" for the Sequanota Golf Fundraiser for $150. Motion made by Bishop Kevin Shock, seconded by Peggy Thatcher, motion carried.**
   C. Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State
      1.) Gearing up for the new year and have younger leadership (rising sophmores).
      2.) Have some plans ready for when students arrive in the next two weeks.
      3.) Thursday worship and fellowship continues to be a foundational part of the ministry.
      4.) Applying for an ELCA grant to help with funding and planning for future funding.
   D. The ELCA Foundation
   E. LAMPa – have our annual retreat coming up in September. Bishop Kevin Shock will be the PA Bishop representative for the next year. We will also need to look to filling the vacant lay representative to the Policy Council due to Terry Koch's passing. Please give any suggestions to Bishop Kevin Shock as he is the one to appoint the person.
   F. United Lutheran Seminary (ULS)
      1.) Need to connect with Region 8 Archivist regarding proposed fees and trying to determine the best way forward.
   G. KELC – $1302 gathered for KELC at Allegheny Synod Assembly in June. These monies will go to support rural ministries in Kenya
      1.) NILC Project – Allegheny Synod has received gifts of $2000 and $7500 for the NILC Project and any additional monies be given to KELC to use as needed.
      2.) Legal Fees – land disputes for NILC and Pagnani Lutheran Children Center, charged after the fact and if not paid the ruling can be overturned. – We have received an ask/been informed of $4300 for legal fees that had been shared with the global partners.
      3.) Bishop Kevin Shock will facilitate the discussion and gifts with Paula Nihoff's assistance to
      4.) ***SC26.08.06*** **– Motion to have the Finance Committee explore what is feasible to build in a budgetary line item for KELC Mission Support under our partner ministries for Fiscal Year ending 2028 and onward. Motion made by Bishop Kevin Shock, seconded by Rev. Nathan Pile, motion carried.**

H. Global Refuge
I. Grace Delivered

8. **Leadership and Congregational Support and Development**
   A. Clergy Appointment updates
   B. Congregation status updates
   C. Committee Updates
      1.) Assembly
      2.) Candidacy
      3.) Constitution
      4.) Hunger Team
      5.) Nominations
      6.) Reconciliation
      7.) Worship
   D. Portico Benefits
   E. Congregational Planning
9. **Faith Formation**
   A. Authorized Lay Worship Leaders
   B. Faith Formation Team
      1.) Planning underway for The Weekend Jr./Sr. High Event in Huntingdon for December 11-13, 2026.
      2.) Registration opening September 1 for grades 6-12
   C. Allegheny Synod's Lutheran Letter
   D. Pericope and Continuing Education opportunities
      1.) Human Sexuality Reconsiderations Study – encourage congregations to participate. Comments due September 30th
   E. Tend Podcast
10. **Planning and Resources**
   A. Congregation Vitality and Innovation Grants
   B. Development of Policy manuals
      1.) Continue work on creating policies/guidelines, especially for use of funds.
   C. Ongoing Tasks
      1.) Resolutions passed at 2025 Synod Assembly:
         a) To Continue the Collaborative Work of the Allegheny Synod
         b) Rural Life and Ministry
      2.) ULS – Seeking someone to serve on the Board of Trustees
11. **Upcoming Events:**
   A. Lutheran Day at the Curve: August 16
   B. Trinity Confluence Closing Liturgy: August 19 at 6:30 pm
   C. Jen Bobolsky Ordination: August 29 at 10:00 am at St. Paul's, Mundy's Corner
   D. Tri-Synod Pastors Zoom Gathering: every second Tuesday beginning September 8 at 4:00 pm
   E. Bishop's Convocation: September 14-16 at Sequanota
   F. Bishops Formation: September 20-22
   G. Conference of Bishops: September 22-26
   H. LAMPa Policy Council: September 27-28
   I. Fall Conference meetings – Bishop Kevin Shock will take the opportunity to share more about his trip to Kenya and KELC and to encourage community ministery
   J. Requiem Service: November 1 at St. Matthews, Martinsburg at 3:00 pm
   K. FCTE Conference: November 4-6 at ULS West
   L. Region 8 Officers Gathering and Steering Committee: November 6-8 at ULS
   M. The Weekend: December 11-13
12. **Next Meeting:** September 19, 2026 at 9:00 am at the Synod Office in Hollidaysburg

A. Devotions by: Rev. Nathan Pile

13. **Adjournment**
    A. V.P. Ann Ferry called the meeting to a close at 12:11 pm

Synod Council members in attendance... 13 of 13

- Executive Committee *(3-ordained, 2-lay)* (election year)
  - Bishop Kevin Shock – present
  - VP Ann Ferry (2021/2025) – present
  - Secretary Rev. Rebecca Horn (2024) – present
  - Treasurer Paula Nihoff (2024) – present
  - Member at Large Rev. Nancy Hoover (2024) – present
- Council Members *(1-ordained, 8-lay)*
  - Mark Hoover (2026) – present
  - Manetta Horn (2025, Youth) – present
  - Gretel Kaltenbaugh (2025) – present
  - † Terry Koch (2024)
  - Christina Pavlock (2026) – present
  - Burton Peese (2025, Young Adult) – present
  - Rev. Nathan Pile (2025) – present
  - Margaret (Peggy) Thatcher (2024) – present
  - Kenneth Weschler (2025) – present
- Synod Staff (not voting members)
  - Assistant to the Bishop for Communications, Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte – absent
  - Assistant to the Bishop for Formation, Rev. Deacon Alicia Anderson – present
  - Assistant to the Bishop for Transition, Rev. Tyler Graham – absent
  - Assistant to the Bishop for Life Together, Rev. Traci Marriott – present
  - Director of Evangelical Mission, Rev. Deacon Sue Ellen Spotts – present
  - Director of Go Tell It IN The Mountains, Rev. John Kratz – absent
- Guests

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Rebecca L. Horn, Allegheny Synod Council Secretary