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 March 21, 2026, in Hollidaysburg and on Zoom

1. The meeting was called to order by VP Ann Ferry at 9:04 am.
2. Devotions – Bishop, The Rev. Kevin Shock
    1. Pray without ceasing – https://praywithoutceasing.world/
        1.) What has made your "heart sing" and/or your "heart heavy?"
        2.) Opening Prayer
        3.) Psalm 130 – Robert Alter, Hebrew Scholar, narrative interpreter
        4.) Song – *O Lord, Hear My Prayer*
        5.) Intercessory Prayers based on the laments and commitments of the Joint Statement, *A Call for Renewed Efforts towards the 'Gift of Peace' for All*.
        6.) Song – *O Lord, Hear My Prayer*
        7.) Closing Prayer & Blessing
3. **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.*
    1. To adopt the March 21, 2026 agenda. – With the addition of "Discussion & Action Request: The 2027 Compensation and Benefits Manual"
    2. To approve the minutes of the January 17, 2026 meeting.
    3. To appoint Margaret Thatcher to the ALSM Board.
    4. To receive with thanksgiving the resignation letter of the Rev. Tyler Graham from the Allegheny Synod Council, as he transitions to Assistant to the Bishop for Transition.
    5. To receive with thanksgiving the resignation letter of the Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte from Synod Council, as she transitions to Assistant to the Bishop for Communications.
    6. ***SC26.03.01*** **– Motion to adopt and approve the Consent Agenda as amended, motion made by Michele Peese, seconded by Rev. Ralph Hamer, motion carried.**
4. **Mission Conversation**
    1. Report on the new Staff structure
        1.) One of the differences between one assistant and four-part-time assistant is that we have four people to triage and act upon what comes into the office.
            a) For example, each of the assistants have been able to give attention "simultaneously."
        2.) Still need to strive for balance and continue the work of team building.
        3.) Share the contact information for the Assistants to the Bishop. On the Synod Website, under the "staff" tab, each person has their own email link under their name.
    2. Rethinking the clergy shortage
        1.) 1 pastor for every 7.5 congregations at the end of the Revolutionary War
        2.) We are in a shortage when we think of 1 pastor to 1 congregation, but if we look at different models then maybe we don't have a shortage, maybe we simply need to reimagine what could be.
5. **Reports of Staff and Officers**
    1. Bishop:

1.) Congregational Worship and Visits – St. Paul's Mundy's Corner; Christ Buffalo Mills; Living Waters Parish Johnstown; Christ Grantsville; Holy Shepherd Parish (Karthaus/Lanse); James Kratz Funeral (Grace State College, presiding); Grace State College; St. Michael's Pine Hill; Taizé Service (First Altoona)
2.) Meetings – Bp. Collins Farewell Gathering; Candidacy Committee; Intern Supervision; Lutheran Letter Meeting (x2); Staff Lunch; Assistants Meeting; Good Shepherd Windber Call Committee; Geeseytown-Newry Parish Council; Deans Meeting (x2); Christ Grantsville Council; Nittany Conference; GTIITM Task Groups and Steering Committee; Assembly Committee; COB Candidacy Manual Update; Staff Meeting; COB Stewardship; Finance Committee (x2); Candidacy Staff; ALSM Executive Committee; ALSM Onboarding; Endowment Committee (x2); COB Class of 2025; Conference of Bishops Gathering; Executive Committee; Laurel Highlands Conference; Johnstown Conference; Transition Check-in; GTIITM Bishops; COB Chaplaincy 101; Sequanota Board Retreat; Lenten Book Study (Leading with Sequanota)
3.) Visits—In-person: 13 Rostered / 3 Lay; Remote: 11 Rostered / 2 Lay
4.) Discussion: Priorities for the Bishop's time
    a) Ex Officio on all boards, meetings, etc. → by virtue of the office
    b) In the middle of seven-weeks with only four days off, one of which involved travel recovery time.
    c) Permission to delegate to Assistants to the Bishop and Chairs as necessary and beneficial to all.
    d) We appreciate that you are trying to diligently to manage the time, but please take your personal time and vacation.

2. Assistant to the Bishop for Formation – Rev. Deacon Alicia Anderson
    1.) Working on various projects, we have dates for Bishop's Convocation, etc.
3. Assistant to the Bishop for Transition – Rev. Tyler Graham
    1.) Meeting with and talking with those in transition.
    2.) Attending a transition meeting with Bishop Kevin Shock to experience what and how Bishop Kevin has led such meetings.
4. Assistant to the Bishop for Communications – Rev. Marty Jo Irvin-Stellabotte
    1.) Designed and published Synod Connections, a new e-mail newsletter that will be distributed monthly (for now). The first issue published in February was well-received, with more than 40 new subscribers added after the first issue. This increased the subscriber base past the free limit of 250 subscribers; we now have a paid monthly subscription (thank you for your approval!) and will continue to encourage new subscribers to receive the newsletter.
    2.) Provided major updates to the Allegheny Synod website, including the addition of a new Office of the Biship Staff Page for Bishop Kevin and the four Assistants to the Bishop, a search engine, and several new first- and second-level pages
    3.) Publicized to local and regional news media the installation of Bishop Kevin and publicized numerous events and news articles through regional and social media and email blasts to Conference Deans and clergy
    4.) Wrote three articles for the Spring Edition of The Lutheran Letter and served on the planning team to develop story ideas and content for the Summer Edition
    5.) On the horizon:
        a) Create a series of stewardship infographics, in partnership with Pr. Traci Marriott
        b) Develop signage for the doors in the Office of the Bishop, in partnership with Michelle Bossler
        c) Set up an Instagram page for the Allegheny Synod to help reach a wider audience

d) Provide a fresh look to the main and first level pages of the website

5. Assistant to the Bishop for Life Together – Rev. Traci Marriott
    1.) Finance Committee:
        a) The Finance Committee is meeting monthly. Members are discerning who may be willing to serve as Chair as I am now on staff and shouldn't serve in both roles.
        b) The Compensation Manual is being forwarded to you with the Committee's recommendation; changes from 2026 are highlighted for you for quick reference. I will give Michelle a clean copy for the Assembly at your recommendation.
        c) The Proposed Budget is being forwarded to you in *almost* finished form, with the Committee's recommendation, for you to review at this meeting. We did not enter a value for estimated interest income for next year; the Finance Committee want to wait until the Endowment Committee met with a representative from 1st Summit Bank, manager of our investments, to get an estimate for that line item. Some notations are made on the current draft of that budget for us to review; you will have to determine which of those notations (and any additional explanations) should be included on the copy of the budget that will be made available to the Assembly. Council will need to recommend the budget before the last week of April to make it available for Spring Conference Caucus meetings, which I will attend to field questions.
    2.) Endowment Committee:
        a) The Endowment Committee is slowly getting up and running; although the normal requirement for this committee is to meet quarterly, as we're getting re-established, the third meeting of 2026 is March 19th. We do not yet have a volunteer to chair this committee.
        b) The March 19th meeting was scheduled for a representative from 1st Summit Bank to review our current investments and work on bringing the portfolio back into compliance with the Synod's investment policy; since last spring, the types of investments have been flip-flopped from the required ratio in the Synod's policy.
    3.) Audit Committee:
        a) Volunteer members for the Audit Committee include, from the Finance Committee, Jim Lakso and Barry Brumbaugh, and from the Endowment Committee, Al Ilgen. The Audit Committee has not met yet (and there hasn't been a functional Audit Committee in recent memory). It is my understanding that the Council has not reviewed the last audit (FYE2025). As the committee isn't up and running yet, I'd request that Council make time at an upcoming meeting to have the auditor review the FYE2025 audit with Council.
    4.) Nominations:
        a) I'm attending Assembly meetings to stay up to date on Nominations; there is not yet a functioning committee.
    5.) Stewardship:
        a) We have not yet revived a Stewardship Committee
    6.) Youth Event:
        a) The Youth Event doesn't fall under my (or anyone's) assistantship specifically, but I convened one meeting in February and have another scheduled for the end of March for planning. The Weekend 2026 will be December 11-13 at St. James in Huntingdon and the Comfort Inn. St. James' Council has approved our return; we have a reservation and are waiting for a corrected contract from Comfort Inn (the first contract they sent specified King size rooms). I'll be attending St.

James' next Council meeting to answer questions and plan for any requested changes to the event from their previous years' experience

7.) Other:
   a) I worked with the Bishop, Michelle, and by extension Amanda to sort out how to pay the four of us who are serving as Assistants:
   b) Each ministry site reported our total compensation and benefits cost (based on synod minimum guidelines)
      We took 25% of that total and then added 5% for the Assistant "premium"—that's what we each "cost"
      Synod pays the 25% to the ministry site
      Synod pays the extra 5% to us directly
   c) The exception is MJ, who had been Communications Director *in addition to* her regular call. In order for her to not take a huge pay cut, the 75/25 split between her and her congregation was adjusted. She still costs the Synod the same total amount, but she keeps more of that total, indicating that she is closer to full time in her congregation

6. Director for Evangelical Mission – Rev. Deacon Sue Ellen Spotts
   1.) Emphasized the abundant submissions for the Daily Bread Grants through ELCA World Hunger. Each grant is for $500. There were 1000 grant submissions (up from 64 the previous year), well beyond what was expected. Through a lot of creative redistribution of ELCA's World Hunger budget, they were able to award 670 grants, of which 10 were awarded to ministries in the Allegheny Synod. It was also noted that the ELCA gives the money to the Synod for the Synod to award to each site and Dn. Sue Ellen Spotts signs the letter that accompanies the check. This is one way that the ELCA shows how Mission Support that goes through Synods to Churchwide also comes back through the Synods to support ministry sites.
7. 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 has experienced some shrinkage as he moved into the Mind Map component of his teaching. The small group cohorts have experienced minor adaptions. All are moving forward. I recommend in 2026 fall we restart small group cohort experiences.
      b) The Allegheny Synod Lay Ministries Task Force completed their program guide. Two laity have begun this Task Force leadership, and my role will fade away.
      c) We are working on creating a common language model to use when referencing our ALWL ministries throughout our tri-synod area. In addition, the three bishops met to discuss common challenges among the rostered leaders in our region. We have approximately 89 active (non-retired) rostered leaders in our tri-synod area.
      d) The Festival of Homiletics for 2026 has been cancelled. ULS Kindling Faith has generated an event for August 9-13 titled "A Festival of Lutheran Proclamation". I have reached out to Kindling Faith noting our interest in promoting this event throughout our tri-synod clergy and lay preachers.
      e) The Zeteo go app which we helped to format has been generated and will be placed onto our GO Tell It website once our new Administrative Assistant is up to speed on our website options.
   2.) Goal 2: Aspiring preachers will be recruited and engaged in a variety of compelling preaching strategies that educate, empower, and support compentency in their ministry.

a) We continue to add trainees to the Faith+Lead program for ALWL certification. We additionally added two non-Lutheran clergy who are serving Lutheran congregations into that resource. This will allow them to take courses to help understand our Lutheran heritage, terminology, and theology better.
b) The next ULS organized preaching training is being organized. No dates have been solidified but the trainer will be Angela Zimmann.
c) The quarterly pericope training with Dr. Allison DeForest (United Seminary) will end in May. In August, the quarterly pericope studies will be led by Tom Martin of Susquehanna University.
d) The Preachers to Pulpits online tools is being engaged March 1st in the Allegheny Synod. A lay person has stepped forward to be this app administrator. A training was held for ALWL and pulpit supply people at the end of January. Growing challenges continue and will be resolved before we launch this tool nationally.

3.) Goal 3: Existing members of congregations and new community audiences within our 3 Lutheran partner synods will respond to compelling preching opportunities and content by integrating the gospel message into their attitudes, actions and ministries in daily life.
a) "Mission Insite" context awareness reports have been mailed to every congregation in the three synods. The contract for this tool expires in end of year 2026 and will not be renewed. Multiple congregations have connected into the site since the mailing was sent.
b) Three Pilot Sites have been identified, and engagement has begun with the "I Will" text. The three are Faith in Erie, 1st in Warren, and Zion in Williamsburg. These continue their studies and supports are being provided to those three congregations in this journey of discovery.
c) The "Ready for Worship" one-minute videos have been instituted and updated. Clergy have begun to sign up for specific Sundays, and the list of dates has been expanded. The auto-reminder has been changed to two weeks prior to signing up as that tool creates some consternation. Last report is that this resource has been growing in responses and "likes".
d) The Go Tell It IN The Mountains Sunday was launched on Feb 1, 2026. Responses from congregations have been coming into our office and will be filtered to see themes and opportunities for development in this listening area.
e) I reached out to our consultants for resources in this goal. I was referred to Working Preacher and another similar resource. I plan on reaching out to Will Willimon for his ideas. In short, we are looking for "working listener" trainings, resources, and ideas.

4.) OTHER:
a) I recommend, in support of the Curriculum Task Force, a whole team and committees meeting in August/September. I would ask a consultant to come in and share a "mid-way' reflections and have time for us to intentionally vision the next few years in this work. I believe a Friday night to Saturday event would allow us time to have break out sessions in different emphases, large group vision, fellowship and communications enhancements. This would be fully funded through our travel line item for hotel and mileage costs.
b) I spent significant time working on the financial reports for the Initiative. The "end of year" 2025 financial data has been sent to the Steering Committee. I have shared with the bishops that this information is good to share "as is" with their respective synod councils. This information is also formatted into the Lilly Endowment annual reporting tools and will be submitted to them by 2/28/29.

c) As noted, we hired Jessica Claycomb as the Administrative Assistant to the Go Tell It IN the Mountains Initiative. She began her duties on Tuesday February 10th.
d) I continue to meet monthly with office staff in each of the three synods. These meetings have been most helpful in the communication work of the 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 Initiative resources.
f) I continue to recruit through the bishops members for our Listening and Sustainability Task Forces.

5.) Explore how to maximize the return on the GTIITM monies without increasing risk. ELCA Foundation does not charge the same administrative fees.
a) The executive committee passed the following motion: *SCEC26.03.01* - Motion to refer the request from GTIITM to explore ways to maximize the return on the GTIITM monies without increasing risk to the Mission Endowment Fund Committee. Motion made by Bishop Kevin, seconded by Ann Ferry, motion carried.
b) Thank you to Janice for all that she has done for the Synod, including scheduling supply coverage. This is being looked into by Ann Ferry.

8. Synod Vice President
1.) $70,000 tithe on bequest received from Moxham Lutheran Church – Moxham had received $700,000 and immediately decided to tithe 10% unrestricted to Allegheny Synod.
a) Recommendations for where this money goes – How does the Synod Council want to receive this – does the Synod Council direct any of these funds beyond simple receipt as unrestricted funds?
a. Do we give 35% to ELCA (the current designated amount of Mission Support)
b. Finance committee – share with ELCA, share with Youth through 2027 Youth Gathering, and set some away for Faith Formation and Leadership development and support -
c. We need to have a longer discussion, needs to be recorded separate from regular mission support. Large donation from a church – note in the finance report.
d. The overall discussion is tabled until the next Synod Council meeting. The monies ($70,000) will be put into its own dedicated line item to enable further tracking of the funds.

2.) Thank you to the Transition Team for their dedication and work.
3.) Thank you to the Walter Startzel Bequest Team for all they have done.

9. Secretary
1.) ***SC26.03.02*– Motion to adopt the Continuing Resolution S7.21.A26 regarding lay voting members to Synod Assembly, with recommended changes from the ELCA Office of the Secretary as follows. Motion made by Rev. Rebecca Horn, seconded by Rev. Ralph Hamer, motion carried.**

- **S7.21.A26** Pursuant to †S7.21. b. of the Synod Constitution, the Synod Council establishes the following formula to determine the number of lay voting members from each congregation of the Allegheny Synod on the basis of the number of baptized members in the congregation is as follows:
  - Using the most current Annual Congregation Report to the ELCA for the number of baptized members per congregation:

- Congregations up to 499 baptized members shall elect two voting members, typically one of whom shall be a man and one of who shall be a woman
- Congregations 500-899 baptized members hall elect three voting members, typically one of whom shall be a man, one of whom shall be a woman, and one of whom may be of any gender expression
- Congregations 900 or more baptized members shall elect four voting members, striving for balanced gender representation

- In addition, each congregation may elect one additional voting member who is a youth or young adult at the time of the election and one additional voting member who is a person of color or whose primary language is other than English. The term "youth" means a voting member of a congregation who has not reached the age of 18 at the time of election or appointment for service. The term "young adult" means a voting member of a congregation between the ages of 18 and 30 at the time of election or appointment for service.
- Each congregation is strongly encouraged to have balanced representation of gender expressions and members of historically underrepresented groups among its voting members.

10. Treasurer
    1.) Balance Sheet and Income, Budget – see submitted reports
        a) ***SC26.03.03*** **– Motion to accept the submitted reports as provided by the Treasurer, Paula Nihoff. Motion made by Margaret Thatcher, seconded by Timothy Albright, motion carried.**
    2.) Raised some concerns regarding Nominations & a shared drive for documents.
        a) Nominations related question was about two committees that are not in the Constitution – this is a concern and topic for the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. This committee will investigate and make recommendations to Synod Council.
        b) A shared drive is being discussed with the Assistant to the Bishop for Communications.
    3.) Who should know how much each congregation has given in Mission Support
        a) Stewardship Team – does not currently exist, would be a good place for this information to be shared.
        b) This should go to Finance Committee and be shared to Synod Council as a trend report.
    4.) Discussion from Mission Endowment Fund Committee and Assistant to the Bishop for Life Together
        a) Recommendation to take action to change the investment account portfolio to be within the most recently approved Financial Guidelines, 2015. It was noted that while the policy had recommended updates in 2022, there is no record of approval; therefore we continue to be guided by the 2015 document.
        b) ***SC26.03.04*** **– Motion to move a total of $160,000 out of fixed income assets in our Investment Fund into the Reserve Fund in the following allocation: $6,000 equities; $77,000 each in cash and fixed income assets. Motion made by Terry Koch, seconded by Rev. Ralph Hamer, motion carried.**
    5.) Action Request: To recommend the Proposed Budget FYE 2028 to Synod Assembly
        a) Discussion and explanations regarding various changes and adjustments to the proposed Budget as attached.
        b) In recent memory we have projected deficits that have not resulted come to fruition.
        c) During discussion, it was noted that we need to discuss and approve the Compensation Manual to have approval of the numbers for the budget before we

make a motion regarding the Budget. Therefore, we tabled the discussion of the Budget to resume following the Compensation Manual and Benefits discussion and motion.

d) Discussion & Action Request: The 2027 Compensation and Benefits Manual
    a. 3% increase for new folks
    b. Update language for health plan
    c. Updated IRS mileage reimbursement for current year
    d. Increased recommended con ed to $800
    e. Sunday supply rate from $140 to $145 and second service from $50 to $60
    f. ***SC26.03.05*** **– Motion to recommend the 2027 Compensation and Benefits Manual for adoption to the Synod Assembly, motion made by Timothy Albright, seconded by Gretel Kaltenbaugh, motion carried.**

e) Following the motion SC26.03.05, discussion resumed regarding the Proposed Budget for FYE 2028.

f) ***SC26.03.06*** **– Motion to recommend the Proposed Budget FYE 2028 to Synod Assembly made by Rev. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Terry Koch, motion carried.**

6.) Mission Investment Fund

7.) Finance Chair report – seeking a new chair as the previous chair is now an Assistant to the Bishop and cannot hold the position.
    a) Financial Management
    b) Endowment (Investment) Committee

8.) Startzel Grant Updates
    a) Twenty-five grants have been awarded with the combined distribution of $41,153.98.

11. Office Manager

1.) ***SC26.03.07*** **– Motion to reimburse the Office Manager for work cell phone usage, at a rate of 90% of the total cell phone bill or individual's portion thereof, whichever is less. Motion made by Gretel Kaltenbaugh seconded by Michele Peese, motion carried.**

2.) Discussion: Finding an alternative to ALSM Guest wi-fi use
    a) Need to provide Wi-Fi, do we share the Office Wi-Fi or build a guest account
    b) Further investigation is needed to determine if building a guest Wi-Fi is feasible. Is it a one-time fee to build and/or is there an additional monthly fee?
    c) Startzel Grant could be an option to cover the cost to build a guest network; but not to pay a monthly fee.

3.) Discussion: How to determine annual pay increase for office manager
    a) There is no known formula to determine pay increase. Some years she has received a raise similar to rostered leaders, other years nothing.
    b) This is being referred to the Synod Council Executive Committee to discuss and determine. They will report back with recommendation(s).

4.) ***SC26.03.08*** **– Motion to add the following to the Employee Handbook, motion made by Rev. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Rev. Rebecca Horn, motion carried.**
    a) Cyber Safety Protocols as an Addendum at the end of the Internet/Email section – attached document
        a. "When the Altoona/Hollidaysburg School Districts announce a closure due to inclement weather or" to section I-16 just before the phrase about a state emergency.

b. To allow two (2) weeks of vacation to carry over from one year to the next, rather than just one week.

6. **Reports of Partner Ministries**
    1. ALSM
    2. Camp Sequanota
    3. Lutheran Campus Ministry at Penn State
    4. The ELCA Foundation
    5. LAMPa – Lutheran Day April 20th, registration is open.
    6. United Lutheran Seminary (ULS)
        1.) Need to connect with Region 8 Archivist regarding proposed fees
    7. KELC
        1.) Discussion: Attending Consecration of Bp.-Elect Catherine Musau Ngina and Deputy Bp.-Elect Dominic Onsongo Nyambisa on 24 May 2026
        2.) Cost is a consideration, but of greater concern is safety.
        3.) Bishop Kevin will need to investigate the further
        4.) ***SC26.03.09*** **– Motion to encourage Bishop Kevin Shock to pursue attending the Consecration of Bishop-elect Catherine Musau Ngina and Deputy Bishop-elect Dominic Onsongo Nyambisa on May 24, 2026, as an opportunity to rebuild relationship with our global partner, the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church, and be affirm that we are part of global community, with the Allegheny Synod covering travel and accommodation expenses, contingent upon appropriate safety considerations. Motion made by Rev. Ralph Hamer, seconded by Michele Peese, motion carried.**
    8. Global Refuge
    9. Grace Delivered
7. **Leadership and Congregational Support and Development**
    1. Clergy Appointment updates – no changes
    2. Congregation status updates – no changes
    3. Committee Updates
        1.) Assembly
        2.) Candidacy
        3.) Constitution
        4.) Hunger Team
        5.) Nominations
        6.) Reconciliation
        7.) Worship
            a) Discussion: Exploring Sundays and Seasons subscription and licensing for Synod worship services – yes explore.
    4. Portico Benefits
    5. Congregational Planning
8. **Faith Formation**
    1. Authorized Lay Worship Leaders
    2. Faith Formation Team
        1.) Planning underway for The Weekend Jr./Sr. High Event in Huntingdon for December 11-13, 2026
    3. Allegheny Synod's Lutheran Letter
        1.) Discussion: 20th Anniversary Edition sponsored messages – Yes, this is something that can be done.
    4. Pericope and Continuing Education opportunities
    5. Tend Podcast
9. **Planning and Resources**

1. Congregation Vitality and Innovation Grants
2. Development of Policy manuals
    1.) Continue work on creating policies/guidelines, especially for use of funds.
3. 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

10. **Upcoming Events:**
    1. Renewal of Vows and Chrism Service: March 24, 2026 at 10:00 am at Trinity Lutheran, Altoona for rostered leaders, ALWLs, and seminarians
    2. Lutheran Day at the Capital (LAMPa) – April 20, 2026
    3. Pre-Assembly Conference Meetings scheduled at 7:00 pm for
        1.) April 28 Nittany Conference
        2.) April 29 Clearfield at St. John's
        3.) April 30 Blair-Huntingdon
        4.) May 6 Laurel Highlands and Johnstown
        5.) May 7 Bedford
    4. Bishop's Afternoon: May 5 at Duncansville Evangelical Lutheran Church
    5. Synod Assembly: June 20, 2026 at Blair County Convention Center
    6. ELCA Rostered Ministers Gathering: July 6-9
    7. Bishop's Convocation: September 14-16 at Sequanota
    8. Conference of Bishops: September 22-26
    9. The Weekend: December 11-13
11. **Next Meeting:** May 16, 2026 – Devotions by Timothy Albright.
    1. Discussion: Retreat Date – looking at dates that will hopefully better coordinate with schedules. Dates will be sent out as soon as they are known.
12. **Adjournment**
    1. V.P. Ann Ferry called the meeting to a close at 12:07 pm.

Synod Council members in attendance... 13 of 15

- Executive Committee *(3-ordained, 2-lay)* (election year)
    - Bishop Kevin Shock – present
    - VP Ann Ferry (2021) – present
    - Secretary Rev. Rebecca Horn (2024) – present
    - Treasurer Paula Nihoff (2024) – present (Zoom)
    - Member at Large Rev. Nancy Hoover (2024) – present (Zoom)
- Council Members *(4-ordained, 5-lay)*
    - Timothy Albright (2023) – present (Zoom)
    - Rev. Ralph Hamer (2023) – present
    - Manetta Horn (2025, Youth) – absent
    - Gretel Kaltenbaugh (2025) – present
    - Terry Koch (2024) – present
    - Burton Peese (2025, Young Adult) – present
    - Michele Peese (2023) – present
    - Rev. Nathan Pile (2025) – absent
    - Margaret (Peggy) Thatcher (2024) – present
    - Kenneth Weschler (2025) – present (Zoom)
- 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 – absent
    - 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