



Member Packet 2026

June 16th | 6:30 pm

Fellowship Hall



St. Andrew
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2025/26 Congregation Council Members

Council members are elected for 3-year terms and can be re-elected to serve up to 2 terms consecutively. Council members elect a President, Vice President, and Secretary from among their ranks at the June Council meeting. These officers serve in their role for 1 year and can be re-elected to serve in the same role for up to 2 years consecutively. The Treasurers are appointed by the Council at the June Council meeting and may or may not also be members of the Council. The Youth Representative is nominated by the middle and high school students and serves a 1-year term.

Name	Role	Term & Year
Scott Anderson		Term 1, Year 1
Tracie Semenchalam		Term 1, Year 1
Casey Tkacz		Term 1, Year 1
Janet Vorvick		Term 2, Year 1
Joel Johnson	Co-Treasurer	Term 1, Year 2
Allison Katsufrakis	Vice President	Term 1, Year 2
Carl Malmstrom		Term 1, Year 2
Tira Nessel		Term 1, Year 2
Lisa Staul		Term 1, Year 2
Chuck Weswig	President	Term 1, Year 2
Tim Duggan*		Term 2, Year 3
Noelle Mehlhorn**	Secretary	Term 1, Year 3
Cindy Stadel**		Term 1, Year 3
Evan McGarvey	Youth Representative	Year 2

Non-Council Member (has voice, not vote): Ron Castner, Co-Treasurer

* Term ends at close of Annual Meeting.

** Term ends at close of Annual Meeting unless re-elected.

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Annual Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

GATHERING

1. Call to Order – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
2. Opening Devotion – *The Rev. Allison Bengfort, Lead Pastor*
3. Establish Quorum – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
4. Adoption of Agenda – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
5. Approve Minutes of Annual Congregation Meeting on June 17, 2025– *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
6. Explanation of Voting Process – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*

MINISTRY

7. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Churchwide
 - a. Video Message from Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry:
Meet the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Rev. Yehiel Curry
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-P_fMDfj4U
8. The Oregon Synod of the ELCA
 - a. Synod Assembly Report – *Liz Hardy, Lay Attendee*
9. St. Andrew Lutheran Church
 - a. Lead Pastor’s Address – *The Rev. Allison Bengfort, Lead Pastor*
 - b. 2025/26 Council Goals & Progress Overview – *Allison Katsufraakis, Council Vice President*
 - c. Church Administrator Search Process Update – *Erin Castner, Search Team Chair*

ELECTIONS

10. Congregation Council
 - a. Recognition of Individuals Completing their Council Term – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
 - b. Election of New Council Members
 - i. Introduction of Council Nominees – *Dana Taylor Blakemore, Nominating Committee Chair*
 - ii. Nominations from the Floor – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
 - iii. Congregational Vote on Council Nominees – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
11. Nominating Committee
 - a. Recognition of this Year’s Nominating Committee – *Dana Taylor Blakemore, Nominating Committee Chair*
 - b. Election of New Nominating Committee Members
 - i. Introduction of Nominating Committee Nominees – *Dana Taylor Blakemore, Nominating Committee Chair*
 - ii. Nominations from the Floor – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
 - iii. Congregational Vote on Nominating Committee Nominees – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*

FINANCES

12. 2025/26 Financial Overview – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
13. 2026 Stewardship Season – *The Rev. Allison Bengfort, Stewardship Team Member*
14. 2026/27 Ministry & Mission Budget
 - a. Overview of Proposed Budget – *Tim Duggan, Finance Team Representative*
 - b. Congregational Vote on Budget – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*

The meeting is temporarily adjourned for the St. Andrew Foundation's Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ST. ANDREW FOUNDATION

15. The St. Andrew Foundation – *Tom Mehlhorn, Foundation President*

The St. Andrew Annual Meeting resumes.

CLOSING

16. Written Ballot Results – *Chuck Weswig, Council President; Dana Taylor Blakemore, Nominating Committee Chair*
17. Announcements – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*
18. Closing Prayer – *The Rev. Allison Bengfort, Lead Pastor*
19. Adjournment – *Chuck Weswig, Council President*

For Your Reference:
2025 Minutes: Annual Meeting of the Congregation
June 17, 2025 | 6:30pm | Fellowship Hall and Online via “Zoom”

GATHERING

1. Call to Order 6:30 p.m.: Elisabeth Hardy, Council President
2. Opening Devotion: Pastor Allison Bengfort
3. Established Quorum: 63 voting members present in person.
4. Adoption of Agenda:
 - **Motion:** by Gordon Teifel, that was seconded, to approve the agenda as written.
Favor: All Abstentions: None **Motion passes.**
5. Explanation of Voting Process: Elisabeth Hardy
6. Approval of June 18, 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes:
 - **Motion:** by Tom Mehlhorn, Gretchen Bancroft 2nd to approve 2024
 - a. Annual Meeting Minutes as written.
 - b. Favor: All Abstentions: None **Motion passes.**

MINISTRY

7. **St. Andrew Lutheran Church:** Pastor Allison Bengfort
 - Living into Our Mission and Vision
 - a. Reference Member Packet for detailed information:
 - Pages 4-6 of the Member Packet provide the revised Mission and Vision Statements and highlight the 2024-2025 Ministry Plan with an explanation of the Core Values and Focus Areas.
 - Focus Areas were reviewed:
 - Goal one completed with the hiring of our new Lead Pastor.
 - Minister of Music hiring continues. Stewardship Campaign was very successful. Safety Task Force goals completed.
 - Council Retreat in July: Goals & Focus areas will be developed. Reference written report on page 6 of Member Packet.
 - a. Expecting Focus Areas to include: Welcoming a new Minister of Music, discerning our vision for a second clergy position, developing a strategy for welcoming younger generations to our church, improving financial reporting practices.
 - b. Paying off the Mortgage:
 - **PAID OFF!** Large donations, a donation with a matching gift, and many other monetary gifts helped to pay off the mortgage. Now our church can focus on programming, staffing in the future to improve our Ministry.
 - A fun festive “Burning the Mortgage” party. A thank you to the party planners.

- c. Maintaining St. Andrew's RIC Status (pink ballot):
 - Reference page 7 of Member Packet for updated RIC Welcome Statement to maintain St. Andrew's RIC Status.
 - Explanation of the RIC Designation for St. Andrew and the need for amendments to our current RIC designation, including updated language regarding sexual orientation and gender as well as incorporating our commitment to anti-racism.
 - Jan Smith worked with Pastor Allison to make changes and additions to the St. Andrew's New Welcome Statement.
 - Extensive Discussion with pros and cons for new Welcome Statement:
 - a. Concern about Language, on page 7, NOT the Intent.
 - b. Maybe next year add explanations and definitions for some of the terminology. The Welcome Statement could be amended next year to continue to improve it.
 - **Motion:** by Sonya Ackman, Gretchen Bancroft 2nd to approve the updated St. Andrew RIC Welcome Statement as written.
 Favor: 60 Opposed: 4 Abstentions: 2 **Motion passes.**

8. The Oregon Synod of the ELCA:

- Synod Assembly Report: Elisabeth Hardy, Lay Attendee
 - a. Complete report will be included in next year's Annual Report.
 - b. Synod Assembly was May 30-June 1, 2025 in Portland. Attendees from our church were: Pastor Allison, Elisabeth Hardy, and Sister India Jensen Kerr. Jan Smith also attended as a Synod council member.
 - c. Re-elected Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar for another 6 years.

9. ELCA Churchwide:

- Video Message from Bishop Eaton: "Faith, Fear, and the Call to Community"

10. Other Ministry Topics:

- a. Connections Team: Connie Losk
 - St. Andrew's MACG team wanted to return to community organizing but still wanted their "connections part" to continue. Now 2 teams: Community Organizing and Connections. "Connections" refers to "internal relationship building" instead of "external relationship building".
 - The Connections Team works to integrate new members and help existing members deepen relationships within the congregation. The Team held a new member orientation in May and hosts Game Nights. This Team will be planning the upcoming Ministry Fair in September. The team includes about 8 people.
- b. Minister of Music: Robert Hawthorne
 - Minister of Music Search Team has been working since last Fall. Developed a job description and fielded candidates to fill the music position. Unfortunately, the Finalist backed out during the final week of the process. Disheartening but the Team has again posted the job description on sites for the American Guild of Organists and the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. In recent posting, changed the listing from an hourly wage to a salaried position on recommendations from previous

candidates. There are new promising candidates. Summer is a good time for candidates/a good time for candidates to possibly plan moves. Local and nonlocal candidates are being fielded. Hopefully a new Minister of Music will be hired by Fall.

- Questions about hiring a choir director or organist. The position is for an organist, choir director, and bell choir director. After this position is filled then our church hopes to hire an Assistant Minister of Music. Our organ, piano, bell choir and small choir are all selling points. An attractive position.
- Search Team includes: Robert Hawthorne, Pastor Allison, Gretchen Bancroft, Clay Gustafson, Christina Mantey, Chuck Weswig
- c. Safety Task Force: Cindy Stadel
 - Task Force has met monthly this past year to develop a plan for action in a time of emergency situations – medical crisis, natural disasters, threatening behavior, and more. We want a welcoming and safe community here at our church. The Team includes: Cindy Stadel, Libby Calhoun, Rick Leroy, Lisa Staul, Chuck Weswig. Met with the Washington County Sheriff's Department, reflected on a 2020 guide from US Department of Homeland Security, reviewed plans from other Houses of Worship including from a church in Hilo, Hawaii. Developed policy for the St. Andrew and staff preparedness manual and recommended formation of an ongoing Safety Team, both approved by Council. First evacuation drill was in May.
 - Safety Team is now being formed. Members of this team will be asked to attend 2-3 trainings per year to stay updated on emergency first aid procedures, de-escalation techniques, and best practices for maintaining a safe environment. Hope to have the Team in place this summer.

MINISTRY SUPPORT

11. Congregation Council:

- Recognition of Council Members completing their terms:
 - a. **Elisabeth Hardy**, Council President
 - b. **Pam Farr** and **Elisabeth Hardy** not seeking second terms.
 - c. **Janet Vorvick** completing first term.
 - d. **Lee Anne Knapp** resigned with one year remaining in term; **leaving position open.**
 - e. **Evan McGarvey** – Youth Representative **THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!**
- Congregation Council Nominating Committee: Dwight Jerde
 - a. Dwight Jerde is Chair. Other members: Chuck Weswig, Amy Harker, Allison Katsufakis, Gretchen Bancroft, Pastor Allison. Started meeting in April.
 - b. Introduction of 2025-2028 Council Nominees: Janet Vorvick for second term, Scott Anderson, Tracie Semenchalam, Casey Tkacz, and Evan McGarvey - for 1 year (Youth Representative renominated by St. Andrew Youth)
 - c. Nominations from the Floor: None

- d. **Vote** to approve Council Nominees: (yellow ballot)
 In Favor: At least 71 for all candidates.
 Janet Vorvick: 71 Scott Anderson: 76 Evan McGarvey: 76 Tracie Semenchalam: 74 Casey Tkacz: 76
All Nominees voted in!
- 2026 Nominating Committee:
 Introduction of 2026 candidates: 3 needed from congregation at-large.
 Nominees: Sonja Ackman, Dana Blakemore, Tom Jelineo. 2 Council members will be added after the new Council is formed. 2-3 people have already agreed to be on Council next year.
- Nominations from the Floor: None
- **Vote** to approve candidates for Nominating Committee: (blue ballot) 72 ballots submitted.
 In Favor: 72 for all candidates.
All Nominees voted in!

12. Finances & Funds:

- Finance Team Overview & Explanation of Funds: Co-Treasurer Tim Duggan
 - a. **Reference written Annual Report & Annual Meeting Member Packet for details.**
 - b. Explanation of M&M Fund and PIPE Fund. PIPE Fund will fund Heating & Cooling Upgrades - A/C in Sanctuary and replacement of 3 furnaces.
 - c. 19 Designated Funds have been closed to reduce number of these funds. Donations have been moved into M&M Fund so now listed in the Budget.
 - d. Church has a “line of credit” – can draw additional funds if needed. Up to \$50,000. CD with money from CARES money. This money was a government tax rebate for continuing operations during the pandemic.
 - e. Mortgage paid off.
- Annual Financial Review Report/Status Update: Jeff Smith
 - a. **Reference written Annual Report for details**
 - b. Jeff was the only person on the Financial Review Committee this year. He reported that the Church finances are in good order. He will make some recommendations to the Finance Team.
 - c. Jeff will be reviewing and explaining finances to Council, in more detail, at August meeting.
- Stewardship Committee: Pastor Allison
 - a. **Reference Stewardship Campaign Results provided at Annual Meeting** – review and explanation of these results.
 - b. Highest pledges on record for the Church.
 - c. 2025 Stewardship Campaign was in February and very successful. Reached 93% of our goal for increased weekly giving. Reached our goal for collecting intent cards. Bonus Gifts secured and added to 2025 total Intended Giving.
- Proposed Ministry & Mission (M&M) Funding Plan: Co-Treasurer Tim Duggan
 - a. **Reference abbreviated budget information** – Page 12 of Member Packet. Review and explanation provided.

- b. **Reference Revenue forecast**, page 12 of Member Packet and **Operating Budget, HR Budget**, page 13 of Member Packet – Review & explanation provided.
- c. **Reference 2025-2026 Budget Forum**, page 14 of Member Packet – Review & explanation of Mortgage, Revenue, Expenses, and Designated Funds.
- d. Healthy financial expectations.
- e. Questions and discussion. Clarified the ongoing church maintenance separate from major PIPE fund expenses. Need future work on increasing “regular giving” instead of depending upon individual large dollar donations.
- Congregational Vote on Budget: (green ballot)
 - a. **Motion** by Tom Jelineo, Lynn Santelmann 2nd to approve the Budget as presented.
 - 73 Present. In Favor: 67 Opposed: 2 Abstentions: 4
 - Motion passes.**

Meeting temporarily adjourned for Foundation’s Annual Meeting – 8:27 p.m.

13. The St. Andrew Foundation: Tom Mehlhorn, President

- Separate corporation from St. Andrew Lutheran Church, tax-exempt 501C3 status through the ELCA.
- Tom called meeting to order: 8:32 p.m.
- **Reference Annual Report** for the Foundation’s 2024 accomplishments, page 36-39. Reviewed the information regarding Scholarships & Grants.
- Now looking at how to best make grants from the Foundation, in the church or related to the church.
- Reviewed “Giving to the Foundation”.
- Members: Tom Mehlhorn, President. Pastor Allison, Dan Fako, Luis Flores, Dwight Jerde, Tira Nessel, Randy Sinn, Lynetta Weswig
- **Reference Written Financial Report in Annual Report**, page 40. Calendar year: January-December is Foundation’s fiscal year as noted in Report.
- Presented name for new board member: Rick Koch
 - VOTE**, with hand raising, to approve Rick Koch as new board member.
 - Favor: All with 1 Abstention
 - Rick voted in!**
- Foundation Meeting adjourned: 8:47 p.m.

St. Andrew Annual Meeting Resumes - 8:48 p.m.

14. Written Ballot Results:

- Presented to congregation and listed above
 - a. Maintaining RIC Status: Elisabeth Hardy
 - 60 Yes, 4 No, 2 Abstentions
 - b. Congregation Council Members: Dwight Jerde, Nominating Committee
 - At least 71 Yes for all candidates. Janet Vorvick: 71, Scott Anderson: 76, Evan McGarvey: 76, Tracie Semenchalam: 74, Casey Tkacz: 76
 - c. Nominating Committee Members: Dwight Jerde, Nominating Committee
 - 72 votes Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

- d. Ministry & Mission (M&M) Funding Plan: Elisabeth Hardy
 - 73 ballots submitted - 67 yes, 2 no, 4 Abstentions.

SENDING

- 15. **Announcements:** Elisabeth Hardy, Council President
- 16. **Closing Prayer:** Sister India Jensen Kerr
- 17. **Meeting Adjourned:** 8:52 p.m. by Elisabeth Hardy, Council President

Respectfully submitted by: Noelle Mehlhorn, *Council Secretary*

Council Nominees

Cindy Stadel (she/her):

As an educator with training, degrees, and experience in adult literacy, I worked for many years with folks involved in the justice system. As a pilgrim, my faith was formed midst the Jesus Movement of the late '60s and early '70s. My knowledge of Christian community and spirituality have since been shaped by Mennonite, Quaker, and now Lutheran communities. I am deeply moved and challenged by St. Andrew's commitment to welcome all and our core tenets of God care, earth care, community care, neighbor care, and self-care. Here at St. Andrew, I've been engaged with The Roots program, Sanctuary Team, Safety Team efforts, and Church Council. I'm inspired by the Earth Care Team and sustained by friendships with people here. I would be honored to serve a second term in Church Council.



Amy Harker (she/her):

I joined St. Andrews Lutheran Church in 2012 after searching for a Reconciling in Christ congregation near my home. It was important to me that my sons, Sam and David, attend a church that was welcoming to all. My husband, Geoff, and mother-in-law, Carol, joined soon after, as did my parents, Doug and Jan Morrell, when they later moved to Oregon. Over the years, I taught Sunday School and helped manage the acolyte program, and currently help in the nursery, usher with the help of Geoff, and serve as a Financial Secretary. I hope to now serve on the council as a way to learn more about the church and help keep it strong and growing.

Jon Thorpe (he/him):

Jon was born in Romania and adopted at the age of 2 before coming to the U.S. and spending most of his childhood in Salem, OR. In high school, his family moved up to Washington where he met his now wife, Christie, in youth group at St. Andrew's Lutheran in Bellevue. Jon studied civil engineering at Gonzaga University and later earned his MBA from the University of Washington. Jon and Christie moved to Portland in 2022 and joined St. Andrew in 2025 shortly after their daughter, Kaiya, was born. They were attracted to St. Andrew because the congregation was so welcoming of young families and they quickly befriended other members in a similar stage of life. Since joining, Jon has been involved in volunteer tree planting/nature cleanups as well as playing the cello during Advent and Lent worship services. He is so encouraged by the growth St. Andrew has experienced over recent years and hopes to use his time on council to support and grow a vibrant congregation.



Noelle Mehlhorn (she/her):

Noelle has lived in Oregon since 2014, moving here with her husband from Albuquerque, NM to be closer to family. She loves her family activities, quilting projects, fun times with her dog “Chaco”, and traveling adventures. Noelle has been serving on the Church Council for 3 years and is now running for re-election. She has also been serving as the Council Secretary for 2 ½ years. Other church activities include “Nifty Notters”, Altar Guild, Service Committee, Nomination Committee, Constitution Update Committee, Earth Camp, and Ushering. Noelle continues to be grateful for the opportunity to help on the Church Council, meet many new people, and learn about St. Andrew’s exciting activities within the church and outreach into the community.



Karen Zocchi (she/her):

I was born in Pittsfield, Massachusetts and my parents moved to Oregon when I was 3, so I’m “almost” a native. I earned a degree in Math & Psychology at University of Washington, then worked for the federal government in the DC area for 3 years. It turns out I’m not a fan of heat and humidity, so I returned to Oregon, earned my MS in Computer Science at OSU and worked for Tektronix and Intel. I’m now retired. I have 2 sons who are fans of hot summers, one lives in California and the other lives in Orlando. I have 3 grandchildren and one foster grandson.



I originally joined St. Andrew in 1980, but then we moved, life happened and I attended various churches in the area. I feel most at home at St. Andrew and hope to make meaningful contributions. I am the treasurer of the service committee and often take-home quilt squares to sew for the Nifty Notters. I look forward to learning more about our church and am especially interested in outreach activities.

My last name rhymes with Rocky.

Budget Overview

For the Budget Forum on June 7, 2026, Council President Chuck Weswig shared this summary of the funding plan for St. Andrew for fiscal year 2026-2027. If you would like a copy of his presentation in its entirety, please contact the church office. Highlights are included below:

St Andrew Actual & Budget Comparisons					
Finance Budget Committee: Joel Johnson, Ron Castner, Tim Duggan, Tracy Powell, Chuck Weswig, & Pr Allison					
	23-24	24-25	25-26	25-26	26-27
	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual @ 4/30/26	Proposed Budget
M&M Revenue					
Offerings					
Intended Offerings	\$603,098.07	\$606,539.71	\$555,029.40	\$524,367.47	\$598,710.00
Other Offerings			\$112,571.00	\$163,734.00	\$82,813.00
Special Offerings					\$29,000.00
Building Use Fees	\$38,255.84	\$50,196.10	\$40,487.00	\$40,744.20	\$49,452.00
Interest - Key Bank	\$665.89	\$3,512.65		\$3,378.18	
Total M&M Revenue	\$642,019.80	\$660,248.46	\$708,087.40	\$732,223.85	\$759,975.00
M&M Expenses					
Category Expenses					
Benevolence - Synod	\$47,953.54	\$54,182.14	\$56,746.00	\$60,093.39	\$56,841.840
Local Benevolence - Service Committee	\$9,424.64	\$8,799.29	\$10,014.00	\$10,604.71	\$14,210.46
Administrative	\$45,219.70	\$53,058.38	\$65,100.00	\$54,516.97	\$60,800.00
Building, Grounds & Equipment	\$66,680.82	\$71,914.57	\$82,750.00	\$54,633.58	\$85,700.00
Ministries	\$7,910.32	\$5,388.17	\$11,700.00	\$4,336.61	\$11,050.00
Worship	\$6,146.91	\$9,322.67	\$12,129.00	\$9,282.57	\$13,479.00
Other	\$4,496.55	(\$942.26)	\$8,300.00	\$1,390.91	\$6,000.00
Total Category Expenses	\$187,832.48	\$201,722.96	\$246,739.00	\$194,858.74	\$248,081.30
Human Resources Expenses					
Employer HR Expense	\$34,444.94	\$36,854.04	\$37,711.00	\$30,719.17	\$36,203.48
Lay Staff	\$251,624.96	\$271,321.39	\$336,900.26	\$242,961.19	\$351,244.52
Clergy Staff	\$176,432.04	\$153,869.56	\$154,951.50	\$129,096.22	\$143,145.74
Contract Expense	\$11,139.50	\$15,641.16	\$9,665.84	\$15,637.21	\$11,831.00
Total Human Resources Expenses	\$473,641.44	\$477,686.15	\$539,228.60	\$418,413.79	\$542,424.74
Total M&M Expenses	\$661,473.92	\$679,409.11	\$785,967.60	\$613,272.53	\$790,506.04
Net Revenue (Overall Surplus/Deficit)	(\$19,454.12)	(\$19,160.65)	(\$77,880.20)	\$118,951.32	(\$30,531.04)

Annual Meeting: Transition Consultation Update

Prepared for St. Andrew Lutheran Church | June 2026

It has been a profound privilege to walk alongside you this past year as your Transition Consultant. Change is rarely a straight line. When major staff or clergy transitions occur, the Bishop asks congregations to work with consultants such as myself to engage in faithful, strategic periods of reflection to discern what the most Spirit-led, missionally-aligned, and sustainable next step might be. As you gather for your Annual Meeting, I want to share an overview of my work alongside your Council, Staff, Community Organizing Team, Human Resources Committee, and other leaders to strengthen your foundations and clarify the pathway for a sustainable future for St. Andrew Lutheran's staffing.

1. The Heart of Our Work: Relational One-to-Ones

At the center of this transition was a commitment to **One-to-One Relational Meetings**. These were not merely 'interviews' but intentional spiritual practices designed to weave relational connection.

Why I Did Them: I utilized over 20 individual conversations with various current and former members & staff to surface the collective 'wisdom of the pews,' creating space for you to share deep hopes, griefs, and imagination for St. Andrew.

The Goal: To move from private opinions toward shared, interwoven vision of what this church might be and become in the next generation.

2. Equipping Leadership: Staff, Council, and other Teams

We invested deeply in the health and skills of St. Andrew's leaders through intensive retreats and ongoing training.

Staff Development & Culture:

- **Supervision as Covenant:** We utilized Susan Beaumont's When Moses Meets Aaron to redefine staff supervision as a covenantal partnership rather than a top-down hierarchy and built a Staff Relational Covenant.

- **Cultural Humility Tools:** We worked to understand the diverse cultural standpoints within St. Andrew, including among the staff, that create not only opportunities but challenges to ministry (and how to work with the Spirit to engage these differences well).

- **Operational Skills:** Staff developed skills for creating behavioral/partnership covenants, team-based decision-making-strategies, and designing meetings for more diverse cultural/learning needs.

Council Development:

- **Governance v. Management:** We clearly differentiated between the roles of Council, staff, and parishioner/volunteers to properly direct resources (including time and energy) and minimize process confusion, redundancy, and leadership burnout.

- **Ministering Effectively and Sustainably in a Program-Sized Congregation:** The Council learned structural opportunities, needs, and limits to leading a 'Program-Church' sized ELCA congregation such as St. Andrew in the 21st century in the PNW.

- **Creating Sustainable, Adaptive Solutions in a Polycrisis World:** We analyzed real-world threats and pressures on individual, congregational, community, and church-wide resources to assist wiser strategic decision-making for the parish's long term mission.

Specialized Teams & Findings

- **Community Organizing Team:** This group focused on helping the congregation's collective voice, wisdom, and concerns be heard through the Listening Sessions that were held Nov-Dec. and which will fundamentally shape the recommendations I make regarding staffing opportunities arising within St. Andrew.

- **Ad Hoc Sustainability Investigation Team:** This team was tasked with a deep dive into congregational resources (physical space/grounds, finances, and people power) and developed an extensive analysis of those resources to support the Council's decision making.

3. From Listening to Life: 'Wisdom of the Pews'

Through relational meetings and themed weekly congregational listening sessions held Nov-Dec. 2025, we identified a central theme: moving from **Isolation to Interdependence**.

Examples of Shared Desires of the Congregation:

- **Mutuality:** A shift from transactional engagement to a model of mutual contribution.

- **Spaciousness:** A cross-generational desire for the 'Gift of Time' and a slower, more intentional pace.

- **Authentic Belonging:** The need for 'Designated Places' where younger members find **authenticity** and elder members find **agency and legacy**.

4. Pathways Forward: Strategic Recommendations

My 9-month work will culminate in clear recommendations of Pathways for staffing and structural re/development that prioritize long-term resilience over immediate fixes, and take into account the listening, analysis, and sustainability assessment accomplished since September.

Looking Ahead

I hope the foundations we have laid this year—rooted in relationship, stewardship, and solving adaptive challenges—will serve as support for your future ministry. Thank you for your courage, your honesty, and your commitment. The Spirit is moving through St. Andrew, and it is a joy to witness. I look forward to sharing my recommendations with you and watching God at work in your midst.

In Peace and Partnership,



Pr. Julia Nielsen, *Transition Consultant*
Oregon Synod