

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH – DURHAM, NC

Congregational Assembly – Sunday, May 23, 2021

Our Mission

We Welcome Everyone to Walk the Way of GRACE: to GROW with Jesus, REJOICE in God, ANSWER with hope, CARE for the neighbor, and EMBRACE community.

Our Vision

GOD HAS A PLAN

FOR OUR LIVES, and so we teach how to walk in the path of Jesus Christ;

FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOODS, and so we work to build healthy, strong communities;

FOR OUR CITY, and so we share life with our neighbors in Walltown, Trinity Park, Duke, and the Triangle; and

FOR OUR WORLD, and so we go with Good News.

A G E N D A

1. Opening Prayer – Pastor Brooks
2. Reading and Approval of Proxies¹
3. Presentation of New Voters²
4. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting
5. Pastor's Comments
6. Statistical Report (November 5, 2020-May 21, 2021)
7. Ministry Reports (see attached)
8. Election of Officers
9. Recognition of Judy Barnes, former Altar Guild leader
10. Announcements, Other Business, Open Discussion
11. Adjournment
12. Closing Prayer

¹ Proxy voting shall be allowed for adequate reason, i.e., illness or other requirements that prevent attendance. Proxies must be submitted **in writing** and will be approved by the Assembly prior to conducting any business.

² New voting members shall have read and signed the Constitution and By-laws of Grace Lutheran Church and shall be received at the beginning of the meeting.

Voter's Meeting Minutes - November 15, 2020

Meeting Started at 12:30pm

Due to Covid19 there were some physically present and others attending via Zoom meeting.

Pastor opened with prayer.

Becky Thomas read the 28 proxies. Gary Stuhlmiller motioned to approve the proxies. Scott Gesell seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Donna Gesell presented the new voters. Sharon Brooks, Jenna and Drew Young. Gary Stuhlmiller motioned to approve the new voters. Chris Wethman seconded the motion. All were in favor.

A quorum was present.

Ken Kempel motioned to approve the minutes of the last meeting as presented. Kent Silvernail seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Pastor's comments. He asked us to encourage one another.

Gary Stuhlmiller motioned to approve the statistical report as presented. Judy Barnes seconded the motion. All were in favor.

There was no discussion on the printed ministry reports.

- Gary Stuhlmiller orally presented the Ministry of Outreach report.
 - Touched by Grace served 157 the day of the event. Others were served in the following weeks with bagged food. The leftover clothes were given to Walltown Ministry.
 - Operation Christmas Child finishes next Sunday.
 - Angel Tree will be next.
 - The next Touched by Grace event will be September 25, 2021.
- Donna clarified on the Treasurer's report that the negative balance in worship budget is due to the cost of guest musicians. The difference is in salary as there was a no musician salary during this time. Net there isn't much of a difference.

Diane Pearson motioned to approve the ministry reports. Ken Kempel seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Funding the Ministry in 2021

- The lay ministers from each area prepared budgets for their ministry.
- Donna stated that there were very few changes from prior year budgets.

- The biggest difference is the \$32,000 in sanctuary lighting. Gary spoke on the capital projects.
 - The elevator will be a future project.
 - The door on the resource room was completed already.
 - Lighting in the sanctuary is needed to cover dark spots. This will enhance the virtual church service. The lighting project will be broken into phases. The first phase is replacing the lights in the front of the sanctuary.
 - It will be financed via special appeal.
 - Geoff suggested we look at it with all the equipment needed for live streaming.

Scott Gesell motioned to approve the proposed operating budget. Tom McGill seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Jeff Gilman read the message from Dave Schultz; he is stepping down as president since they have moved. Jeff thanked Dave and Marg for their service.

Chris Wethman made the following motion: RESOLVED, that Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, as a standing resolution to remain in force and effect until such time as amended or revoked, hereby authorizes and establishes a housing allowance for Rev. David H. Brooks at any time serving in the amount of \$20,400 per year. Gary Stuhlmiller seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ken Kempel motioned to adjourn the meeting. Gary Stuhlmiller seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Becky Thomas, Secretary

Treasurers Report
Congregational Assembly meeting of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Overall Budget

Ministry	2021 Budget	2021 Add. Giving	2021 YTD Expenses	Remaining
Administration	234,926.15		60413.89	174512.26
Education	4,178.50	59	751.42	3486.08
Fellowship	1000		234.8	1000
Mutual Care	2,635		734.31	2635
Outreach	17,500			17500
Pastoral	8,150		28.99	8150
Properties & Facilities	57,780.00		15138.69	57780
Stewardship	250			250
Worship	10,100		4357.95	10100
Totals	336,519.65		81660.05	275413.34

Quarterly Budget	Quarter #1	Quarter #2	Quarter #3	Quarter #4
Income:				
General Envelopes	82223.16			
General Plate	122			
Miscellaneous	6421.97			
Total	88767.13			
Running Total		88767.13	88767.13	88767.13

LAY MINISTRY REPORTS

Reports to the Congregational Assembly meeting of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church May 23, 2021 // 12:30 PM

From Lay Minister of Administration, Vacant

From Lay Minister of Education, Bev Hudgins
May 23, 2021

Education Ministry Report Activities since November 2020 Upcoming:

- Planning an alternative to VBS. Perhaps some family events in June, a neighborhood scavenger hunt partnering with Jordan Lutheran in July and a backpack, shoe event in August.
 - iNeighborhood classes - Sunday between services
 - Life gifts classes ???
 - July Ministry and Mission classes ???
 - Children's Sunday School in the fall. Need teachers.
 - Ongoing: Spiritual Conversation classes online Saturday mornings, in-person Sundays between services. Availability of RightNow Media for small group and/or individual study.
 - Pastor Brooks offering visitor meet-up Monthly (A Taste of Grace).
 - New Attenders classes - Saturday mornings in June.
 - Children's Zoom Sunday School will finish May 23.
 - Completed: Women's Bible studies X2.
 - On The Road Again Bible study led by Pastor Brooks during Lent
 - Goals: spiritual formation, learn to live the WAY of Grace, make disciples (multiply).
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From Lay Minister of Fellowship, Kae Huggins
May 23, 2021

COVID has largely prevented most activities. We did provide box lunches following a funeral, packed and delivered 44 sacked pancake dinners for Shrove Tuesday and provided coffee and crumb cake between services on Easter Sunday. It is hoped the Annual Picnic can be held in the fall when there are no more restrictions.

From Lay Minister of Mutual Care, Barb Tippin
May 23, 2021

During the last 6 months, the Deacons/Mutual Care have been working on the following:

- Deacons have continued to meet monthly either virtually or in person, depending upon the status of the pandemic.
- Deacons are studying the book *Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health* by Donald Whitney. This book asks 10 probing questions to diagnose spiritual health and guide us on our journey of spiritual transformation. Joyce leads us each month in our study.

- Deacons sent personal notes in cards and gift cards to 15 college and military members and friends of Grace in April. Included in each card was a \$10 Starbucks gift card. We are hopeful that either in late fall or next spring we will be able to pack boxes with hand baked goodies again.
- Deacons continue to lift up members, visitors, inactive members and friends of Grace in prayer. The seven Deacons have been making calls and sending cards to members during the Covid pandemic to check in on them and let them know that they are being thought of. We are also keeping members and friends of Grace in prayer.
- Mutual Care/Compassion Ministry delivered hot cross buns and a card with a personal note to our shut-ins not living in congregate settings at Easter. We mailed Easter cards with personal notes to our members who are in congregate settings.
- Mutual Care/Compassion Ministry plans to bring lunch to our Miss Mollie's teachers and helpers for Teacher Appreciation week during the month of May.

Mutual Care Ministry also encompasses the following and work in these ministries is ongoing:

- Bereavement Ministry – Specializes in supporting congregation members who have experienced the death of loved ones by offering comfort to those who mourn with Stephen Ministry books. Grace continues supporting Growing Thru Grief throughout the year. Joyce Rea is the Deacon who serves in this special ministry.
- Stephen Ministry – Provides support for congregation members who are struggling with life's difficult problems. Two members are completing training with 8 active Stephen Ministers at Grace. Stephen Ministers typically meet each week with their care receivers for an hour or more as needed (currently with Covid, telephone ministry and video chat with some in person now) and attend monthly supervision meetings (currently via teleconference or in person).
- Healing and Recovery Ministry – Provides care for those who are ill or in crisis through practical support (meals, transportation, etc.) and visits as needed or requested. Grace Friends Ministry— Provides for an introduction to Grace for new members and friends. The Grace Friends assimilation process typically takes 2 about months. This ministry has been on hold during the Covid pandemic.
- Prayer Shawl Ministry – ongoing creation of wonderful prayer shawls to share care, comfort and the love of our Savior to those who are suffering in various ways. Anyone who can knit, or crochet can be an important part of this ministry.

*From Stephen Ministers of Grace, Joyce Rea and Joe Wethman, leaders.
May 23, 2021*

The Stephen Ministers of Grace want to thank the Congregation for the opportunity to support Care Receivers in times of Stress, Sadness, and or Grief.

- In the past, we have had men and woman contact either Pastor, Joyce Rea, or Joe Wethman, in confidence, about their personnel concerns.
- We as Stephen Leaders then select one of our Stephen Ministers to fit the person and their situation.
- We have seven Stephen Ministers at, our Church. At the present time only six are actively meeting with a Care Receiver.
- If you feel you would like to know more about our Stephen Ministry at Grace either as a recipient of our care or what it takes to become a Stephen Minister, contact Pastor, Joyce or Joe.

From Lay Minister of Outreach, Gary Stuhlmiller

May 23, 2021

Committed Community Formation:

- With the shroud of Covid easing, it is a time for a re-awakening of many church functions. In essence, we are re-starting the congregation and its activities. It's an opportune time to remember what the first disciples did when they, through the power of the Holy Spirit, originally started the church - they joyfully and intentionally shared the gospel as far and as wide as they were empowered to do so. Outreach ministry is intending to partner with other Lutheran Churches in our circuit, and perhaps beyond, to form a Committed Community/ies. As the disciples spent time learning from Jesus, so we will spend time learning first.
- Rev Schroeder, our district facilitator, will lead a 6-week bible study with teams of persons who have a heart for reaching out with the Gospel. Such a team is now forming at Grace, and all are invited to participate, without further commitment. This bible study will center on the books of Haggai and Luke, and will begin on June 21 in the evening, via Zoom. After the initial bible study, participants will be given the opportunity to continue in further study. So likewise, teams will form at other participating congregations.
- Touched by Grace: TBG 2021 is scheduled for September 25. Thanks to Jacob and Kayla Robinson for again serving as Co-Leaders for this event. After much prayerful consideration, we have decided that it is still too soon to host the full event. Again this year, we will make available pre-packaged food and clothing, Bibles and prayer. Look for more information shortly.
- Walltown Community Ministry- Thank you to all who volunteer to help with food distribution and shopping, and to our team of leaders, Mo and Joe.

Other on-going activities of the outreach ministry include:

- LWML and their regular weekly quilting gathering, Sponsorship of Krista Young in Africa, and Duke Lutherans.
- Anticipated events for the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons include participate in Operation Christmas Child and the Angel Tree.

From Columbarium Board Chair, Dede Crosmer

May 23, 2021

The Columbarium Board was appointed by the congregational president in July 2018.

Current members are:

- Dede Crosmer (chair, 3-year term – term ends in 2021)
- Kathy Pittman (reappointed to a 3-year term – term ends in 2023)
- Greg Taylor (3-year term ends in 2022)

No additional niches have been reserved since the November 2020 voters meeting, 41 remain.

Eligibility for interment in the Columbarium is restricted to members of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, a spouse, parents, children and grandchildren, subject to review and approval of the Columbarium Board.

Eligibility of others, such as a 'significant' prior member or other with special relationship to a member shall be determined by the Columbarium Board, with consultation with the Pastor. If anyone is interested in purchasing a niche, please contact the church office.

From Grace House Administrators, Dede Crosmer & Donna Gesell
May 23, 2021.

Upstairs of Grace House continues to be used in cooperation with Host Homes program of Duke University Medical Center for family members of patients receiving treatment at Duke who are from outside the Durham area. We opened Grace House back up to families after the Covid restrictions were lifted. Since the November 2020 voters meeting, we have had two families stay in Grace House and have one family there at the present time.

Each family is met by one of the Grace House coordinators (Dede Crosmer or Donna Gesell) to orient them to the home and give them keys to the house. We try to touch base with them weekly while they are there to make sure they are not in need of anything and that all is working well in the house.

Smoke detectors and air filters are checked and changed on a regular basis.

The downstairs is used for church meetings, Early Head Start and Duke Lutherans.

The sheetrock has been replaced and finished in the downstairs laundry room.

Quote has been received to power wash Grace House and has been approved by council.

From Lay Minister of Property & Facilities, Mike Hunike
May 23, 2021

During the last 6 months, the Properties and Facilities have been working on the following:

- Front railing is almost done and we are sanding the railing on Grace house parking lot, railing going down alley. Painting these soon.
- Mr. Lloyd Reddick and son, John replaced all lower lights in Narthex and sanctuary with new Led lights.
- The neighbor put up new fence on Grace house side and we helped in getting it finished.
- Working on putting up signs to better our fire awareness protocol per Fire Marshal
- Keeping the bottom parking lot clear of weeds and under bush.
- We will continue to change air filters every three months for the HVAC to help with air clearer.
- Getting the Grace House and Church pressured wash to make buildings cleaner to look at.

Properties and Facilities is always looking for individuals that would like to help keep our facility running and looking good. Our future projects that we will be working on:

- Rewiring project - for the outlet and pole light in the courtyard.
- Installing new posts for the parking lot signs.
- Replacing all water shutoff on the toilets and urinals.

- Putting in a drain for front gutter at Grace House.
 - Paint the back railings on Grace House side.
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From Lay Minister of Stewardship, Kent Silvernail

May 23, 2021

No meeting was held since last General Assembly meeting.

Who We Are: Donna Gesell, Ken Kempel, Tom McGill, Kent Silvernail, Elmo & Donna Walston, and Joe Wethman.

From Lay Minister of Worship, Geoff Heintzelman

May 23, 2021

Over the past several months, the Worship Ministry team has been very busy. The team has been meeting twice a month. On the first Wednesday, we focus on worship logistics, and on the third Wednesday, we focus on strategy and planning. I would like to thank everyone that has been working with the team so far. I'm very grateful for their dedication to regularly attend these meetings and to move forward during the pandemic. We have used this time to evaluate everything associated with worship and determine how to adapt to the present situation and needs of the church. In the paragraphs that follow, you'll read about our progress.

- 1) Given the current COVID-19 situation, one of our primary concerns has been to continuously evaluate our current guidelines and adjust accordingly. We have recently increased the attendance limit, as more people are getting vaccinated, so we hope that more people will feel comfortable attending worship.
- 2) We've recognized the value of the online worship experience. Accordingly, some new equipment has been purchased and we are working hard to keep the online and call-in options running smoothly. If you ever have any problems with participating at home or have any suggestions, please call me or the church office. We're also training several volunteers to bring these services to you each week.
- 3) We added a Saturday Easter Vigil service this year, and we were very grateful with the participation. We are also considering adding other mid-week services (i.e., Ascension) throughout the year.
- 4) Our worship liturgy is now taken from the *Lutheran Service Book* published from Concordia Publishing House, the publisher of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Support from the publisher of our old hymnals has stopped. In the weeks ahead, you will notice that some of the liturgy that has been spoken will be sung.
- 5) Judy Barnes is stepping down as the leader of the Altar Guild, a position in which she has served for approximately 20 years. Please take this opportunity to thank Judy for her dedicated service, as well as all the other volunteers who serve on the Altar Guild. The Altar Guild will be meeting in early May to discuss how to best meet the needs of our worship services and ways to best organize the way they serve.
- 6) Scheduling volunteers to support worship each Sunday can be a daunting task. We are working on the implementation of a new scheduling program. This automated program will allow us to schedule volunteers more efficiently for all aspects of our ministry, send out reminder notices, and allow volunteers to access and change their schedule. We will initially use this to schedule readers for the services and will roll it out to more positions gradually.

- 7) Recognizing worship trends helps us plan for communion each week. Identifying attendance patterns is crucial to connecting with members. Recording numbers gives us the data we need to report statistics to the Synod. These are some of the reasons we will soon be placing attendance cards in the pew racks for you to fill out. The individual cards will replace the attendance sign-in books. One side of the card will be for members; the other for guests. Online worshipers will also have a digital registration card. Please watch the eNews and take the time to tell us when you attend worship in any way.

We are always considering ways to enhance our worship time together, so please let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions.

Our team: Judy Barnes, Pastor Brooks, Geoff Heintzelman, John Kolba, Richard Kuehn, Barbara Stiles, Greg Taylor, Barb Tippin, Mo Walston, Chris Wethman, and Jenna Young.

*From the A/V (Audio Visual) Team, Joe Wethman
May 23, 2021*

We want to take this time to thank all those who support the Sunday Worship Service, A/V live streaming at 11AM, and those who volunteered to be trained in the near future. We are able to support a phone conference and a live streaming process for those that are not able to attend in person. So, when you see a A/V person after worship thank them for their support. We will be training more volunteers on the system and use them on a rotational basis with those who have already been trained.

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Congregational Assembly Meeting - May 23, 2021
Statistical Report – November 4, 2020 through May 10, 2021

	Baptized	Confirmed
As of November 4, 2020	346	288
Deaths	-2	-2
Transfer to LCMS	-	-
Released to Other Churches	-1	-1
Baptism	+2	N/A
Members Received by Transfer from LCMS Church	+1	+1
Members Received by Transfer from Other Lutheran Church	-	-
Members Received via New Member Instruction (Affirmation)	-	-
Communicant Members Received (Jr. Confirmation)	-	-
Total Membership as of 05/10/2021	346	286
MEMBER DEATHS:		
Karla Beu Reich	Date of Death: 07/15/20. Graveside service held at a later time. <i>(Note: Karla's death was not reported on the 2020 Congregational Assembly Statistical Report in November).</i>	
Barbara Jeanne Murray	Date of Death: 11/07/20. Inurnment at Grace Lutheran Church Columbarium on 11/25/20.	
BAPTISMS:		
Theodore James de Talence	Baptized 01-24-2021	
Cairo Carl Mhina	Baptized 04-25-2021	
MEMBERS RECEIVED BY TRANSFER FROM LCMS CHURCH:		
Betty Newman <i>(Homebound)</i>	LCMS – St. Paul Lutheran Church Montgomery, AL 36109-3102 Received February 23, 2021	
MEMBERS RELEASED TO OTHER CHURCHES:		
Christina Hanson	Released, April 7, 2021. Joined another church, per phone request. Church Unknown.	

SLATE OF OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED FOR THE 2021 THRU 2023 TERM

The Nominating Committee would like to thank all of the people that prayerfully considered being an officer for the next two years. Many of our officers have graciously agreed to continue on with their work for the next term. We are grateful for their experience and willingness to serve. We are also excited for the chance to have new people with additional insights added to our Parish Ministry Council.

<u>Office</u>	<u>Nominee</u>
President	Christine Wethman
Treasurer	Donna Gesell
Lay Minister of Administration	Erin Romes
Lay Minister of Education	Beverly Hudgins
Lay Minister of Fellowship	Vacant
Lay Minister of Outreach	Gary Stuhlmiller
Properties & Facilities	Mike Hunike
Lay Minister of Stewardship	Tom McGill
Deacon	Joyce Rea
Deacon	Gary Stuhlmiller
Deacon	Barbara Tippin

Nominating Committee: Walt Crosmer, Donna Gesell and Dave Pittman

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Christine Wethman (Chris)

Position: President

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

This November, Joe and I will celebrate our 49th wedding anniversary. We have two daughters Lisa (lives in Mebane NC) and Kelly (lives in Deltona, FL). We also have two grandchildren – DJ who is 7 and Grace who just turned 3.

I was born in Brooklyn, NY but moved to South Jersey when I was 13 where I attended high school and met Joe. We then moved to Florida due to a job transfer and lived in the Orlando area for 30 years. We moved to Mebane in 2015.

After graduating high school I attended Brandywine College in Wilmington, DE for a brief period and then Seminole Community College. Later I earned a BS in Organizational Behavior from Rollins College in Winter Park, FL and a MS in Positive Organization Development and Change from the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH and a Certificate in Developing Leadership through Emotional Intelligence.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

For over 18 years I served in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Oviedo, FL. I started out as a volunteer in the church office and when I left in 2012 I was the Ministry Assistant to the Senior Pastor and also worked with the other three staff pastors, Director of Worship, Vicar, and DCE.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

During my tenure there I was office manager, finance assistant, membership coordinator, communications director, volunteer coordinator, and board liaison. I worked closely with our partner church about 15 miles away and helped coordinate a satellite location.

In my spare time, I served as a consultant helping other LCMS churches in FL, MN, and IA with strengths-based strategic planning and visioning. I facilitated a visioning session for the Lutheran Haven, a retirement center as they planned their next phase of development. While at St Luke's I served on the Assimilation Team, Stewardship Board, LWML President and Secretary, Adult Bible Study Teacher, Worship Team, Worship Planning Team, Nominating Committee, Capital Campaign Team Coordinator, Spiritual Gifts Team, Pastoral and Principal Call Committees.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church?

There is so much potential at Grace to have a positive impact for the Kingdom of God. I feel we are a blank canvas that God is getting ready to use all of us to paint a wonderful masterpiece! Exciting times are ahead and I am looking forward to our future together.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Donna Gesell

Position: Treasure

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I was born in Rock Hill, SC but grew up across several southern states following my Dad from church to church. I studied Radiologic Technology at UNC Memorial Hospital finishing in 1973. That is where I met my husband Scott. We have 2 children, Tony and Amy, and 4 grandchildren, Landon, Kaley, Kenzie and Mason. We are thrilled to spend as much time as possible watching our grandchildren compete in different sports activities.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I retired in 2016 from my position of Clinical Director of Orthopaedic Specialists of NC.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

I became a member of Grace after Scott and I married almost 48 years ago. I have been Treasurer for the last 4 years and look forward to continuing. I have been on the Altar Guild for about 40 years and in the choir almost as long. I have been a deacon in the past. I have also served as co-coordinator for the Touch By Grace hot meals. I assisted in children's Sunday School for a few years.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

I am excited that we have been able to keep ourselves together both financially and spiritually during the struggles of the last year. It shows that we have a really good group of dependable people as part of Grace. I am also excited that we have gained some new members during this time and look forward to all of us reuniting in fellowship and worship. As most of you know, I really look forward to the day we can all sing praises to our Lord together.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Erin Romes

Position: Lay Minister of Administration

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I was born and raised outside of Detroit, Michigan. I went to Albion College in Michigan to study Chemistry for my undergraduate degree. I started attending Grace while completing my PhD at UNC in Biochemistry and Biophysics.

Drew and I celebrated 10 years of marriage last year with our 3 girls; Caroline (8), Ellie (5), and Maggie (2). I don't have much free time, but when I have a few extra minutes I enjoy gardening, baking cakes, and swimming.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I am a Senior Process Development Scientist at Grifols Therapeutics where I help develop medicines from human blood plasma for patients with chronic conditions. At Grifols I am also the Outreach Coordinator for NC Research and Development where I help facilitate the R&D summer internship program.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

I was the Registration Coordinator for several years for the Touched by Grace outreach program.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church?

One reason we have been attending Grace for so long is that the members are so kind and Christ-centered. I really enjoy being part of the Touched by Grace ministry and I'm hopeful that we can continue to reach out to the local community. I think the pandemic made a lot of people reevaluate their lives and priorities and I'm encouraged with all of the changes that the church has made and can make in the future to adapt to accommodate families.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Beverly Hudgins

Position: Lay Minister of Education

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I grew up in the Pocono Mountains, PA. I came to Durham in 1969 to attend Duke nursing school, graduated in 1972 with a BSN and in 1978 with a MSN. When I married Leon in 1983, he had 5 children and we have two children. Together we have 7 grandchildren and 3 great-children. Our family is spread out in the East from Alabama to New York.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I am a retired RN, now working a few shifts a week in electroconvulsive therapy.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

This will be a consecutive term as Lay Minister of Education. I love my team and am inspired by what we have already accomplished and look forward to what the Lord has for us to do in the next two years to support the mission and vision of Grace.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church.

I feel that the Lord has been preparing Grace for something exciting about to happen. I think He is getting us serious about making disciples and sending us out into the world.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Gary M. Stuhlmiller

Position: Lay Minister of Outreach; Deacon

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I grew up in the suburbs of Buffalo, NY (Go Bills) and lived there until I graduated from Cornell University in 1972. I attended Duke for graduate school and earned my Ph.D. in 1976. Once that was completed, I served on the Duke faculty through 1989. I am twice married and have two sons, Josh and Danny. We joined Grace as a family in 1983. I am now married to Gisele have a daughter by marriage, Laticia, and two fabulous grandchildren, Leah and Tatum, with another grandson, Caleb, expected in June. Gisele and I live in Mebane.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I presently work at LabCorp in Burlington where I am a technical director in the DNA Identity Testing Division.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

I have twice served as President of the congregation at Grace, and have also served as Lay Minister of Mutual Care, Lay Minister of Worship, Lay Minister of Outreach, Twice Call Committee Chairperson, choir member, altar assistant and part-time janitor. I have also served as Touched by Grace Coordinator, and have been a confirmation instructor and leader in adult Bible study.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church?

Serving our Lord Jesus Christ, in any capacity, whether out in front where what you do is highly visible, or the seemingly humblest of chores, is a joy-filled blessing for me. I am serving Him who gave his all for me. With specific regard to my service at Grace, I give back only the smallest portion of what I have received the faithful preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments, through the fellowship with my brothers and sisters in Christ, and the challenge of a growing mission field ever closer to the church.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Mike Hunike

Position: Properties & Facilities

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I been a member here at Grace for 49 years. I grew up in northern part of Durham. Went to Western Carolina for a little ended up going to Alamance Community College getting a degree in Electronics. My wife Nancy and I have three boys Joseph, Jared and Jack. We live in Oxford. My family like outdoors going to the Kerr lake, Ocean, Taking trips to neat places.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I worked with the state of North Carolina as an Electronic Tech. I get much enjoyment on making things work again.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

I did teach Sunday school with the younger children. I use to like coming as a child with my Father Carl to help out with church things. I did help toast Eggo waffles for Easter breakfast those were the days.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

To get together with members and work, talk and enjoy fellowship as we tackle jobs around the church and Grace house. It fun to found out about the pass and present with our members. Everyone has so much history to share.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Tom McGill

Position: Lay Minister of Stewardship
Deacon

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I am 74 years old, grew up in a small town in Eastern North Carolina, Clinton. I graduated from Clinton High School in 1964 and NC State University in 1971 majoring in economics. I am divorced and had no children.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I am retired. I had several occupations beginning in finance (banking) ending up in production supervision.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

I am currently a deacon at Grace and for a couple of years I was an Elder.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church?

The most exciting thing I have found about Grace is that we worship a just and loving God through His Son, Jesus Christ. One of the most important things is that we take communion on our Kneels under the cross.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Joyce Rea
Position: Deacon

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I grew up in Columbus, Ohio, and went to Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where I met Dave Rea, my husband. We had three children and five grandchildren.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

I was an editor for a life insurance company in Baltimore, Maryland before retiring in 2000. That year I also earned an MS in Pastoral Counseling from Loyola University of Maryland.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

I have served as deacon for several years. As one of Grace's Stephen Leaders, Joe Wethman and I lead the Stephen Ministry. I'm also part of the prayer shawl ministry, prayer team coordinator, grief ministry, and LWML. I have also served as prayer team leader for Touched by Grace.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church?

I like the way we at Grace offer acceptance and support to members, visitors, and area organizations as a witness to our love and acceptance from Christ.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Name: Barb Tippin

Position: Deacon

Tell us about yourself and your family? Where you grew up? Went to school? Are you married? Children? Grandchildren?

I grew up in Tallahassee, FL. Entered the first class of women at the Air Force Academy in 1976 but later decided that military life and engineering were not my gifts, so I left the Academy and returned to Florida State University and completed an Art and Design degree. I initially worked in advertising and design for about 12 years and switched to textile design and did that for 28 years with emphasis in lace home décor products. After being let go from my last job of 20+ years due to a severe decline in business because of Covid, Grace reached out to me and offered me the office assistant job. The Lord indeed looked out for me again as He always does! I am happily single, have a brother in California and a sister in Florida who both have families.

What do you do for a living? If retired, what was your occupation?

See above for my past work and now I am happily working at Grace as the office assistant.

Have you served in other church positions here or at another church? Other volunteer or leadership positions held?

Trained in Stephen Ministry in the early 1990's when attending Grace. Was a part of our former 'Grace Groups' for both the Chapel Hill and Oxford groups many years ago. Played flute in the early service contemporary service way back in the day. I am currently a Stephen Minister and the Lay Minister of Mutual Care, along with being a Deacon for several years at Grace. I have also been lead Red Shirt for clothing for Touched by Grace for several years.

What excites you about the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church?

I am excited about the direction that was established with our new Mission and Vision statements at the Covenant Café. Covid hit not long after and has caused a long separation of members of our parish. As we begin to engage again I am eager to see how we all embrace our Mission with our ministries and really begin to Walk the Way of Grace.

A strong message of love, grace and mercy is taught here – a message that is so needed in our world. We are encouraged to trust God is with us in all things and to use the gifts He gives us to His glory.