

History of Grace House

Grace House, located at 820 Buchanan Street, was purchased by the congregation in 2004 after many years of thoughtful consideration. As early as 25 years prior, the church had expressed interest in the property and requested the opportunity for first refusal should it ever be sold.

When the opportunity finally came, the congregation voted unanimously to purchase the home—without a single fixed purpose, but with a shared commitment to faithful stewardship and openness to how God might use the space. From the beginning, Grace House was envisioned as a place of possibility, with ideas ranging from community housing and student use to ministry space for youth, seniors, and outreach efforts.

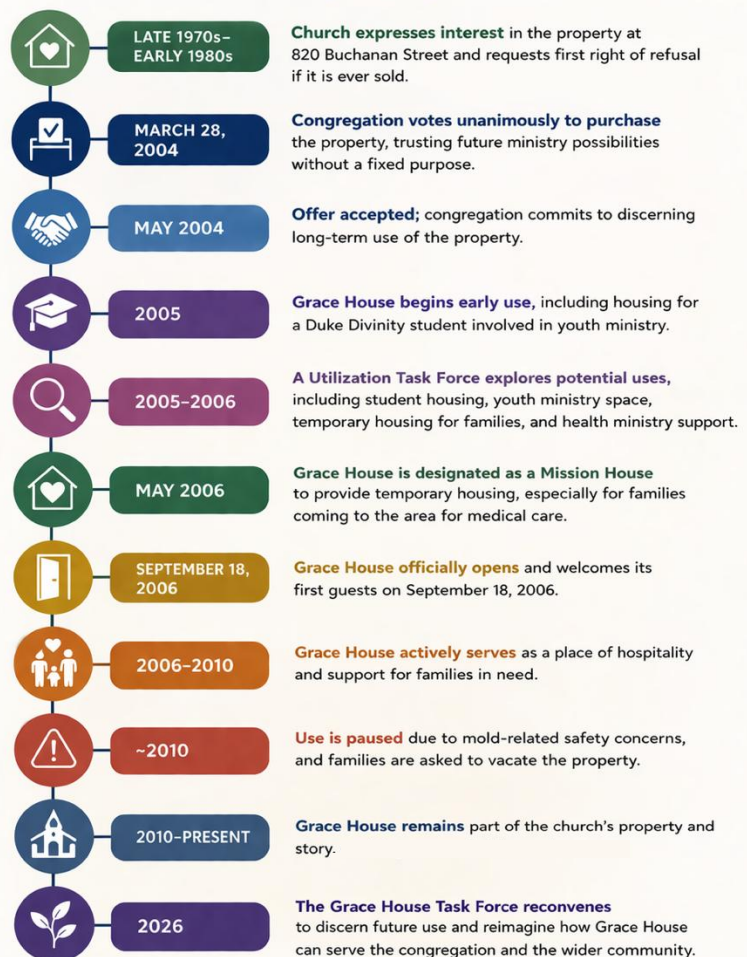
In the early years, Grace House was used in a variety of ways. It provided housing for a Duke Divinity student who was also involved in youth ministry and became part of a growing partnership with Duke Divinity School. As conversations continued, the congregation leaned into a vision of hospitality and outreach.

In 2006, Grace House was formally established as a mission house, offering temporary housing for families—particularly those in the area for medical care. The home opened its doors to its first guests in September of that year, living into its calling as a place of welcome and support during times of need.

Grace House continued to serve in this capacity for several years until safety concerns related to mold required the property to be vacated around 2010. Following a period of mold remediation and restoration work, Grace House was brought back into use and once again became a space for ministry and community life.

In the years since, the house has been used in a variety of ways, including hosting Duke Lutherans, Early Head Start programming, youth Sunday School classes, Duke Host Homes, and Taste of Grace gatherings, among other uses. The house has remained a meaningful part of the church's property and story—one rooted in generosity, flexibility, and a desire to serve others. Today, as we revisit its future, we do so grounded in that same spirit, seeking new ways for Grace House to once again support ministry, outreach, and care in our community.

GRACE HOUSE TIMELINE



Grace House Task Force

WHY THIS TASK FORCE EXISTS

Grace House is currently underutilized, and we believe we are called to be faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us. The Grace House Task Force was formed to prayerfully explore how this space might better serve our congregation, our community, and reflect God's work through us.

Mission:

Going with Good News: teaching, serving, and sharing Christ with our neighbors

Vision:

To be a people able to be Church wherever we are

WHAT THE TASK FORCE IS DOING

Rather than a single fixed plan, the task force is:

- Exploring possible uses for Grace House
- Listening to congregational input
- Learning about needs in the local community
- Evaluating feasibility and potential partnerships

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The task force will present 2–3 proposals at the Voters' Meeting at the end of May for congregational consideration.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE

The task force serves in an *advisory role*.

The final decision belongs to the congregation.

Task force members will be present at the Voters' Meeting to share information, answer questions, and receive feedback.

ONGOING IDEAS AND DIRECTION

Current exploration includes opportunities centered on:

- Hospitality
- Community outreach
- Ministry partnerships

We remain open to new ideas as needs and possibilities emerge.

Your voice matters in this process. If you have ideas, questions, or concerns, please reach out to any member of the task force: *Adam Casteel, Whitney Kolba, Janet Dickmander, Kent Silvernail, Carolyn McElfrick, Mike Hunike, and Anna Voelker.*