

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



Grace
Lutheran
Church

Voters' Assembly

May 31, 2026

12:30PM

GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH – DURHAM, NC
Voters' Assembly – May 31, 2026

Our Mission

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

Our Vision

To be a people able to be Church wherever we are

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
and Special Voters Meeting: 11/26/25 & 3/29/26 pgs 3-6
5. Pastor's Comments
6. Statistical Reports pg 7
7. Board and Ministry Reports pgs 8-10
8. Election of Officers pgs 11-12
 - a. President Dave Dickmader
 - b. Vice-President Leonard Hango
9. Proposed changes to Grace's Constitution and By-laws pgs 13-29
10. Recommendation to Voters from Grace House Task Force pgs 30-36
11. Farmers Market Restricted Funds pgs 37-40
12. Announcements, Other Business, Open Discussion pgs 41-43
 - a. Staffing update
13. Adjournment
14. Closing Prayer - ALL

Lord God, we thank You for guiding our meeting today. Bless the decisions made and help us serve Your church with wisdom, unity, and love. Go with us as we leave this place and keep us faithful to Your will. In Jesus' name, Amen.

¹ Proxy voting must be submitted via special form to the Church Office 72 hours prior to the Voters' Assembly and cite extenuating circumstances. (Bylaw 4.9)

² Voting membership is to be renewed annually through a commitment to grow as a disciple, participate in a ministry, and give financially (Bylaw 1.3)

LINKS TO PROXY FORM AND VOTER COMMITMENT CARD ARE LOCATED ON THE HOMEPAGE OF OUR WEBSITE

WWW.GRACEDURHAM.ORG.

COPIES ARE ALSO AVAILABLE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Voters' Meeting Minutes – Sunday, November 16, 2025

1. Meeting called to order at 11:43am with Opening Prayer – Pastor Brooks

2. Reading and Approval of Proxies

- Judy Barnes – proxy given to Barb Tippin
- Mike Hunike – proxy given to Dede Crosmer
- Brandi de Talence – proxy given to Dede Crosmer
- Kent Silvernail – proxy given to Barb Silvernail

Motion made (Dave Pittman) to accept proxies and **seconded** (Walt Crosmer)

Discussion: none

Motion approved

3. Presentation of New Voters

- Deaconess Anna Voelker
- Noah Voelker
- Dwight Knoll

Motion made (Pastor Brooks) to accept new voters and **seconded** (Kathy Peterson)

Motion approved

Quorum has been reached

4. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting: May 18, 2025 & Special Voters Meeting June 8, 2025

No changes

Motion made (Dave Pittman) to accept as submitted and **seconded** (Walt Crosmer)

Discussion: none

Motion approved

5. Pastor's Comments

Pastor Brooks took a moment to thank all in the room. It has been a busy yet fruitful year.

We will be welcoming 14 new members on Sunday, November 23.

Great things are happening!

A special thank you to Deaconess Anna, Erin and Kim. They work tirelessly in ways we don't always see.

6. Statistical Report

Motion made (Walt Crosmer) to accept as submitted and **seconded** (Dave Pittman)

Discussion: none

Motion approved

7. Ministry Reports

Motion made (Kathy Pittman) to accept as submitted and **seconded** (Sharon Brooks)

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Voters' Meeting Minutes – Sunday, November 16, 2025

Discussion:

- Director of Christian Outreach
 - Deaconess Anna has been serving as the temporary Servant Board lead. What is the process of getting on the Servant Board and replacing Deaconess Anna as the facilitator.
 - GAB is in prayer on this and will start an active search after the new year.
- Discipleship Board
 - A big thank you to all the work Barb Silvernail has been doing on the Discipleship Pathway.
- Resource Board
 - When will the parking lot get repaved?
 - Dede Crosmer will start calling Raleigh Paving (frequently) to get his on the schedule
 - Kathy Peterson thanked all who have helped with all the projects the Resource Board accomplished; a lot has been done.
 - Dave Pittman thanked Kathy Peterson for all she has done for and with the Resource Board, she has been a phenomenal lead
 - Questions were raised about where the leaves are for the round tables in the downstairs dining hall.
 - There are no leaves, they are foldable tables.
 - Comment was made about moving round tables upstairs and rectangular downstairs. Something to think about. There are spare rectangular tables in the closet in the Bethlehem room.
- Farmer's Market
 - How are the vouchers distributed?
 - Vouchers are given to Walltown ministries, Early Head Start and a few miscellaneous others.
 - Vouchers are given to the farmers for food and then the farmers turn them in to receive the money.
 - Farmer's Market will be changing how they do the vouchers. Instead of handing out one voucher/family, each voucher will have a monetary value.
 - Does Walltown Ministry help with the Farmers Market?
 - Some members come to shop
 - Walltown Ministry is a conduit for the Farmers Market by identifying those in need.

Motion approved

- 8. Fund the Ministry for 2025** - Walt Crosmer (Treasurer) highlighted the changes made by recommendations from the Finance Committee to GAB (which GAB approved).

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Voters' Meeting Minutes – Sunday, November 16, 2025

Motion made (Dede Crosmer) to accept as submitted and **seconded** (Pastor Brooks)

Discussion:

- Reminder that grants are not guaranteed for next year; most grants are seed money for the first two years.
- Process of vouchers will be reviewed and farmers will be made aware of any possible changes.
- How much money was received from grants?
 - Approximately 18,000 and that money was used before what was budget by the congregation for this year.
- Concern that with less money budgeted for the Farmers, that there will not be food for those in need.
- Thoughts on involving the Duke Lutherans?
 - They are very involved, they volunteer at the Farmers Market
- Comment was made that the budget is a plan, not set in stone. Changes can happen throughout the year.
- Pastor Brooks reminds those in attendance that this ministry is part of our church, not just a few peoples ministry. This is an opportunity to reach out to others members to involve/include them.
- Walt thanked the Finance Committee for all the work they put in on the budget.

Motion approved

9. Announcements, Other Business, Open Discussion

- Next Sunday, November 23 – New Member Sunday and Servant Appreciation after church
- Advent begins in two weeks
- Saturday, December 13
 - 9am – hanging of the greens and decorated the Christmas tree
 - 1pm – Christmas Market

10. Adjournment

Motion made (Walt Crosmer) and **seconded** (Scott Gesell) to adjourn at 12:30pm

Discussion: none

Motion approved

11. Closing Prayer – read in unison

Respectfully submitted,
Dede Crosmer, Secretary

- **Opening Prayer** – Pastor Brooks

Meeting called to order at 11:37am by Bev Hudgins

- **Reading and Approval of Proxies**

- Brandi de Talence has given her proxy to Dede Crosmer
- Kent Silvernail has given his proxy to Barbara Silvernail
- Leonard Hango has given his proxy to Bev Hudgins

Motion made by Pastor Brooks to accept proxies and seconded by Kathy Peterson

Discussion: none

Motion approved

- **Presentation of New Voters**

- Geoff & Sue Heintzelman
- Stephanie Smith
- Jamie Craven
- Emma Pollard
- Hunter Garrison

Motion made by Chris Wethman to accept new voters and **seconded** by Judy Barnes

Discussion: none

Motion approved

- **Proposed changes to Grace's Constitution and By-Laws**

Motion made by Scott Gesell to accept the proposed changes to Grace's Constitution and ByLaws and seconded by Walt Crosmer

Discussion: grammatical errors in section 8.4

Motion approved with corrections of grammatical errors

- Bev Hudgins opened the floor for any comments.

- Kathy Peterson thanked those who have been involved with signage and clean-up.
- Kathy Pittman reminded all to come to the Easter Breakfast on April 5 after the Sunrise Service and before the 10:10 service.

- **Motion made** by Pastor Brooks to adjourn the meeting at 11:45am and **seconded** by Judy Barnes

- Meeting closed with prayer by Bev Hudgins.

Respectfully submitted,

Dede Crosmer

Grace Advisory Board Secretary

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Statistical Report – October 30, 2025 through May 14, 2026

	Baptized	Confirmed
As of October 30, 2025	194	176
Deaths	2	2
Whereabouts Unknown	-	-
Transfer from LCMS	-	-
Released to Other Churches	-	-
Baptism	-	-
Members Received by Transfer from LCMS Church	7	7
Members Received via New Member Instruction (Affirmation)	4	4
Communicant Members Received (Confirmation)	-	-
Total Membership as of May 14, 2026	203	185
DEATHS:		
Loyd Redick	11-12-25	
Jean Pochert	1-6-26	
BAPTISMS:		
MEMBERS RECEIVED (Affirmation):		
Daniel Smith	11-23-25	
Matt Whittaker	11-23-25	
Mark Williams	11-23-25	
Joan Williams	11-23-25	
MEMBERS RECEIVED (TRANSFER):		
David Lange	Resurrection Lutheran Church, Cary	
Cynthia Lange	Resurrection Lutheran Church, Cary	
Hunter Garrison	University Lutheran Church, Tallahassee, FL	
Emma Pollard	University Lutheran Church, Tallahassee, FL	
Harrison Iles	Christus Vicor Lutheran Church Athens, GA	
Rosemary Edberg	Zion Lutheran Church, Mora, MN	
Mark Grabowski	3-20-26 from St James Lutheran, Lafayette, IN	
SELF EXCLUSION:		

Purpose:

Discipleship Board - This Ministry Board Is committed to:

- **Making disciples** by teaching men and women how to Walk the Way of GRACE. This teaching responsibility includes core classes intended to help learners understand the congregation's vision and mission and to grow as participants in the congregation's shared life, such as the Discover series;
- **Encouraging servant ministry** by training persons in the key habits of discipleship: prayer, study of the Scriptures, generous living and sharing community through confession and forgiveness;
- **Facilitating the movement** of men and women from visitor to committed discipleship to Jesus Christ through encouragement, engagement, and instruction;
- **Creating and supporting** neighborhoods or subgroups for specific ministry functions such as the care of baptized children, confirmation, and other youth ministries.

Section 8.1 of Grace's Bylaws

The Discipleship Board is pleased to share the following ~

- Successfully launched the **Discipleship Pathway**.
 - The pathway provides a clear, intentional, and relational framework for helping people grow in Christ—from first exploration of faith to living as active disciples who serve and share Christ with others. Rather than treating discipleship as a single class or program, the pathway recognizes that spiritual growth is a lifelong journey.
 - Built around five movements—**Seeking Christ, Knowing Christ, Growing in Christ, Serving Christ, and Sharing Christ**—the pathway helps individuals identify where they are and discern what next steps God may be inviting them to take. Each movement is represented by an icon.
- **Wednesdays at One** events (lunch and speaker) held on the following dates:
 - January 2026 - Chocolate Making hosted by Grace member Laura Michael.
 - February 2026 - Making "Mug Rugs" hosted by Grace's LWML Quilters
 - March 2026 - A representative from Lutheran Hour Ministries
 - April 2026 - Ingrid Daubechie spoke about her work with the Ghissi Alterpiece
 - June 2026 - Leonard Hango, Grace Member, will share his life story including how he wandered in refugee camps for 10 years before coming to the US.
 - Wednesdays at One will take a break for July and August. During that time, planning will take place for the Fall-Winter 2026 line-up.
- Planning is underway to launch Consecration Sunday: Teaching Stewardship from a Spiritual Perspective.
- Starting in June, leadership of the Discipleship Board will transition to Barbara Silvernail. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve Grace in this capacity.

Submitted by: Chris Wethman

2026 May Voters Meeting-Resource Board Report

Members of the Resource Board thank you, Grace's Congregation for your prayerful support of this important Ministry. We have a number of "projects in progress" so hope to have a few Saturday morning "opportunities" for fellowship and service.

Important updates on campus:

- Parking lots have been redone! Dan Hauser and crew are working on the island and other campus landscaping.
- Signage has been replaced: thank you Chris Wethman, Dede Crosmer along with the installation crew: Walt Crosmer, Joe Wethman, Mark Williams, Mike Hunike, Noah Voelker, and others for their hard work "planting" the new signs.



- Outdoor lighting: Dede contacted numerous lighting companies. The Courtyard light shines brightly dusk to dawn and the other outdoor lights are now functional!
- Safety Committee: Dede, Mark and Joan have done a safety survey which will be shared with the congregation.
- Plumbing at Grace House failed: Drew Young organized and supervised that BIG FIX. No more funky smells.....very nice, Thanks Drew!
- As we create spaces for learning, study, outreach and fellowship the Bethlehem Room was redone using Go & Make Funding along with team Dede/Walt. It's a great space that our Young Adults and other groups use regularly.



- Entrance Railing: this spring Dave Dickmader, Karen Kreymborg, Carolyn McElfatrick, and Dede prepped and painted the railings. During prepwork, it was discovered that four of the posts on the ramp had completely rusted through. Though not an urgent fix, it is important to bring to the congregation's attention that the rails will need to be replaced soon. Dede contacted numerous companies and had two that came out to view the rails and give us a bid for replacement:
 - Seegars, \$31,548 (current materials-composite)
 - RailFix: \$35,548 (composite) \$48,620 (aluminum)
 It is noted that due to the amount of the expenditure, the Resource Board will need to have first GAB's approval then come to the congregation for a vote. Funds have been set aside for the project.
- Lawn mowing ministry or M&Ms. We have a team of 6. Kathy is working out a schedule for the summer season. ..cause grass grows 24/7 and weeds never sleep.

The Resource Board meets monthly alternating Sunday after service and Tuesdays at 6:30pm. If the Spirit is moving you to join-please email/txt Kathy @ resource@gracedurham.org or 919-641-8267.

In His Service, Kathy Peterson

Slate of Officers to Be Elected for The 2026-2028 Term

The Nominating Committee would like to thank all the people that prayerfully considered being an office for the next two years. Dan Thomas has graciously agreed to continue as Congregation Representative for the next term. We are grateful for his experience and willingness to serve. We are also excited for the chance to have new people with additional insights added to our Grace Advisory Board.

<u>Office</u>	<u>Nominee</u>
President	Dave Dickmander
Vice-president	Leonard Hango

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH



Dave Dickmander grew up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and received his degrees in electrical engineering from Purdue University. He recently retired after a 41-year career with Hitachi Energy, formerly ABB, during which he was employed at various sites including Sweden, Milwaukee, and Pittsburgh. His last move with the company was to Raleigh in 1992, where he met his wife, Janet, and finally was able to settle down for a while.

Dave and Janet enjoy travelling and have visited Sweden, Switzerland, France, and Canada together, as well as national parks in the US. In the past few years they've taken up camping, which has allowed them to take along their rescue beagle, Mocha, during adventures in the Carolinas, Virginia, and Tennessee. Dave also enjoys astrophotography. He has made attempts at playing the banjo and has become skilled at dodging flying tomatoes while doing so.

Dave has served in various roles including Sunday School teacher, Elders, Long Range Planning, and Church Council at past LCMS congregations in Wisconsin, Pittsburgh, and Raleigh. At Grace, he presently serves on the Finance and Safety committees, and he looks forward to the opportunity to be of greater service.



Leonard Hango is a native of Namibia (formerly Southwest Africa) and a member of GLC for over 30 years. He escaped his native Namibia in the early 1970's during the Apartheid years. Leonard wandered in refugee camps for 10 years before he came to the U.S.A. to pursue higher education at Morehouse College in Atlanta GA.

Leonard started his professional career at IBM, RTP North Carolina, after earning an MS in Computer Science from Clark Atlanta University. He has spent the last 30 years at Cisco Systems, RTP building technology solutions that securely connect the world.

A husband, father, and grandfather, Leonard's faith has nurtured that Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) where he was baptized and confirmed. Over the years he has served in various capacities at Grace including serving as a Deacon for several years and recently as the founding member of the Racial Reconciliation PALS (now termed Small Groups). Leonard has an unrealized interest in quilting due to lack of skills. However, he values the work that the LWML ministry does due to his gratitude from personally benefiting from receiving a quilt when he was a refugee.

BYLAWS
GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Durham, North Carolina
Adopted July 10, 2022

ARTICLE 1. MEMBERSHIP

Inasmuch a congregation exists only by God's will and for the purpose of His glory, membership in this congregation begins in the Lord's gracious call to be a part of His Body and share in His work.

1.1. **Baptized Members** are people who have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit and who come under the shepherding care of this congregation. It is expected that all Baptized Members will:

- ✘ Attend worship services faithfully and regularly.
- ✘ Lead a Christian life as taught in Galatians 5:19-26.
- ✘ Bear in love with other Baptized Members (Galatians 6:1-2) and be quick to confess and forgive error or offense (Matthew 18:15-20).
- ✘ Be generous with all gifts from God, whether of their time, talents, and treasure, toward the ministries of the congregation and the extension of the church at large

1.2. **Confirmed Members** are those baptized within the congregation who have completed a course of instruction in Christian doctrine and congregational mission that meets with the approval of the Grace Advisory Board. Persons seeking to attain confirmed membership shall make that fact known to the Senior Pastor or any other delegated pastor.

1.2.1. The pastor shall verify the understanding of and commitment to the congregational purpose stated in Article 2 and Confessional Standard contained in Article 3 of the Constitution. From that verification, the pastor will determine if additional instruction is needed and the appropriate method for that instruction. The pastor is authorized to extend confirmed membership to the person and shall announce that in a public worship service.

In addition to the expectations of Baptized Members, all Confirmed Members will:

- ✘ Affirm the congregational mission stated in Article 2 of the Constitution.
- ✘ Affirm the confessions of faith listed in Article 3 of the Constitution.
- ✘ Be familiar with the life and activities of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (hereafter "The Synod").

- ✕ Partake frequently of the Lord's Supper.
- ✕ Participate in continuing Christian education.
- ✕ Participate in an ongoing ministry.
- ✕ Provide for the Christian upbringing of their children by participating in the educational life of the congregation, such that parents are equipped to be the spiritual teachers of their children and to nurture their children's faith in Christ.

1.3. **Voting Members** are Confirmed Members who take part in the discernment of God's will for the congregation by their participation in Voters' assemblies and voting. Voting Membership is available to Confirmed Members who have reached their eighteenth (18) birthday and is renewed annually through commitment to grow as a disciple, participate in a ministry, and give financially. New voting members are acknowledged by and received at the first available Voters' Assembly.

1.4. **Termination of membership:** Baptized or confirmed members may terminate their membership or have their membership terminated in this congregation for any one of the following reasons:

1.4.1. **Transfer-** A member desiring transfer to another Synod congregation shall make that fact known to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall ensure a letter of transfer is provided to the congregation receiving former Grace members. Such transfer shall be reported at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Grace Advisory Board and Voters' Assembly. Members who move out of the community shall be encouraged to transfer their membership to the sister (Synod) Congregation nearest to them.

1.4.2. **Release-** Members who join congregations outside of Synod fellowship thereby terminate their own membership in this Congregation. Such terminations shall be reported at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Grace Advisory Board and Voters' Assembly.

1.4.2.1. **Lack of Participation**

1.4.2.1.1. **Baptized Members-** As baptized members are in the shepherding care and keeping of the congregation, questions regarding their ongoing membership will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Grace Advisory Board and Senior Pastor.

1.4.2.1.2. **Confirmed Members-** Persons who neglect their commitment to the congregation's life as outlined in Article 1 above for a period of six months shall be contacted by the Grace Advisory Board or its designee for encouragement. After another six months, the Grace Advisory Board may vote to end their membership. Such persons shall be notified of

their removal from membership at the address of record possessed by the congregation. Similarly, members whose whereabouts are unknown or who have moved from the area may be removed from membership after a period of one year, by a vote of the Grace Advisory Board.

- 1.4.2.1.3. **Voting Members-** Voters who do not renew their voting membership annually will revert to Confirmed Membership and be ineligible for voting on congregational matters until their commitment is renewed and they are received at the next Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE 2. CALLING MINISTERS OF RELIGION – ORDAINED OR COMMISSIONED

- 2.1. **Vacancy-** At the time of vacancy in the office of pastor or commissioned minister of religion, the congregation shall notify the District President and the Circuit Visitor and request the procedure for calling a new pastor or commissioned worker.
- 2.2. **Authorization-** After authorization is received from the Voters' Assembly, the Grace Advisory Board shall appoint a Call Committee. No more than one-third of the Call Committee members may be members of the Grace Advisory Board.
- 2.3. **Candidates-** Every voting member shall have opportunity to suggest one or more candidates for consideration. The Call Committee shall consult with the District of The Synod to which the Congregation is assigned as part of their effort to secure candidates and confirm submitted names are eligible for a call. A call will only be extended to candidates who are approved by The Synod.
- 2.4. **Extension of Call to Pastor or Other Called Worker**
- 2.4.1. At a properly convened Voters' Assembly a list of candidates for the office of Pastor or other called worker shall be submitted to the Voters' Assembly.
- 2.4.2. In the matter of calling a Pastor, all Confirmed Members shall be eligible to vote.
- 2.4.3. The vote shall be by ballot and the candidate receiving a majority of all votes cast shall be notified of the extension of call.
- 2.4.4. The election shall, if possible, be made unanimous by a rising vote, and the call shall be sent to the pastor or commissioned minister.
- 2.4.5. Calls made shall follow guidelines of the synod with which affiliated or be otherwise carried out by the Voters' Assembly in a proper manner.
- 2.5. **Discipline of Called Workers:** Any ordained or commissioned minister of religion may be removed from office for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine,

scandalous life, willful neglect or inability to perform the duties of the office. Prior to any action to remove a called worker, the Circuit Visitor and District President shall be notified with full information concerning the proposed action concerning an ordained or commissioned minister. The guidance of the District President shall be followed and be in accordance with the Synod's Dispute Resolution Process. A two-thirds majority ballot vote, in a Christian and lawful manner, shall be required to remove a called worker.

ARTICLE 3. DUTIES OF THE PASTOR

3.1. **The Pastor** of the congregation, duly called, ordained, and installed, shall fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the Letter of Call and related call documents. At minimum, these responsibilities include those recognized by the Confessions and The Synod as belonging to the Office of Public Ministry:

- ☒ To preach the Word of God, both Law and Gospel;
- ☒ To administer the Sacraments;
- ☒ To exercise the Office of the Keys (to forgive or retain sins).

3.2. **Additional Duties-** In addition, the Senior Pastor shall supervise all ordained or commissioned staff under call to the congregation, providing direction, support, and performance reviews, in cooperation with the Grace Advisory Board.

3.3. **Ex Officio-** The pastor shall serve as an ex officio member of all boards, committees, and small groups, or assign such representation to other called staff as deemed desirable or necessary.

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ARTICLE 4. MEETINGS OF THE VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

4.1. **Meetings-** The Voters' Assembly shall regularly meet two times a year. The first regular meeting shall be held during May, at which time election of officers shall take place. The second regular meeting shall be held during November, at which time the annual budget will be ratified. The budgeted fiscal year shall begin January 1. Elected officers will assume office on the first Sunday in June or the first day of the month following the annual election.

4.1.1. **Special Meetings-** Special meetings of the Voters' Assembly may be called by the president or the Grace Advisory Board or by request of seven (7) or more confirmed members to the president or Grace Advisory Board.

4.1.2. **The Agenda** for any regular or special meetings of the Congregation shall be available at church the Sunday prior to the meeting.

- 4.2. **Notice Of Meetings-** The day and hour of the semi-annual meetings shall be set by the Grace Advisory Board and announced in public services at least two weeks in advance of regular meetings. The time and purpose of special meetings shall be announced in public services at least one week before such meeting.
- 4.3. **Member List-** After scheduling a date for the semi-annual Voters' Assembly meeting, the Grace Advisory Board's designated representative(s) shall prepare an alphabetical listing of the names of voting members. The list should be updated and retained up until the time of the meeting and provide the list of members who are entitled to vote at the assembly.
- 4.4. **Order of Business-** The order of business of Voters' Assembly meetings shall be at the discretion of the President. Robert's Rules of Order shall be applied as necessary.
- 4.5. **Quorum-** One-fifth (20%) of the registered voting members shall be present to constitute a quorum for an official meeting of the Voters' Assembly, except in the instances of call or recall of a Pastor or other called worker, sale or purchase of property, erection of buildings over \$10,000 in cost, when one-third (33%) of the registered voters shall be necessary for a quorum.
- 4.6. **Voting-** A majority vote of those present and voting shall rule, except for amendments to the constitution or bylaws, or a decision when a two-thirds (66%) majority is required. Elections shall be determined by majority vote, with additional ballots if and as necessary.
- 4.7. **Remote Participation in Meetings-** Voting members may participate in any meeting of the Voters Assembly by means of remote communication to the extent the Grace Advisory Board authorizes such participation. The means of remote communication is subject to any guidelines and procedures the Grace Advisory Board adopts and the requirements of the following subsections.
- 4.7.1. **Voting Members participating by means of remote communication** are deemed present and may vote at the meeting if all reasonable measures are made to verify that each person participating remotely is a voting member, provide the members a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting, and to vote on matters submitted to the members to the same extent they could participate and vote if present in person. Participation includes an opportunity to communicate and to read or hear the proceedings of the meeting concurrently with the meeting.
- 4.7.2. The **Grace Advisory Board** may, in its sole discretion, determine that any meeting of voting members shall not be held at any place and shall instead be held solely by means of remote communication, but only if subsection 4.7.1 is implemented. A notice of a meeting held solely by means of remote communication shall clearly indicate such and provide instruction and information to members so they may join and participate in a remote meeting.

4.8. **Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Voters' Assembly may be called by the president or the Grace Advisory Board or by request of seven (7) or more confirmed members to the president or Grace Advisory Board. The agenda for any regular or special meeting of the Congregation shall be available at church the Sunday prior to the meeting.

4.9. **Proxy voting-** Proxy voting shall be allowed for extenuating circumstances, i.e., illness or other requirements that prevent attendance. Such proxies are to state the reason for non-attendance and should be signed and submitted in writing in a form of the Secretary's choosing to the Secretary or Church Office seventy-two (72) hours prior to the Voters' Assembly. Submission of a signed proxy is not a guarantee of acceptance. The Secretary shall announce the proxies and the Voters' Assembly retains the right to approve all proxies before conducting any business.

4.10. **Order of Business:** The order of business of Voters' Assembly meetings shall be at the discretion of the President. Robert's Rules of Order shall be applied as necessary.

ARTICLE 5. ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF CONGREGATION

The Elected Representatives of this congregation are president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and one congregational at-large representative.

5.1. **Representative Duties-** As part of their responsibilities, elected representatives of the Congregation are expected to attend all meetings of the Grace Advisory Board.

5.1.1. **If illness or other reasons** result in excess absences, the Grace Advisory Board, by majority vote, may request the officer to resign.

The duties of the Elected Representatives are as follows:

5.2. **A President** who shall

- ✧ Be a voting member who has reached age 21, and shall have been a voting member for at least two years;
- ✧ Preside at all meetings of the Voters' Assembly and of the Grace Advisory Board and call such meetings as necessary;
- ✧ Be an ex officio member of all boards and small groups;
- ✧ Enforce the Constitution and Bylaws;
- ✧ Perform the general duties as are common for the office, including such additional duties as may be directed by the Voters' Assembly from time to time.

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5.3. **A Vice President** who shall

- ✧ Be a voting member who has reached age 21 or more and shall have been a voting member for at least one year;
- ✧ Preside at meetings in the absence of the president;
- ✧ Participate actively in the programs of the church, and especially in planning further development;
- ✧ Be an ex officio member of all boards and small groups.

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5.4. **A Secretary** who shall

- ✧ Be a voting member who has reached the age of 18 or more, and shall have been a voting member for at least one year;
- ✧ Keep accurate minutes of the meetings of the Voters' Assembly and of the Grace Advisory Board for the permanent records of the Congregation;
- ✧ Perform other duties in keeping with this office including ensuring an up-to-date list of voters and determination of a quorum.
- ✧ Handle such correspondence as the Congregation may require.

5.5. **A Treasurer** who shall

- ✧ Be at least 18 years of age, and a voting member for at least two years;
- ✧ Pay all bills authorized by the Grace Advisory Board and Voters' Assembly;
- ✧ Keep and preserve the accurate records of all receipts and disbursements and submit a written report at all regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly;
- ✧ Submit all records of financial transactions for a Financial Review at the request of the Grace Advisory Board. Note that all records of financial transactions remain the property of the congregation.

5.6. **A Congregational Representative** who shall

- ✧ Be at least 18 years of age, and be a voting member for at least one year;
- ✧ Represent the Congregation on the Grace Advisory Board;
- ✧ Assist in interpreting and communicating the mission and vision of the congregation to the members;

5.7. **Terms of Office** - Elected Representatives shall serve for a term of two years. No one shall serve more than two (2) full successive terms in an elected position without a break of at least one year.

5.8. **Nomination of Elected Representatives** –

5.8.1. The Vice President of the Congregation shall annually assemble a **Nominating Committee** whose responsibility will be to develop a slate of candidates for elected positions.

5.8.2. **The committee shall contain a majority** who are not Grace Advisory Board members, shall function for no more than one year, and shall submit the slate to the election meeting of the Voters' Assembly.

5.8.3. The Senior Pastor shall be a **non-voting member** of the Nominating Committee.

5.8.4. **All nominees to congregational offices** shall be Voting Members noted for their Christian knowledge, zeal, and experience in the spiritual work in the Kingdom. The Nominating Committee, in identifying suitable candidates, shall communicate to a potential candidate the specific criteria for the office being sought and secure acknowledgement from the potential candidate of the same.

5.8.5. **The slate of candidates** must be completed and received by the Congregation President one month (30 days) before the scheduled Voters' Assembly meeting at which the election takes place.

5.8.6. In addition to the Nominating Committee's slate of candidates, **any Voting Member may nominate a candidate(s)**. An individual Voting Member pursuing a candidate's nomination is under the same obligations of the Nominating Committee as outlined in section 7.8.4. Such nominations must be received 14 days prior to the Voters' Assembly.

5.8.7. **Those elected by the Voters** may not receive compensation from the congregation.

5.9. **Election** - Nominees receiving a majority of the ballots cast at the Voters' Assembly shall be elected.

5.10. **Vacancy** - The Grace Advisory Board shall be authorized to appoint a person to fill an unexpired term of any elected position. If the President is unable to complete his/her term, the Vice President will become the President, and a new Vice President will be appointed to fulfill the term.

ARTICLE 6. CORPORATE OFFICERS

6.1. **The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer** are designated as the Corporate Officers.

6.2. **The President** upon authorization of the Grace Advisory Board, is empowered to execute any and all legal proceedings on behalf of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church or appear at any legal proceeding on behalf of the Church.

- 6.3. **Any legal document** shall be signed by the President and attested to by the secretary (or treasurer if the secretary is unavailable).
- 6.4. **If the President is unavailable** when needed to perform these functions, the Vice President shall perform them.

ARTICLE 7. GRACE ADVISORY BOARD

The Grace Advisory Board shall have the authority to act on behalf of the Congregation between meetings of the Voters' Assembly. That authority is limited by the decisions of the Voters' Assembly and by the Constitution and Bylaws. Consequently, any decision of the Grace Advisory Board may be appealed to the Voters' Assembly.

- 7.1. **Membership-** The Grace Advisory Board shall consist of the following elected positions: President, Vice-president, Secretary, and one (1) congregational representative. Additionally, one (1) leader representing each of the Ministry Boards are members. The Pastor(s) shall serve as an ex officio member.
- 7.2. **Term of Office** The term of office shall be 2 years. Members shall serve no more than two (2) full successive terms in that position without a break of at least 1 year.
- 7.2.1. Elections for President, Vice President and Representative shall be held in even-numbered years.
- 7.2.2. Elections for Treasurer and Secretary shall be held in odd-numbered years.
- 7.3. **Meetings-** The Grace Advisory Board shall meet as frequently as necessary, but at least every other month throughout the year. All meetings shall be open to all members of the congregation. The time and location of all meetings shall be announced at a regularly scheduled public service at least 48 hours in advance or in the regular publications of the parish. The President shall call meetings of the Grace Advisory Board as necessary, or at the request of three or more members of the Grace Advisory Board.
- 7.4. **Quorum-** A quorum shall consist of 55 percent of the Grace Advisory Board members. Decisions shall be by majority vote. *Robert's Rules of Order* shall be applied as necessary.
- Board Leader Absence-** In the event a Ministry Board leader is unable to attend an Advisory Board meeting, he or she may appoint another person from the represented team to substitute, having both voice and vote.

ARTICLE 8. GRACE MINISTRY BOARDS

The structure of the Christian life is both personal—a person is called by Jesus Christ to follow—and communal, for each person is called to life together with other Christians. To facilitate the ability of individual men and women to grow as followers of Jesus and to provide structure to the common life of the congregation, ministry boards shall exist to provide training, support, education, and leadership as is required to ensure the fulfillment of the congregation's mission and vision. There will be three (3) Grace Ministry Boards:

8.1. Discipleship Board – This Ministry Board Is committed to

8.1.1. **Making disciples** by teaching men and women in the lifelong process of becoming a dedicated follower of Jesus Christ and learner of His teachings. This teaching responsibility includes core classes intended to help learners understand the congregation's vision and mission and to grow as participants in the congregation's shared life;

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8.1.2. **Encouraging servant ministry** by training persons in the key habits of discipleship: prayer, study of the Scriptures, generous living and sharing community through confession and forgiveness;

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8.1.3. **Facilitating the movement** of men and women from visitor to committed discipleship to Jesus Christ through encouragement, engagement, and instruction;

8.1.4. **Creating and supporting small groups** or subgroups for specific ministry functions such as the care of baptized children, confirmation, and other youth ministries.

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8.2. Servant Board – This Ministry Board is committed to

8.2.1. **Supporting the small group ministry** of the church by providing any needed resources for learning, service or mutual care;

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8.2.2. **Assisting in the formation** of new small groups that fulfill the mission and vision of the congregation, especially by identifying, teaching and mentoring persons who are interested in leading;

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8.2.3. **Caring for small group leaders** by coaching and supporting leaders in their group tasks; encouraging growth in the areas of prayer, ministry tasks/goals, mutual care, and study of the Word; and providing ongoing training in key leadership topics and competencies.

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8.3. Resource Board – This Ministry Board is committed to

8.3.1 **The stewardship** of the church's assets. These assets are defined as the financial, physical, and related gifts that God has placed in the care of the parish. Specific areas

of responsibility include: the financial responsibilities of the congregation, managing and coordinating office staff and activities, caring for the physical plant/facilities, and supporting other teams with needed materials or resources.

8.3.1 **Supporting the** Grace Advisory Board with any reports needed

8.3.3 **Supporting other teams** with needed materials or resources

8.3.4 **The Treasurer** is a part of this team to support the board's financial and facilities oversight.

8.4 The Boards will consist of **members committed** to the mission and vision of **Grace Lutheran Church**. The boards may establish **small groups or** subcommittees or to support the mission and ministries of the board.

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8.5 **Participation and Service-** Any of the three membership categories may serve on a Board. No member may serve on two or more Boards. If at any time, there are not at least two members serving on a specific board or subcommittee the ministry will be suspended until this is no longer the case.

8.6 **Grace Advisory Board Representation**

8.6.1 **Each Ministry Board** will elect a leader; this person will also serve as a member of the Grace Advisory Board.

8.6.2 **As part of their responsibilities**, Ministry Board leaders are expected to attend all meetings of the Grace Advisory Board.

8.7 **Duties** - Each Board will set annual goals, monitor the appropriate **small groups** or subcommittees, provide minutes and reports to the Grace Advisory Board, and assist in providing education, training, and/or resources to ensure the fulfillment of the congregation's mission and vision.

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ARTICLE 9. SPECIAL FUNDS

9.1. Gifts, Bequests and Endowments- Grace Lutheran Church, at the direction of the Grace Advisory Board, may accept gifts, bequests or contributions (from estates, living wills, IRA's and similar sources). Unrestricted gifts will be disbursed at the Board's discretion to the General Fund, designated funds, or other places of ministry need.

9.2. Restricted Gifts- Gifts restricted by the donor or estate are subject to review by the Grace Advisory Board for compatibility with the congregation's mission, vision and core values. If compatibility of purpose is accepted, the Board will establish a Special Fund to manage such a gift.

9.3. Trustees- Special Fund Trustees shall be appointed for the management and use of all Special Funds to ensure faithfulness to the goals and associated restriction(s) of the Special

Funds. The number of trustees shall be four (4), one of whom shall be appointed from the membership of the Grace Advisory Board. The remaining three (3) are to be members of the Voters' Assembly nominated by the President and approved by the Grace Advisory Board. They will serve for staggered terms of three (3) years.

ARTICLE 10. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended, in accordance with the provisions of Article 11 of the Constitution of this Congregation

ARTICLE 11. AUTOMATIC REVIEW

These Bylaws shall be reviewed every seven years, under the direction and authority of the Grace Advisory Board, which shall advise the Voters' Assembly of any recommendations for action.

ARTICLE 12. ADOPTION

These Bylaws revised and revisions accepted by vote of the Voters' Assembly on May 31, 2026,

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CONSTITUTION
GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Durham, North Carolina

Adopted July 10, 2022

The Constitution and Bylaws, contained herein, were adopted by this Congregation on July 10, 2022, and supersedes all documents of similar nature previous to this date.

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Grace Lutheran Church accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws. They shall govern the spiritual, material, and missional affairs of the congregation.

We affirm that at the center of our fellowship is the Word of God which is made active and powerful by the Holy Spirit. For the furtherance of Christian fellowship, for the nurturing of Christian people, for help in fulfilling a Christian calling (Ephesians 4:11-16), this constitution and Bylaws is set forth, to organize mission and ministry efforts in an orderly manner, according to the Word of God (1 Corinthians 14:40, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Galatians 1:6-8).

ARTICLE 1. NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham, Inc. incorporated in and under the laws of the State of North Carolina.

ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to the triune God by supporting those who have answered the call of Jesus Christ to be His disciples. We, therefore, commit our lives to this particular way by:

- 2.1 Growing as followers of Jesus and participating in the shared life of this Congregation fostering Christian fellowship and love;
- 2.2 Rejoicing in God by participating in worship, hearing the Word of God, and celebrating the Holy Sacraments manifesting the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ;
- 2.3 Answering with hope by generously giving of ourselves, our time and our possessions carrying out the will of God in our lives;
- 2.4 Caring for our neighbors by following the model of Christ and ministering to their spiritual and physical needs, and inviting them to walk with us as we follow Jesus; and

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- 2.5 [Embracing](#) others through our hospitality and creation of community making possible encounters with the Risen Christ.

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ARTICLE 3. CONFESSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation accepts without reservation the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice and all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord (1580) as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit:

- ✦ The three Ecumenical creeds: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed.
- ✦ The unaltered Augsburg Confession (1530),
- ✦ The Apology of the Augsburg Confession,
- ✦ The Smalcald Articles,
- ✦ Luther's Large Catechism,
- ✦ Luther's Small Catechism,
- ✦ Formula of Concord (1580).

All doctrinal controversies which may arise in this congregation shall be decided and adjudicated according to this norm of doctrine.

ARTICLE 4. SYNOD MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be a member of THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD (LCMS) and the district to which the Congregation is assigned, as long as the confessions and constitution of said Synod and District are in accord with the confession and constitution of this Congregation as determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Congregation at a meeting called for that purpose. It shall be the privilege and responsibility of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of the Synod and District and to participate in the District conventions of the Synod.

ARTICLE 5. MEMBERSHIP

The types of membership in this Congregation include the following as further defined in the Bylaws:

- 5.1. **Baptized Members:** All those who have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit and who are under the spiritual care of this Congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed.
- 5.2. **Confirmed Members:** All Baptized Members who accept and adhere to the confessional standards of Article 3 of this Constitution and who have been received through the rite of confirmation, by

transfer from a partner congregation, or by profession of faith or by reaffirmation of faith in accordance with the Bylaws of this Congregation.

- 5.3. **Voting Members:** All Confirmed Members at least 18 years of age may become a voter by signing in as a new voter. Voting Members have the right and responsibility to speak and to vote in the Voters' Assembly called to carry out the mission and ministry of Grace Lutheran Church.

ARTICLE 6. GOVERNMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

Governing Body

6.1. The Voters' Assembly shall:

- 6.1.1. Be the final governing body and shall have final authority in managing the internal and external affairs of Grace Lutheran Church.
- 6.1.2. Have the authority to arrange, direct, and adjust the spiritual and material affairs of the congregation.
- 6.1.3. Not even the congregation or Voters' Assembly shall be empowered to order, enact, or decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as set forth in Article 3 of this Constitution.

6.2. The Grace Advisory Board shall:

- 6.2.1. See to it that all activities of the church reflect the mission and vision of the congregation;
- 6.2.2. Concern itself with establishing all policies governing the activities of the congregation and with the implementation of the mission, vision, budget, and plans adopted by the Voters' Assembly;
- 6.2.3. Be responsible for review of the organizational structure and may appoint or dissolve any entity to carry out the vision of the congregation. Such entities may be either long term or short term and include task forces, committees, or teams;
- 6.2.4. Have plenary authority to transact all the affairs of the congregation except the following matters, which are reserved for the Voters' Assembly:
 - 6.2.4.1. Call or removal of a called minister of religion or called church worker;
 - 6.2.4.2. Authorize expenditures greater than 120% of a budget line item in the annual budget;
 - 6.2.4.3. Authorize expenditures greater than 5% of the total annual budget for nonbudgeted items;
 - 6.2.4.4. Adopt the congregational budget;
 - 6.2.4.5. Dissolve the congregation or terminate the congregation's membership in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

6.2.5. Officers and Boards

- 6.2.5.1. Officers of this congregation are elected by the Voters' Assembly and shall be such as the Bylaws of this Constitution prescribe.
- 6.2.5.2. Boards of this Congregation shall be such as the Bylaws of this Constitution prescribe.

ARTICLE 7. DIVISION

Should serious controversy arise in this congregation, the Grace Advisory Board shall be directed to seek advice and assistance from the Synod and/or District with which the congregation is affiliated.

ARTICLE 8. ORDAINED AND COMMISSIONED MINISTERS

- 8.1. The congregation has the exclusive right to call ordained or commissioned ministers, which includes Teachers, Directors of Christian Education, Directors of Christian Outreach, Deaconesses, Parish Assistants, Certified Lay Ministers, and any other church workers rostered by the Synod.
- 8.2. Calling or releasing pastors and other called workers shall be vested in the Voters' Assembly, as described in the Bylaws, Article 2, and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual. In case of a vacancy in the office of an ordained or commissioned minister, the Congregation shall notify the president of the district so that he may assist in temporarily filling a vacancy and also give assistance in regard to the calling of a new ordained or commissioned minister.

ARTICLE 9. PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THE CONGREGATION

- 9.1. This Congregation may receive, acquire, hold title to, and manage such real estate and other property as it may deem necessary to accomplish its purpose as a Congregation and may sell or dispose of such real estate and other property or any part thereof.
- 9.2. This Congregation shall have all the rights and powers that are granted by the laws of the State of North Carolina to religious organizations.
- 9.3. In the event that a separation in the congregation occurs, the property of the congregation and all rights connected therewith shall remain with those members who hold fast to this Constitution as determined by simple majority of the votes cast in a meeting of Voters' Assembly.
- 9.4. In the event the congregation should disband, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to that District of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod to which the congregation is assigned.

ARTICLE 10. BYLAWS

The Voters' Assembly may adopt such Bylaws as necessary to provide for orderly accomplishment of its purpose. Such may include direction and delineation of authority, responsibilities and duties of officers, organizations, boards, and committees, etc. Such Bylaws shall serve to carry out the intent of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 11. AMENDMENTS

- 11.1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in a meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
- 11.2. The Bylaws may be amended by a simple majority of the votes cast in a meeting of the Voters' Assembly.
- 11.3. The revised Constitution and/or Bylaws shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the District to which the congregation is assigned for approval and shall not be effective or implemented by the congregation until such approval is received.
- 11.4. To alter or repeal any articles or portions of the Constitution and Bylaws requires:
 - 11.4.1. A special or regular, called, and announced meeting as specified per Article 4 of the Bylaws;
 - 11.4.2. A statement of intent to amend the constitution and/or Bylaws;
 - 11.4.3. Presentation of the proposed amendments in writing to the Voters' Assembly no less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting for which the change is to be considered;
 - 11.4.4. Distribution of proposed amendments to the congregation assembled for worship on two (2) different Sundays in advance of the Voters' Assembly meeting;
 - 11.4.5. A quorum of two-thirds or more of eligible voting members be present at each of two (2) consecutive Voters' Assembly meetings at which the change is to be considered.

ARTICLE 12. ADOPTION

Revisions to this constitution were adopted by the Congregational Assembly on May 31, 2026, and shall take effect, superseding all previous documents of similar nature and purpose.

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Grace House Task Force Report

May 2026

Introduction

The Grace House Task Force was formed to evaluate potential future uses of Grace House and present viable options for consideration by church leadership and the congregation. Over the course of several meetings, the task force discussed community needs, congregational capacity, sustainability, logistical feasibility, and alignment with the church's mission and outreach goals.

The task force identified three primary options for consideration:

1. Duke Host Homes Upstairs + LINKS Downstairs
2. LINKS Upstairs + Rotating Community Space Downstairs
3. Duke Host Homes Upstairs + Rotating Community Space Downstairs

Each reflects a different balance between residential ministry, community engagement, volunteer involvement, and long-term sustainability.

This report is intended to provide an overview of the options discussed, along with key considerations, benefits, and potential challenges associated with each.

Note: The upstairs apartment is currently used for Duke Host Homes. Two rooms downstairs are used for Early Head Start twice a month.

Congregational Capacity

One of the most significant distinctions between the proposed options is the level of congregational involvement required.

Ongoing/Background Ministry Models

Programs such as Duke Host Homes and LINKS function primarily as ongoing ministries that can operate with relatively limited day-to-day congregational management.

Active Programming Models

The rotating community space concept would require:

- Ongoing volunteer leadership
- Event planning and coordination
- Scheduling oversight
- Community outreach and communication
- Long-term volunteer engagement

The task force acknowledged that sustained participation in similar initiatives has historically been challenging and identified this as an important feasibility consideration.

The task force discussed the importance of selecting an option that is both meaningful and realistically sustainable over time.

Several members noted that although active programming models may create broader opportunities for involvement and visibility, they also require significantly more coordination and volunteer commitment.

Residential Privacy and Logistics

The task force discussed the importance of maintaining appropriate privacy and boundaries if residential use continues within the home.

Potential considerations include the following:

- Separate entrances for upstairs/downstairs residents
- Door locks and privacy measures
- Noise management
- Respect for residents' schedules and living space

Program Summaries

Duke Host Homes and Early Head Start

The Duke Host Home Program assists with lodging families of Duke inpatients for a nominal fee, although Grace House has typically been offered at no cost. Duke Concierge Services sponsors the program and coordinates referrals, which usually come from social workers, patient navigators, or patient resource managers.

In 2026, the upstairs apartment has been occupied over 50% of the time. Typical stays range from several days to several weeks while a loved one receives medical treatment.

Currently, Barbara Silvernail oversees the Duke Host Home portion of the ministry, including opening the home and preparing the upstairs apartment between guests.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start currently uses two downstairs playrooms at Grace House approximately twice monthly for 2–2.5 hours per session. Although enrollment includes approximately 20 children, average attendance is generally 4–6 preschool-aged children.

The current agreement provides a monthly donation of \$450 and includes flexibility for relocation into church facilities if Grace House space becomes unavailable.

The task force noted that the total time usage remains relatively limited and likely would not significantly impact most proposed future uses of the property.

LINKS Program

The LINKS program supports young adults ages 18–21 who are aging out of foster care by providing transitional support and temporary housing opportunities.

The program's goal is to foster independent living, education, and long-term stability through:

- Life skills training
- Educational planning
- Vocational support
- Transitional housing assistance

Tanza Moye, MS, Special Services Supervisor for the LINKS Foster Care 18–21 Program, would oversee screening, supervision, and ongoing support for any participant housed at Grace House.

Potential residents would sign agreements outlining:

- Behavioral expectations
- Program participation requirements
- Curfew and visitation guidelines
- Safety expectations
- Communication requirements
- Grounds for early discharge

The program would also provide transition planning toward permanent housing.

Estimated length of stay would typically range from 3–6 months, generally with one resident at a time.

Potential Benefits

- Serves a vulnerable population with limited housing options
- Greater opportunities for relationship-building and mentorship with congregation members
- Potential integration into church life and activities
- Existing oversight and support structure through LINKS
- Close proximity to public transportation

Potential Challenges

- May require volunteers willing to mentor or support residents
- Cleaning and turnover responsibilities may require additional coordination
- Some minor facility modifications may be needed
- Residential use downstairs would require relocation of Head Start programming

Janet Dickmader has expressed willingness to serve as liaison with the LINKS program if this option is pursued.

Rotating Community Space

The rotating community space model would use part of Grace House as a flexible, community-oriented ministry space.

Potential programming discussed included:

- Resume and cover letter workshops
- Parenting or life-skills classes (e.g., finances, AI, scams, etc.)
- Small support groups
- Community resource events
- Partner organization programming
- Early Head Start use

The task force emphasized that this model would need to remain intentionally small-scale, sustainable, and well-organized.

Important Considerations

The task force discussed several limitations regarding use of Grace House as an event space.

Although larger events such as sports viewing parties or movie nights were suggested during discussion, concerns were raised regarding:

- Noise levels, particularly during evening hours

- Potential disruption to residents living upstairs
- Physical limitations of the building
- Parking and space limitations
- Licensing requirements for public movie screenings or similar events

The task force generally agreed that Grace House is better suited for:

- Workshops
- Classes
- Small group gatherings
- Community support programming

If there is interest in hosting larger or higher-energy events, the task force believes those activities would be more appropriately held within the main church facilities rather than Grace House.

Volunteer Requirements

Unlike the Duke Host Homes or LINKS models, the rotating space concept would require substantially greater congregational participation.

This option would require:

- Volunteers willing to lead programming
- Scheduling and oversight coordination
- Community communication and outreach
- Ongoing leadership or committee structure

Proposed Options

Option 1

Duke Host Homes Upstairs + LINKS Downstairs

This option would continue the existing Duke Host Homes ministry in the upstairs apartment while utilizing the downstairs portion of Grace House for LINKS transitional housing.

Benefits

- Maintains current Duke partnership
- Expands housing support ministry
- Provides ongoing service to vulnerable populations
- Lower day-to-day programming burden on congregation

- Existing support structure through LINKS

Challenges

- Requires privacy and logistical planning between floors
 - Short-notice turnovers may require rapid cleaning and preparation
 - Some minor facility modifications may be needed
 - Communication and coordination with Duke representatives can occasionally be inconsistent
 - Limited opportunities for direct relational ministry
-

Option 2

LINKS Upstairs + Rotating Community Space Downstairs

This option would transition the upstairs apartment space from Duke Host Homes to LINKS housing while utilizing the downstairs for rotating community programming.

This option could also provide flexibility for future transition to full-house LINKS use if rotating programming becomes unsustainable.

Benefits

- Combines residential ministry with active community outreach
- Increased visibility and opportunities for congregational involvement
- Flexible use of downstairs space

Challenges

- Requires sustained volunteer leadership and coordination
 - Potential noise and privacy concerns
 - Greater operational complexity
 - Higher risk of volunteer fatigue or inconsistent programming
-

Option 3

Duke Host Homes Upstairs + Rotating Community Space Downstairs

This option would maintain the Duke Host Homes ministry upstairs while utilizing the downstairs for rotating community-oriented programming.

Benefits

- Preserves existing Duke ministry partnership
- Creates opportunities for community engagement
- Flexible programming opportunities
- Allows congregation to participate more directly in ministry efforts

Challenges

- Requires significant volunteer coordination and oversight
- Sustainability concerns regarding long-term participation
- Potential disruption concerns for upstairs residents
- Scheduling and communication demands

Conclusion

The Grace House Task Force believes each option presents meaningful opportunities for ministry and service while also carrying different operational demands and sustainability considerations.

The primary distinction between the proposed options centers on the desired level of congregational involvement and the congregation's long-term capacity for active programming and leadership.

The task force respectfully submits these findings to the Grace Advisory Board for review and further discussion.

Proposal: Farmers Market Ministry Restricted Fund

“I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty”

John 6:35 (NIV)

Purpose

The Grace Community Farmers Market is an outreach ministry that reflects the mission and values of Grace Lutheran Church: *“Going with Good News: teaching, serving, and sharing Christ with our neighbors.”* Through this ministry, we seek to grow with Jesus, rejoice in God, care for our neighbors, embrace community, and to be a people able to be Church wherever we are.

Located near Trinity Park, Duke University’s East Campus, and Walltown, the market serves a diverse cross-section of Durham. According to the 2023 Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina Hunger Map, approximately 14% of Durham residents experience food insecurity, including 18% of children. This ministry responds to both physical and spiritual needs by creating a welcoming place where neighbors can access fresh food, build relationships, and experience Christian hospitality and encouragement.

Since launching in 2024, the Grace Community Farmers Market has grown into one of the congregation’s most visible and impactful outreach ministries. The market operates monthly from April through October, with an additional Christmas Market in December. During its first season, the ministry partnered with the Walltown Neighborhood Food Ministry to provide food vouchers for families experiencing food insecurity. In 2025, the ministry expanded through a partnership with Durham’s Partnership for Children – Early Head Start program, increasing support to a total of 155 participating households.

To better meet the varying needs of families, the ministry transitioned from a flat voucher amount to a flexible distribution model that considered household size and need. This approach increased equitable access to fresh produce, eggs, baked goods, meats, and crafts available at the market.

The market also strengthens connections within the wider Durham community by supporting local farmers and small businesses. Vendors are provided a welcoming fee-free environment to sell their products, develop relationships, and participate in a mission-centered community event. To date, more than 1,700 people have attended the markets, and local farmers and vendors have earned approximately \$50,000 through market sales.

This market is also a place of fellowship, prayer, and Christian witness. Volunteers regularly pray with visitors, distribute Bibles in English and Spanish, and offer encouragement. Hundreds of prayer requests have been shared through the ministry, reflecting the trust that has developed within the market community. Requests for healing, family concerns, employment challenges, immigration issues, and thanksgiving for God’s blessings have all been lifted up in prayer.

The market creates opportunities for congregation members to live out their faith in practical and relational ways. Volunteers serve side-by-side with neighbors, assist elderly shoppers, welcome first-time visitors, and build meaningful relationships across generations and backgrounds. These acts of service have strengthened connections both within the congregation and throughout the community.

One example is Tonya, a faithful Walltown resident with significant physical limitations. Over time, volunteers formed relationships of trust with her, helping carry groceries and supporting her through personal challenges. When church members learned she had an unresolved plumbing problem she could not afford to repair, one volunteer stepped in to fix it at no cost. Moments like these reflect Christ's love in tangible ways that extend far beyond food assistance.

The market also helps Grace members to move beyond the walls of the church and engage directly with the community. Volunteers often describe the ministry as a place where faith becomes active through listening, hospitality, prayer, and service. Participation continues to grow creating new opportunities to build relationships and invite neighbors into deeper connection with the church community.

Financial Need

To sustain and grow this ministry, approximately \$20,000 is needed annually for outreach activities, operational support, volunteer coordination, and food-access subsidies for underserved families.

Mitchell Endowment funds of \$12,300 provided the funds for start-up in 2024. In 2025, grants such as LCMS National Development Grants, Mid-Atlantic Lutherans in Mission, and small donations were instrumental in establishing a strong foundation. However, these start-up funds are limited in duration. A stable long-term funding structure is now needed to ensure continued ministry growth and sustainability.

Proposed Solution

We propose establishing a **Farmers Market Ministry Restricted Fund** dedicated to supporting the annual operation and future sustainability.

This restricted fund will:

- Provide transparent, dedicated financial support for the ministry
- Strengthen long-term sustainability and planning
- Expand outreach to families experiencing food insecurity
- Reduce uncertainty around annual expenses
- Allow leaders to focus on service, outreach, and spiritual care

The fund would be managed through existing church financial oversight with regular reporting to leadership and the congregation.

The Grace Community Farmers Market is already bearing fruit through service, fellowship, and sharing Christ's love. This fund will ensure ministry continues to grow, serve, and reflect Christ's compassion to the Durham community for years to come. The ministry has a goal of raising an additional \$40,000

The Grace Community Farmers Market is already bearing fruit through service, fellowship, and opportunities to share the love of Christ with our neighbors. Establishing this restricted fund will help ensure that this important ministry continues to grow, serve, and reflect Christ's compassion within the Durham community for years to come.

Motion:

That the congregation approve the establishment of a Farmers Market Ministry Restricted Fund dedicated to supporting the ongoing operation and sustainability of the Grace Community Farmers Market; that \$40,000 be committed and allocated from Grace Lutheran Church Funds for the 2027 and 2028 period; that fundraising efforts begin in the fall of 2026 toward a \$40,000 goal for 2029 – 2030 and that the fund be administered under existing church financial policies with appropriate oversight and annual reporting to the leadership and congregation.

Financials:



Grace Lutheran Church GCFM Ministry

GCFM ministry		GCFM ministry	
Expenses	Total Actual Expenses 2025	Total Projected Expenses 2026	
Salary and Benefits	\$ -	\$ -	
Contract Services (consulting, professional, fundraising)	\$ -	\$ -	
Occupancy (rent, utilities, maintenance)	\$ -	\$ -	
Training & Professional Development	\$ -	\$ -	
Insurance	\$ -	\$ -	
Travel	\$ -	\$ -	
Equipment- tents, signs, weights, wagons, banners	\$1,509.00		
Bibles Spanish (15) English (20)	\$138.00		
Printing supplies - cardstock 250 sheets x 6 packages	\$120.00		
Evaluation	\$ -	\$ -	
Marketing		\$1,000	
Conferences, meetings, etc.	\$ -	\$ -	
Administration	\$ -	\$ -	
Voucher reimbursment to farmers and vendors (2026@85% utilization)	\$14,872.00	\$17,600	
Other -Minimum Gauranteed Income	\$2,336.00	\$0.00	

TOTAL EXPENSES		<u>\$</u> <u>\$18,975</u>	<u>\$</u> <u>\$ 18,600</u>
Revenues	Committed 2025	Committed 2026	
Contributions, Gifts, Grants, & Earned Revenue			
LCMS	\$10,000	\$	-
Grace Lutheran Church from operating budget	*\$15,500		\$8,000
MALIM Grant	\$ 5,000	\$	-
Committed Funds	\$1,000		\$5,000
SED	\$ -		\$1,000
Fundraising	\$		
	\$ -		
	\$ -	\$	-
	\$ -	\$	-
TOTAL REVENUES	<u>\$ 31,500.00</u>	<u>\$</u>	<u>14,000.00</u>

*\$2975 was used from the \$15,500 due to the use of awarded grant funds.

Statement of Income and Expense Through April 2026

January 2026 - December 2026 / April

	This Year Budget	This Year Actual	% of Budget	Remaining
Income (Less Restricted Income)	\$ 471,777.63	\$ 150,795.93	32%	68%
> Plate	\$ -	\$ 842.00		
> Envelopes	\$ -	\$ 138,038.69		
> Miscellaneous Income	\$ -	\$ 8,565.73		
> Interest Income	\$ -	\$ 2,921.51		
> LWML	\$ -	\$ 20.00		
> Altar Guild	\$ -	\$ -		
> Flowers	\$ -	\$ 408.00		
> Restricted Income	\$ -	\$ 23,380.71		
> Go and Make Income	\$ -	\$ 10,150.00		
> Benevolence Income	\$ -	\$ -		
> DCO NonBudget	\$ -	\$ -		
> ESL Income	\$ -	\$ 40.00		
> Farmers Market Income	\$ -	\$ 116.46		
> Maita Puerto Rice Income	\$ -	\$ 30.00		
> Mitchell Endowment Income	\$ -	\$ 7,190.04		
> Pastor Discretionary Fund	\$ -	\$ 950.00		
> Pastor Sabbatical Fund Income	\$ -	\$ -		
> Saints of Grace Income	\$ -	\$ 340.53		
> Shepherd's Tent Income	\$ -	\$ 2,103.80		
> Grace House Income	\$ -	\$ 500.00		
> Walltown Food Bank Income	\$ -	\$ 1,959.88		

Expense (Total)	This Year Budget	This Year Actual	% of Budget	Remaining
	\$ 471,777.63	\$ 192,826.27	41%	\$ 278,951.36
> Operating Expenses	\$ 416,790.63	\$ 140,456.51	34%	\$ 276,334.12
> Administration Expense	\$ 38,587.76	\$ 15,449.61	40%	\$ 23,138.15
> Staff Expense	\$ 328,275.87	\$ 109,335.28	33%	\$ 218,940.59
> Utilities	\$ 27,654.20	\$ 10,076.14	36%	\$ 17,578.06
> Maintenance Expense	\$ 22,272.80	\$ 5,595.48	25%	\$ 16,677.32
> Missions Expense	\$ 54,987.00	\$ 13,483.72	25%	\$ 41,503.28
> Grow With Jesus	\$ 11,150.00	\$ 3,665.82	33%	\$ 7,484.18
> Rejoice in God	\$ 6,350.00	\$ 2,139.55	34%	\$ 4,210.45
> Answer With Hope	\$ 850.00	\$ -	0%	\$ 850.00
> Care For Neighbors	\$ 4,887.00	\$ 918.25	19%	\$ 3,968.75
> Embrace Community	\$ 31,750.00	\$ 6,760.10	21%	\$ 24,989.90
> Restricted Expense	\$ -	\$ 38,886.04		
> Benevolence	\$ -	\$ 7,300.01		
> ESL Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Farmers Market Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Go and Make Expense	\$ -	\$ 17,155.87		
> Grace House Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Maita Puerto Rico Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Mitchell Endowment Expense	\$ -	\$ 2,250.00		
> Pastor Discretionary Fund Expense	\$ -	\$ 1,150.66		
> Pastor Sabbatical Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Saints of Grace Expense	\$ -	\$ 2,214.50		
> Shepherd's Tent Expense	\$ -	\$ 8,815.00		
> Touched By Grace Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Walltown Food Bank Expense	\$ -	\$ -		
> Walltown Building Project	\$ -	\$ -		

Income (Less Restricted Income)	\$ 471,777.63	\$ 150,795.93	32%	
Expense (Less Restricted Expense)	\$ 471,777.63	\$ 153,940.23	33%	
Income (Surplus or Shortfall)		\$ (3,144.30)		

Apr-26

	First Horizon (Checking)	First Horizon (Money Market)
Balance per bank	65,657.23	19,618.06
Outstanding Deposit	0.00	0.00
Outstanding Charges	0.00	0.00
Outstanding Auto Payments	0.00	0.00
Outstanding Checks		
8092	-45.00	
8101	-750.00	
8103	-864.00	
Total	63,998.23	19,618.06
Balance per financials	63,998.23	19,618.06
Total	403,016.95	

LCEF (Stewards hip)	LCEF (SOG)	LCEF (DCO 12 mo)	LCEF (Go & Make DCO 12 mo)	LCEF (MOE 12 mo)	LCEF (Unrestrict ed 12 mo)	LCEF (Walldown Bldg Proj 12 mo)	LCEF (DCO 18 mo)	LCEF (Go & Make DCO 18 mo)	LCEF (Shepherd 's Tent 18 mo)	LCEF (Unrestrict ed 18 mo)	LCEF (DCO 24 mo)
47,196.91	4,015.55	15,406.30	35,326.02	20,186.30	30,279.45	10,093.15	15,406.30	35,326.02	20,186.30	70,652.05	15,406.30
-79.99											
47,116.92	4,015.55	15,406.30	35,326.02	20,186.30	30,279.45	10,093.15	15,406.30	35,326.02	20,186.30	70,652.05	15,406.30
47,116.92	4,015.55	15,406.30	35,326.02	20,186.30	30,279.45	10,093.15	15,406.30	35,326.02	20,186.30	70,652.05	15,406.30