



Ministry Portfolio

Full Portfolio (last updated May 5, 2021)

Grace Episcopal Church, North Carolina

419 South Main Street, Lexington, NC 27292, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 06/18/21.

Weekly Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) 68	Number of Weekend Worship Services 2	Number of Weekday Worship Services	Number of Other per Month Worship Services
Current Annual Compensation \$68000	Cash Stipend	Housing / Rectory Detail	Utilities
SECA reimbursement	Compensation Available for New Position \$65000	Housing Available for	Pension Plan We're in compliance with CPF requirements.
Healthcare Options Negotiable	Dental	Housing Equity Allowance in budget	Annual Equity Amount
Vacation Weeks One month, including 5 Sundays (standard)	Vacation Weeks Details	Continuing Education Weeks 2 (standard)	Continuing Education Weeks Details
Continuing Education Funding in budget	Sabbatical Provision Yes	Travel/Auto Account Yes	Other Professional Account Yes

Compensation may be negotiable.

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

In addition to an aging population, in the last few years, Grace has been blessed with a growing number of young people. During Lent 2020, our Rite 13 youth recognized the hardship the pandemic had posed to Davidson County foster children and spearheaded an ecumenical effort of Lexington Middle School youth groups to raise money for the children at Christmas. Downtown churches and others participated and lit over 13,000 luminaries (at \$1/each for a total of \$13,000) around the churches and down the streets on St. Nicholas Day. Many in our parish helped with contributions, gathering at a safe distance to distribute the lights and support the youth with food. The youth were proud of the impact their work had on meeting the needs of our community, offering an opportunity for service during the pandemic and bringing hope to all who saw the lights. This was successful on many levels: it brought the community of Grace together during a time of severe separation caused by the pandemic; it reminded us that together, we are strong; it encouraged and supported our youth; and it benefitted the community in which we live with outward and visible signs of God's Grace.

How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

Plans are to explore hybrid church potential and to sustain virtual worship and event offerings after the pandemic to provide access if people are unable to attend in-person services and activities. Looking toward the future technologically, we have greatly enhanced our online presence through Facebook and other platforms, and we are able to stream online Sunday services as well as special services. Other than these, while many discussions have taken place where ideas have been suggested, little organized strategic planning has occurred to address the shifts in demographics, Episcopal Church trends, religious attitudes and practices across generations. Programs for young people have increased during the pandemic and are supported by the membership. Historically, Grace has been a congregation open to opportunities to learn through small group studies and to apply what we learn to the world beyond the church doors. Many parishioners, for example, have become increasingly involved in local issues of racial reconciliation. What is missing is wise rector leadership to help us articulate and live a shared vision for our future.

Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

joyful, wise, Servant Leader, spiritual growth, life long learning

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

Grace's liturgical style is not high—we are more relaxed in our approach to Sunday morning services, especially our gathering time—but neither are we low. Typically, we have a traditional Sunday 9:00 Rite I Holy Eucharist service in the historic chapel and an 11:00 Rite II Holy Eucharist service in the new sanctuary. We offer special services in both settings, including during Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent (with imposition of ashes), Holy Week (with foot-washing), Easter, and Pentecost. The chapel is open weekly for meditation and prayer. Liturgy and Eucharist are the heart of our worship. Our youth participate in all parts of the service as acolytes, lay readers, and more. Our children offer music and participate in other ways during special services. We are a relaxed though intentional gathering. Most of us don't get upset when someone misreads or when children talk during services. We have a robust 6-8 member choir and a rollicking organist, though sometimes we sing with our mouths closed.

How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

Many ages serve as acolytes, altar guilders, A/V techs, lay eucharistic ministers, lectors, musicians, social hour hosts, ushers, web designers, worship leaders, commission members, and more. Two outreach ministries, Grace Food Ministry (GFM) and Arts Academy at Grace (AAG), are led by ecumenical boards. Our GFM Sunday Lunch Program serves over 100 guests weekly, made possible by the combined efforts of its leaders, our members, and volunteers from neighboring churches. AAG offers lessons in the performing and visual arts to students of all ages within and outside our parish; its teachers also are within and outside the parish. Serving a diverse population, the Arts Academy holds two week-long, day camps for rising 3rd-5th graders. During our annual camping trip to Pisgah National Forest, leaders and campers from across the community gather for outdoor worship and fellowship. Perhaps our longest-observed ministry (69 years) is the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, a ministry of the men of Grace, which brings in almost 500 enthusiasts annually. Proceeds support social ministries within the church and community.

As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Members of this parish genuinely like and care about one another, though these days, we care for each other more on a personal basis than a parish program basis. We are learning from the pandemic impact that we have work to do in the caring for our parish's spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. Adult Forum has long been a place where members and visitors are free to ask questions and delve deeply into matters of personal and social concern. In 2020, we planned to begin a focused practice of Becoming Beloved Community through Adult Forum. This was scaled back to several small group book studies focused on racial injustice. We see ourselves as inclusive and invitational, but lately we have noticed that our once vibrant pastoral care has become more reactive than proactive. There are plans to reactivate our congregational care commission with more intentionality to rebuild and support our parish family that has waned during the pandemic. The vestry has made efforts to reach out to the membership, and several parishioners have taken it on themselves to keep in touch with others. Effort and attention are needed to care for one another within our parish.



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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

In addition to the Grace Food Ministry Sunday Lunch Program and Arts Academy at Grace, both discussed at length above, our members serve on boards or have been participants in Pastors Pantry, Meals on Wheels, Hinkle Hospice House, Habitat for Humanity, Guardians ad Litem, Family Services of Davidson County, Davidson Medical Ministry, Crisis Ministries, the Cancer Center, Arts Davidson County, American Children's Home and many more. We have been instrumental in the founding, leadership, and success of many of these and other groups and nonprofit organizations. As a parish we have been more involved in the past in outreach and pastoral care beyond our community. This is an area in which we would like to grow. As individuals, we work throughout the community in various capacities, and even though we are a small parish, our influence and impact is strong.

Describe your worshipping community's involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

We serve as delegates to Diocesan Convention on the diocesan Committee for the Diaconate, and have served on Diocesan Council, as Convocation Lay Warden, Trustees of the University of the South, and others. We pay our diocesan Fair Share. Our youth continue to participate in diocesan youth events. Grace Food Ministry Sunday Lunch Program serves unmet community needs through collaborative efforts, where local church members join us as board members and volunteers to cook and serve meals. Arts Academy at Grace actively reaches out to the community through partnerships with local schools, government, civic clubs, and area churches to bring children and adults into our space. Grace Church leadership is typically actively involved in GLAMA (Greater Lexington Area Ministerial Association), which meets monthly and addresses issues within the community, including racism and inclusivity. Al-Anon and other groups meet at Grace. Laity and clergy have participated in peace vigils and protests sponsored by local GLAMA churches to establish a strong community presence. Grace members and clergy have played active roles in community groups such as 2CFar (Crucial Conversations on Faith and Race).

Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

Several new ministries have evolved during the pandemic that reach our congregation and others: 1) We conduct and offer virtual worship services and outreach via Facebook, along with Christian formation events; 2) Another ministry renders congregational care for homebound members. Our Journey to Adulthood teens deliver Grace Food Ministry Sunday Lunch takeout meals, providing food for many senior members; 3) As part of our outreach ministry, Grace purchased a house on property adjacent to ours and volunteer parish members began renovating it to house an expanding Sunday Lunch and Food Pantry Program. When the Food Pantry portion of the program folded, we were able to sell the house at cost to Habitat for Humanity, which has been able to place a veteran's family there. Part of the "sweat equity" agreement involves the family assisting in our Sunday lunch program as volunteers, maintaining a sort of connection to its origin with us. Marjorie Parker, a parishioner and Executive Director of Habitat, can be contacted for further information. Grace has a history of working with Habitat in the community, and we were happy to continue that connection.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

When we know someone or something needs to be taken care of, people come together and do it. During our clergy transition, lay participation has grown and has sustained governance, formation, outreach, website development, and virtual worship. Our dedicated lay professionals have maintained on-site and remote support needed for communications and continuity. Many Safe Church projects have been completed in the last two years. Funds have been applied for and received from outreach ministry grants to Payroll Protection Program loans. In 2019, volunteer parishioners built a new playground with mostly donated materials. When resources are needed for causes, we come together and try to provide them. We hold annual pledge campaigns, hoping to fund our operating budgets. Income has decreased recently due to deaths, relocations, and the pandemic. Fewer members have pledged. Some pledge to the operating fund and donate added funds as well as time and talent for our Columbarium upkeep, outreach ministries and other projects.

What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Conflicts that require confidentiality in handling by the Vestry have sometimes created confusion and uneasiness because the explanations some parish members wanted could not be appropriately shared. Some of our historic conflicts involving a former rector are under the surface, though we have been able to work through many of them. It has sometimes been our tendency to ignore conflict. However, when a concern involving church shootings arose a few years ago, the Vestry involved several members in addition to themselves and contacted every member of the church through phone calls, emails, or personal visits to find out their feelings and thoughts about what to do for our safety in keeping with our stand as a welcoming community. While there continued to be disagreement about the decision, members generally seemed grateful for being included in the decision making process. Personal communication was/is the key.

What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

Many of our members have come to Grace from traditions other than the Episcopal Church. Generally, we value the liturgical traditions of the Episcopal Church and the beauty of the service with its music and its attention to the connections with the sacred. We have somewhat adapted to the virtual community, but most long for the time of in-person gathering again. Because we have not been together in over a year, we probably don't even realize how much we have already changed. Many express a desire to get back to "the way things used to be" while others look forward to experimenting with new programs and innovations in worship. Change works better here when the congregation is invited intentionally and directly involved in planning to address the future. Small groups—who can share their stories and build trust and community, who feel wanted and needed and recognized for their unique gifts—have historically succeeded. While that takes time, it pays dividends.

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Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
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Art Academy at Grace: A community school of the arts, virtual lessons are being held during the pandemic. <https://gracelexingtonnc.org/arts-academy/>

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
	4	17

Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
4	16	3	24

Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
	55	7	2

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Worshipping Community Web site:<https://gracelexingtonnc.org/>

Media Links:

- > <https://www.facebook.com/graceepiscopalchurchlexington>
- > <https://gracelexingtonnc.org/arts-academy/>

Online References:

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

References

Bishop:

919-834-7474 sam.rodman@episdionc.org

**The Rt. Rev. Samuel E.
Rodman**

Diocesan Transition Minister
Canon Catherine Massey

919-834-7474 catherine.massey@episdionc.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

Mr. Tommy Black

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Mrs. Pamela Harvey

Search Chair

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader