



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 13, 2020

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

**Saint John Lutheran Church
Griffin, Georgia**

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Let us come close to the God of Love, who forgives our sins, and is faithful to us, forever.

Loving God, we have not thought about you as often as you have thought about us. **We're sorry.**

Sometimes, we've been grumpy, we've taken our anger out on others, we haven't been as kind as we'd like to be. **We're sorry.**

We haven't been our best selves, haven't been as brave and as creative and as loving as you have made us to be. **We're sorry.**

We haven't taken care of people who are hungry, people who are lonely, and people who are in prison, as well as we would like to. **We're sorry.**

We haven't taken care of the earth as well as we should. **We're sorry.**

We have forgotten that you are a God of Grace and have been afraid of your judgement. **We're sorry.**

God does love you no matter who you are or what you have done or what has happened to you in your life! God is always ready to forgive us when we say we're sorry, and help us to be the people we want to be! Let's live in God's love together! **Amen!**

Our mission here at St. John is...

We trust God and invite you to experience God's inclusive Love!

Gathering Song

Faith of Our Fathers

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Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

The Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Faith of Our Fathers

1 Faith of our fa - thers, liv - ing still in spite of dun - geon,
2 The mar - tyrs, chained in pris - ons dark, were still in heart and
3 Faith of our fa - thers! We will love both friend and foe in

fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy
con - science free; and blest would be their chil - dren's fate
all our strife; pro - claim thee too, as love knows how,

Refrain

when - e'er we hear that glo - rious word.
if they, like them, should die for thee. Faith of our fa - thers,
by sav - ing word and faith - ful life.

ho - ly faith, we will be true to you till death.

Kyrie



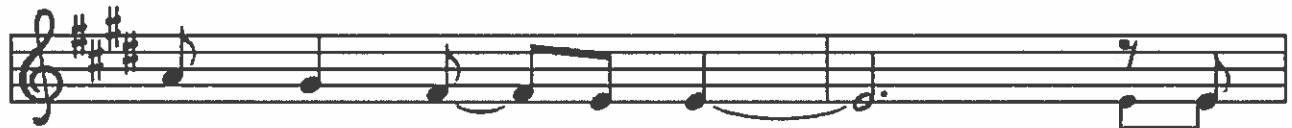
Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.



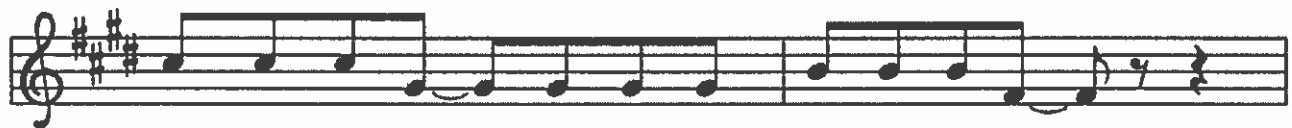
Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.



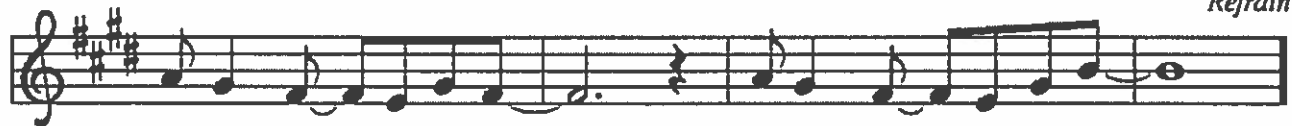
1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you



this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,



let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

WORD

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 103:[1-7] 8-13

¹Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

²**Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all God's benefits—**

³who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases;

⁴**who redeems your life from the grave
and crowns you with steadfast love and mercy;**

⁵who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶**O Lord, you provide vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.**

⁷You made known your ways to Moses
and your works to the children of Israel.

⁸**Lord, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

⁹you will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.

**¹⁰You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

**¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.**

**¹²As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

**¹³As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O Lord.**

Romans 14:1-12

¹Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹For it is written,

**“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”**

¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Matthew 18:21-35

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Silence is kept for reflection

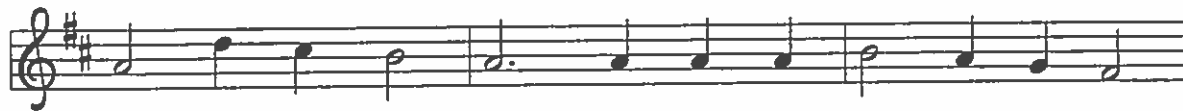
Please stand as you are able

Hymn of the Day

Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace



1 Lord of all na - tions, grant me grace to love all
2 Break down the wall that would di - vide thy chil - dren,
3 For - give me, Lord, where I have erred by love - less
4 Give me thy cour - age, Lord, to speak when - ev - er
5 With thine own love may I be filled and by thy



peo - ple, ev - 'ry race; and in each per - son may I
Lord, on ev - 'ry side. My neigh - bor's good let me pur -
act and thought - less word. Make me to see the wrong I
strong op - press the weak. Should I my - self the vic - tim
Ho - ly Spir - it willed, that all I touch, wher - e'er I



see my kin - dred, loved, re - deemed by thee.
sue; let Chris - tian love bind warm and true.
do will cru - ci - fy my Lord a - new.
be, help me for - give, re - mem - b'ring thee.
be, may be di - vine - ly touched by thee.

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

Prayers of Intercession

Drawn together in the compassion of God, we pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

You welcome us when we are weak in faith. Uphold your church throughout the world; make it a place of welcome. Strengthen faith through Bible studies and Sunday schools, confirmation classes and youth ministries. Nurture new ministries of education and growth. Bless the ministry of Agustinian Lutheran School, Guatemala and St. Johannes, Bavaria. We pray for Grace Missions and Chez Moi Orphanage, Haiti. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make your ways known to the nations. Speak kindness to our bitter grudges. Settle our hearts when we want to settle accounts with violence. Bless our leaders with patience and wisdom. Protect those serving in the military, especially **Sequoia McLendon, Chris Perrault, Chantz Roche.** Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring healing and justice wherever harm is dealt. Provide vindication for all who are oppressed. Free victims of human trafficking and forced labor; deliver all who are bound by debt. Feed all who hunger, and guard refugees fleeing famine, poverty, and war. Place your healing hand upon those who are sick, especially, **Cathleen Dahl, Terry McCormick, Charlie Parks, William Panick, Bob Keener, Karen and Alvin Gruenewald, Susan and David Friend, Brandon, Stephanie and Kimber Roberts, Maureen Caldwell, April Kennedy, Andy and June Harnack, Myrna Schultz, John Bennett, Whitney O'Connor Hawk, Sarah Lanier, Connie Klopfenstein and Charlie Norman, Ken Bell, Catherine Campbell, Amy Kompelien, Gwen Taylor.**

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Teach us to forgive. Remind us that you do not always accuse us. Still our tongues when we are tempted to pass judgment and argue over opinions. Make this congregation a community of mercy for one another and for all our neighbors. Bring joyful celebrations to those who are celebrating birthdays, **Amy Kompelien, Sarah Lanier, Patrick McVey, Beth Mayo, Matt Baade, Kathy Gates, Les Windsor;** those celebrating baptisms, **Terry Emlet, Janet Kindred; expectant parents, Brandi and Matt Baade, Liesl and Tyler Swenson.** Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift up all others we name in our hearts or on our lips..... *(Pause).*

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else you see that we need, we entrust to your mercy; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

MEAL

We Share the Peace of the Lord

Special Music

Gathering of Gifts

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Merciful God, our ordinary gifts seem small for such a celebration, but you make of them an abundance, just as you do with our lives. Feed us again at this table for service in your name, in the strength of the risen Christ. **Amen.**

Spiritual Communion

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen

Thanksgiving for the Word

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

SENDING

Announcements

Blessing

God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.

God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

And God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.

The God of all grace ✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn

Bring Forth the Kingdom

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Dismissal

As we go on our way, let us remember...

**We are an equipping and responding church
that continues to grow, impact, and transform lives.**

Go in Peace, May the Holy Spirit guide you

Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Bring forth the kingdom

Leader
D G/D D D/F# All G D/F# A D

- 1 You are salt for the earth, O peo-ple: salt for the king-dom of God!
- 2 You are a light on the hill, O peo-ple: light for the cit - y of God!
- 3 You are a seed of the word, O peo-ple: bring forth the king-dom of God!
- 4 We are a blest and a pil-grim peo-ple: bound for the king-dom of God!

Leader G D/F# G A D All G D/F# A D

Share the fla - vor of life, O peo - ple: life in the king-dom of God!
 Shine so ho - ly and bright, O peo - ple: shine for the king-dom of God!
 Seeds of mer - cy and seeds of jus - tice, grow in the king-dom of God!
 Love our jour - ney and love our home - land: love is the king-dom of God!

Refrain
G D/F# Em A D G D/F#

Bring forth the king - dom of mer - cy, bring forth the

Em A D G D/F# G A D

king - dom of peace; bring forth the king - dom of jus - tice.

G D/F# Em/G A D G D/F# A D

bring forth the cit - y of God!

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION – September 13, 2020

Cathleen Dahl, Terry McCormick, Charlie Parks, William Panick, Bob Keener, Karen and Alvin Gruenewald, Susan and David Friend, Brandon, Stephanie and Kimber Roberts, Maureen Caldwell, April Kennedy, Andy and June Harnack, Myrna Schultz, John Bennett, Micah Stansell, Whitney O'Connor Hawk, Sarah Lanier, Connie Klopfenstein and Charlie Norman, Ken Bell, Catherine Campbell, Amy Kompelien, Gwen Taylor.

BIRTHDAYS

9/15 Amy Kompelien
9/16 Sarah Lanier
9/16 Patrick McVey
9/17 Beth Mayo
9/18 Matt Baade
9/18 Kathy Gates
9/18 Les Windsor

BAPTISMS

9/18 Terry Emlet
9/18 Janet Kindred

EXPECTANT PARENTS

Brandi and Matt Baade
Liesl and Tyler Swenson

MILITARY

Sequoya McLendon, Chantz Roche,
Chris Perrault

FAMILY AND FRIENDS: Teresa Gibson (Daughter of Pr. Barb Gibson); Liz and Bob Sherliza, Deb Tutson, (Friends of Saint John); Ruby Reid (family of Gwen Flowers-Taylor); Sheryl Weldon (friend of Julie Gates); Charles Harper, Tim Kennedy (family and friends of April Kennedy); Rick Schnaible, Lynne Reichelt, Phyllis Kesler (family of Lyle and Cheryl Kesler); Mary Locke (mother of Janet Kindred); Kim Lothrop, (family of Connie Klopfenstein); John Bechtel, Susan St. John, (family and friends of Sarah Lanier); Isaac Russell (family of Marcus Loner); Jim & Emma Shoup, Chuck and Bunny Blume, (friends of Tish Martin); Sara, Merline and family (Friends and family of Gwen and Charlie Parks), Melissa Roy, Mary Donna Harris (family of Jill Roy); Doug Maxwell, Max Maxwell (Brother and Father of Debbie Sakmar); Jack Bauser (family Carol Tackett), Anneka Swann, Amanda Doyle, Ted Helms, Herbert Rogers (family and friends of Bill, Cherie, and Mandy Tidwell).

The church is offering drive by Communion from 12-1 p.m. Please drive up, and stay in your car. Pastor Mary will bring you the hosts, and another member will bring you the wine/grape juice. Gluten free will also be available. We will still have Zoom coffee hour from 11-12 online. Please see the invite if you would like to join us.

We will continue to offer Communion each Sunday from noon to 1 p.m. indefinitely. Please join us for Communion!

Offering plates will be available as well as the noisy change buckets.

Blessings, Pastor Mary

Hi everyone,

This year, our God's work, our hands projects will be more individual, family, or small groups serving together. An early project that needs help is from Susan Friend. Susan is going to make 136 dolls for children in our community. She and a friend will stuff and sew but they need help cutting out the patterns. She also is looking to see if anyone has an embroidery machine (or knows someone who has one and would help), and could embroider faces on the dolls?

If you can help, please contact Susan directly at: susanfriend1@comcast.net

We can have her drop off the material and pattern at church, and it can be picked up here, or we can mail it out. We can also have it ready to be picked up if you come for Communion any of the upcoming Sunday's for the drive in Communion from 12-1 p.m. Thanks in advance! More project ideas to come!! If you have one to share, please send it to me soon.

Blessings,

Pastor Mary Armstrong-Reiner,

TITHING

There are several ways to give to Saint John during the Covid-19 shutdown.

(1) Mail your tithe to Saint John at the address listed on the next page.

(2) Go online to Tithe.ly.com and give using a credit card. The easiest way to get to the correct page is to use the link in the weekly newsletter or the link on our webpage at www.stjohngriffin.org. This service does charge, so be sure to add the fees to your intended gift.

(3) We are set up with United Bank to take gifts of stock. If you are interested in giving stocks, please let the office know and we will give you the contact info at United Bank.

Thank you for your continued support of Saint John and its ministries.

“Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications in your faithfulness, answer me in your righteousness.” Psalm 143:1

If ever there was a time that we wanted God to hear our prayers, it is now. So much going on, so much to process, so many in need of prayers for so many things. We add the layers of needs from health and protection from Covid-19, to unemployment, school, loneliness, to all the regular things that need prayer. We add in the crises of our world, as we see the explosion in Beirut last week, and know of earthquakes, famine, and hurricanes that draw us to pray for the needs of all.

The psalmist continues in verse 5: “I remember the days of old, I think about all of your deeds, I meditate on all the works of your hands. I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land.

When we think of the prayers that we have lifted over the years, and that God has answered, we know that God is with us in all that we face. We know that we can turn to God to sustain us in this time of being apart and rely upon the strength of God’s love to help us through whatever we are dealing with in our lives.

In these times of the long, hot summer, we continue to pray for so many friends and family who are struggling. WE continue to pray for those affected by Covid-19, and for all frontline workers whether they be working in the hospital, or the grocery store. We pray for justice in our communities, and our land. We pray for the people of Beirut, and wherever there is war in the world, we pray for peace. We also pray for the schools, the children, the teachers, and the staff as they prepare to teach, whether in person or online.

The Psalmist continues in verse 8: “Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning, for in you I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.”

May we all continue to hear God’s love each day, and trust that God is leading us in the way that we should go. Blessings to you all in this hot August! I look forward to seeing you at Communion at Saint John in August from 12-1 p.m.

Blessings, Pastor Mary

P.S. if you have any prayer requests, please e-mail me or Lynn with your requests. Thanks!

From Lutheran World Relief:

In addition to the devastating casualties, injuries and widespread destruction, three containers of LWR Quilts and Kits – amounting to more than 47,000 items – were destroyed in the Beirut explosion. These items were bound for families throughout Lebanon struggling with the current economic crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, including refugee families from Syria.

Because we have raised enough funds that we need for backpack for kids to be able to sponsor 10 kids for a weekend meals for the year, we have switched our loose change giving to raise funds for Lutheran world relief to be able to give for the funds to replace some of the quilts and the kits that will run from last Sunday, August 9 through Labor Day and possibly a week or two beyond.

Thank you for everyone who brought in your change last week. Please keep sending it, and we will send funds on to help with this greatly needed work.

Pastor Mary is also going to find out if we can put together kits (hygiene, school, and baby care) and be able to get them sent to our Lutheran church Offices that could be sent over to Beirut. There's some details to find out and as soon as she finds them she will share them with everyone.

In the meantime, thank you for the over \$200 raised last week. You can make checks out to the church as well Put your change in the loose change bucket. If you would put on the memo that it is for Beirut-Lutheran world relief, that will help us to know It is designated to that collection.

Thank you for helping some of the neediest in our world!

Saint John Lutheran Church
1689 Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway
Griffin, GA 30224
Church Phone: 770-228-0662
Email: stjohnelca@bellsouth.net
Website: www.stjohngriffin.org
Facebook: Saint John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Pastor Mary Armstrong-Reiner
Pastor_st.john@yahoo.com
Cell 309-212-0888

Support Staff

Lynn Jones, Administrative Assistant
Marilyn Droegmiller, Organist
Joan Thomas, Choir Director
Jennifer Durham, Choir Accompanist

Amy Droegmiller, Youth Leaders
Gayle Harvil, Praise Team Director
Heather Loner, Nursery Attendant

Congregation Council

Mark Miller, President
Don Taylor, Vice-President
Enid Mswia, Secretary
Butch Armistead, Financial Secretary
Tish Martin, Treasurer

Donna Milam
Phyllis Hutchings
Liesl Kompelien
Tyler Swenson
Rita Johnson

Ministry Contacts

Altar Guild: Sandra Harwood
Education: Phyllis Hutchings
Fellowship: Laura Miller, Martha Dansby
Finance: Tish Martin, Butch Armistead
Gifts and Memorials: Tish Martin
Glocal Mission: Andy Harnack, Larry Schultz

Member Care: Sarah Lanier, Cherie Tidwell
Property: John Sanders, Matt Baade
Social Ministry: Jill Gates, Don Taylor
Stewardship: Mark Miller
Worship: Sandra Harwood
Youth Ministry: Amy Droegmiller

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