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IMPACT REPORT 2023-2024





PASTOR ANDREW'S REFLECTIONS

REV. ANDREW RICKEL, CAMPUS PASTOR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year has been nothing short of extraordinary, marked by the vibrant energy of our Passion Collective Ministry Interns and the remarkable contributions of our student leaders. Together, we've cultivated a robust community that transcends disciplines, Greek life, and campus boundaries. We fostered growth and connection among our students. Our programming has flourished, evolving in response to the dynamic engagement of our community.

I'm continually inspired by students' unwavering commitment to challenge us to live authentically and deepen our faith journey together. One of the highlights of this year was undoubtedly our Easter worship, where students shared profound reflections on the Resurrection. Each offered a unique perspective with vulnerability and sincerity. Ezra, class of 2025, reflected "Sometimes I just wish we could see the pain that's on the inside on the outside, and the scars that come from healing that pain, the way Jesus showed it and the way that people responded to it... It's so hard to remember when you live in a world where you can only see from your eyes, the people around you, because there is so much beyond people than just their bodies." The spirit of the Good News was palpable, culminating in a truly transformative experience that encapsulated the essence of our collective journey.

Entering into campus ministry, I was forewarned of the perpetual turnover in student populations—a carousel of graduations, new arrivals, and study abroad adventures. While this flux indeed presents its own set of challenges, I've found it to be an invigorating aspect of my role. However, what I hadn't fully anticipated was the emotional weight of bidding farewell to graduating students as they embark on their next chapter. It's a delicate balance of celebrating their achievements, eagerly anticipating their futures, grappling with their absence in the coming semester, and questioning whether we've equipped them sufficiently for life beyond graduation.

Though I have every confidence in their resilience and potential, the act of releasing them and entrusting their spiritual journey to the guidance of the Holy Spirit remains a profound challenge. Yet, it's a testament to the depth of our connection and the impact of our ministry that such farewells are imbued with both sadness and hope, reflecting the rich tapestry of relationships we've woven together.

OUR STORY SO FAR

For almost 70 years, God has used Lutheran Campus Ministries to engage with and transform the lives of students at Georgia Tech. Starting in 1955, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer began connecting with students at Georgia Tech. In 1980, Lutheran Campus Ministry at Georgia Tech called it's first Pastor, Rev. Al Daly. In 1981, we moved into our current location at 182 5th St NW. In 2024, hundreds of students pass through Grace House every week looking for everything from spiritual guidance and wise counsel to food, a safe space and sometimes even coffee.

OUR MISSION

Lutheran Campus Ministry's Grace House equips students to make a transformative impact in the world by embodying and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom. We believe that simply making an impact is not enough; it must be an impact that bears good fruit and leads to lasting transformation.

89%

OF STUDENTS IN ELCA CAMPUS
MINISTRIES INDICATED THAT THEY
PLAN TO REMAIN ACTIVE IN A
RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY AS ADULTS

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY STUDY SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

OUR PURPOSE

We emphasize that when students experience the transformative power of Jesus' love, their impact on the world becomes not only greater but also qualitatively distinct. Grace House operates with a commitment to holistic care, addressing students' spiritual, emotional, and physical needs through programs marked by radical love, safe inquiry, and inclusive justice.

Our core practices include serving free coffee, facilitating small groups for Scripture study, organizing weekly dinners and worship services, offering one-on-one meetings for theological and life discussions, and maintaining a pantry stocked with free food and toiletries on-site. Additionally, we collaborate with Georgia Tech to address broader student needs, such as providing crisis support and pastoral care in times of hardship.

Ultimately, we aim to create spaces where students can be transformed by God's love, empowering them to become agents of positive change in their communities and beyond.

Both my parents are ELCA pastors. Sometimes when I mention this to friends or people I meet, I notice a skeptical look on their faces. It's like they're wondering if I'll be stricter or different somehow. But every time, especially when I mention that they're the same type of pastors as the Grace House, everyone's face lights up. It's like an instant connection. People start sharing how much they love Grace House, mentioning grabbing coffee there or attending worship services. It's incredible how universal the positive response is, no matter where I am or who I'm talking to.

I believe it's because our mission at Grace House is so transparent. Our values of radical love, inclusive justice, and safe inquiry resonate deeply with our student body. It's something that everyone can understand and relate to, regardless of their background or beliefs. Whether I'm studying at the library or hanging out with friends, Grace House seems to be a part of everyone's experience. It's not just a place for worship or small group meetings—it's a hub of community.

Every Thursday, you'll find students stopping by for coffee, picking up free food, or grabbing blessing bags. It's a space where everyone has the opportunity to connect and engage. And that's what makes Grace House so special—it's more than just a church. It's a place of true community, where people from all walks of life come together.

For me, being part of the Grace House community has been life-changing. It's opened my eyes to the power of communion and what genuine community looks like, not only here at Georgia Tech but also in the greater Atlanta area. I'm so grateful for this place and the love it embodies.



ASHLEIGH HENNING

3RD YEAR

Watch a video of Ashleigh sharing her experience at ATLLutheran.org/ashleigh



OUR PEOPLE

Bios for our Staff Team at ATLLutheran.org/people

2023-2024 Student Leadership

Sophia Alexander Ellie Baker Vicky Celedon Katherine Mittleder
El Pimentell Claire Pukhaber Ezra Spivey

Campus Pastor
 & Executive Director
Pastor Andrew Rickel



Director of Partnerships &
 Kingdom Experiments Campus Pastor
Pastor Matt Pritchard



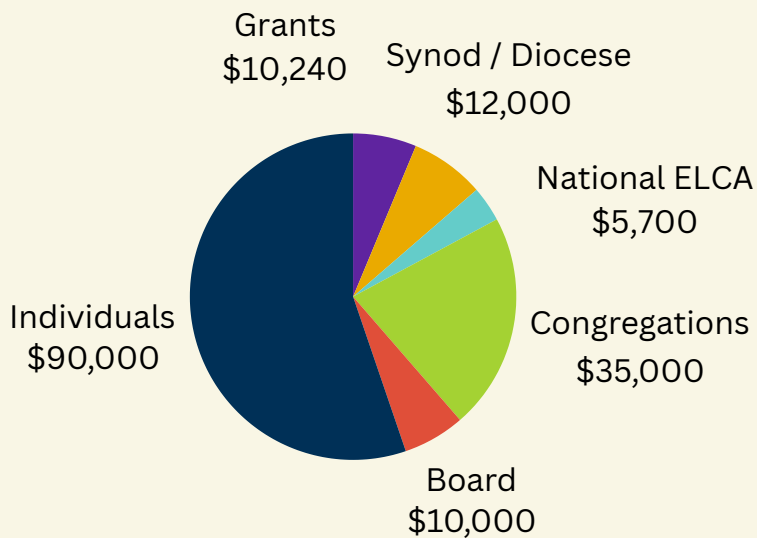
Passion Collective Ministry Interns

Michael Williams Sammi Watson Eric Strickland

Board of Directors

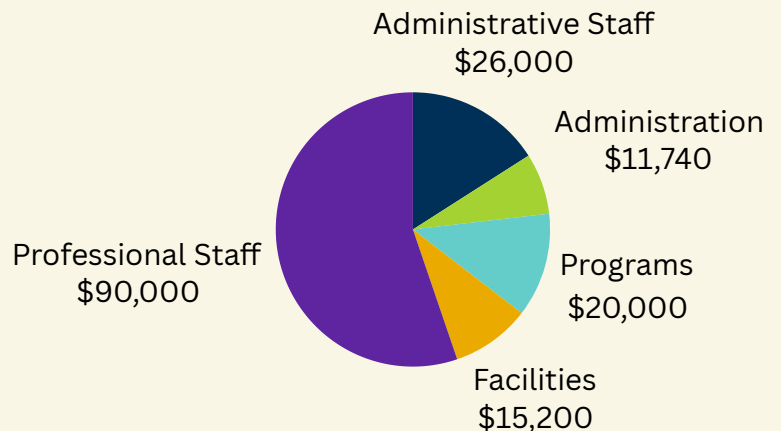
Rev. Matthew O'Rear Rev. Steve Fazenbaker Dan Lizdas Allison Lizdas
Michael McCoy Imran Siddiqui Rev. Ashton Roberts

Total Income \$162,940



OUR BUDGET

Total Expenses \$162,940



IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

2023-2024

538

In-Person Meals
Served to Students

400

Students Welcomed
Weekly*

25

Students Participating
in Small Groups

64

Worship
Gatherings

640

Pounds of Groceries
Distributed*

11

Student Leaders
Developed

5834

Cups of Coffee
Served

475

Ready-Made Meals
Distributed

*estimated



TESTIMONIES OF IMPACT

"What I love about Grace House is... how welcoming the community is to everyone and how it's a space where you can just exist without people asking questions."

-Vicky, Class of 2026

"I've grown a lot in my personal faith through Grace House, especially through small group discussions... Grace House has been critical in helping me find a community at Tech and feeling like it's a home away from home."

-Ellie, Class of 2027

"It's been amazing to see how the small groups provide a space for students to take care of themselves and embrace who they are."

-Michael, Passion Collective intern

"That exemplified radical love certainly, and how Grace House can be a unique space for conversations like that."

-Eric, Passion Collective Intern

"What I love about Grace House is I know I'm always safe to be my true self."

-Sammi, Passion Collective Intern

"As a small group leader at Grace House, I usually saw familiar faces every week. But one day, two freshmen joined unexpectedly. Excited by their presence, I mentioned an upcoming Pride Eucharist at All Saints later that evening. To my surprise, they were intrigued and decided to join. We spent the next two hours at Grace House, and then I took them to the service.

During the Eucharist, it became evident that they had experienced hurt from faith backgrounds that rejected their identities. Witnessing their emotional reaction to the affirming atmosphere was moving. Over the course of the service, it was like witnessing a transformation in them. They found acceptance and belonging in Grace House, embracing a faith community that welcomed them entirely.

Now, those two freshmen have become small group leaders themselves, introducing others to the idea of a faith that embraces individuals for who they are. It's a beautiful journey of acceptance, transformation, and finding home in a community that celebrates diversity and love."

-Sophia, Class of 2024



LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY'S GRACE HOUSE
PO BOX 55590 ATLANTA GA 30308
182 5TH ST NW ATLANTA GA 30313
404-500-6233 | INFO@ATLLUTHERAN.ORG
ATLLUTHERAN.ORG

A STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE CULTURE OF GRACE HOUSE

At the beginning of spring semester, Ali Lumpkin asked if she could study Grace House for one of her classes:

"While I was conducting my study, I started to look forward to Thursday coffee events just like their regular coffee-goers because while I observed interactions, I experienced first-hand their kindness as I was greeted by name each week when I stopped by and encouraged to hang out in the living room or on the back porch. By the end of this study, I had gotten to know each member well and developed friendships. While this study is over, I will continue to go to Grace House's coffee events because of their welcoming, friendly, and accepting culture."



Read Ali's full study at
[ATLLutheran.org/culture](https://atllutheran.org/culture)



Lutheran Campus Ministry's Grace House
TRANSFORMING
STUDENTS ❖ THE CAMPUS ❖ THE WORLD
THROUGH THE LOVE OF JESUS

BECAUSE *TRANSFORMED STUDENTS TRANSFORM THE WORLD.*

