

Cross Connections



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

July 2022



Vacation Bible School 2022

Rocky Railway: Jesus' Power Pulls Us Through
Saturday, July 23, from 9:00 am until noon with a hot dog picnic at noon

We will again be doing a Saturday morning VBS program this year on **JULY 23, 2022 from 9:00 am until noon**, ending with our traditional picnic. **We need children registered by July 3**, ages 4 thru grade 5.

Just as we all have discovered in the past couple of years, life is rocky for everyone, especially kids – full of ups and downs and twists and turns. The theme for this year's Vacation Bible School Day is Rocky Railway, where kids will explore Jesus' power and how we can trust Jesus to pull us through when life feels like a valley or a mountaintop. Kids will deepen their friendship with Jesus and leave knowing they can trust him to do big things in their lives.

Volunteers are needed to shepherd children in small groups, lead a Bible Adventure storytime, and lead the KidVid Cinema. We will have a short snack time mid-morning to break up a schedule of activities, crafts, and science tasks. Can you help with any of these tasks?

Have friends? Invite them to join you at VBS this year. Pick up a registration form at church for each child. Adults can complete the same registration form or drop an email to Susan Esposito, at admin@stpaulsdurham.org to volunteer. Want to decorate? We will be doing that early July.

The Rev. Scott M. Anderson, Pastor

Susan Esposito, Parish Administrator & Editor

Ted Turner, Minister of Music

Mac Mullins, Vicar

Amanda Stoen, Preschool Director

Alan Rigsbee, Bookkeeper

The Rev. Amanda Highben, Associate Pastor, Duke Lutherans

The Rev. Dr. Charles R. Huggins, Pastor Emeritus

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From the Pastor...

Summertime is here and we are in the midst of vacations, planning for VBS, worship at just one service, and beginning to plan to say good-bye to Vicar Mac and hello to Vicar Amanda.

On July 31st we will plan a going away reception for Vicar Mac after the 10 am service. We have had a great year and will miss him sincerely. But, he has a lot planned for the summer. Between writing approval essays and a trip to Germany, he will keep himself busy.

I want to take a moment to remind us just what a vicar is and how we are to interact, especially since we may have forgotten during this time of pandemic.

In the broadest sense, a **vicar** (from the Latin *vicarius*) is anyone acting as a substitute or agent for a superior (compare “vicarious”). In this sense, the title is comparable to *lieutenant*. Usually the title appears in a number of Christian ecclesiastical contexts, but in the Holy Roman Empire a local representative of the emperor, perhaps an archduke, might be styled “vicar.”

In the case of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a vicar is a third or fourth year seminarian. Vicar Amanda is a fourth year intern, much like Vicar Sue or Vicar Megan, and she will perform all of the duties of a pastor except for presiding at the sacraments (except under special circumstances) and performing Marriages and baptisms. She is available for counseling, visitation, work with the youth and children and on and on.

Our job will be to be her teachers and mentors. We are called in love, to show her what it means to be the Body of Christ in this place. That doesn't mean that we are all her bosses. The pastor is the vicar's supervisor. We are called to live the good news and help her to continue her formation into a pastor of the church. She will have duties and responsibilities assigned by the pastor, but she will also be free to explore all aspects of ministry here.

Her internship committee will be asking some of you to participate in her learning in a variety of ways, including: sermon critiques, evaluation of her work with you and/or your committee, evaluation of her special internship project and on and on. This evaluation process will be part of the committee's ongoing work and will be done using standard evaluation tools provided by the seminary.

Remember to wear your nametags, introduce yourself over and over for the first few weeks, and try not to make comparisons between previous vicars and Amanda.

Vicar Amanda and I will appreciate your

willingness to work with us to make this year fulfilling and meaningful for us all.

Pastor Scott

From the Vicar...

“For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” 1 Cor. 2:2

Is there ever an easy goodbye when you're leaving people you love? It's difficult for me to believe that our twelve months together have already come and gone. It feels like preparations for Christmas and excitement for Holy Week were only just yesterday. And yet, in this year together, we have done so many things. We've studied God's word and theology together, growing in our faith and trust in God's promises. We've thought and acted together on how to faithfully care for God's creation that we have been made stewards of. We've opened our hearts and minds to the pain of our city's past and the hope and need for a better future. But most importantly, whether on Sunday mornings or in your homes, we have proclaimed God's Word to one another and broken bread together at Christ's table.

Through what we have lived out, I have learned and discovered things about myself and about God from you. Many gifts that I had known were whole-heartedly affirmed by our work together especially teaching, worship, and pastoral care. But I also discovered a newfound love, burden, and humility in preaching. Few vicars spend as much time in the pulpit as I have, and that opportunity formed and affirmed my voice for the Gospel. You have also helped to instill the confidence needed in a pastor to lead a congregation. Many seminarians enter internship with a sense of imposter syndrome; we have all the training and knowledge, and yet lack the experience of using it. After a year together, you have helped remove any worries or fears I might have in my capabilities through your encouragement, advice, challenge, and love.

And it is exactly that encouragement which is this congregation's greatest gift that the Holy Spirit has bestowed on you. I am St. Paul's twentieth vicar, and that alone should speak to the ability of this faithful community of Christians to teach, train, encourage, and love future pastors of Christ's church. Each of you bring your own experiences and knowledge into your relationship with me, no matter your background. And collectively you offer a firm foundation on which a vicar can stand with their own two feet to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ not only to you, but to the whole world.

For those wondering, I am returning to complete

my last year of seminary down in Columbia, SC. During this last year, I will finish up my candidacy process with the NC Synod and hope to begin interviewing for my first call sometime in early 2023. Please keep me in prayer throughout this process.

I want to give special thanks to Pr. Scott. I am blessed to have him as a supervisor and life-long mentor and friend. His firm confidence in the promises of Christ Jesus have kept me grounded and excited even in the most difficult times of my ministry here. I would also like to give thanks for my internship committee: Wendy Waugh, Katherine Trexler, Mary Runestad, Mark Dewhirst, Curtis Chi, Barbara Shade, Marcia Redman, and Linda Foreman. These eight folks have kept me in prayer, held me accountable, and loved me from before I even arrived at St. Paul's. Not a moment of my internship would have been possible without them. I lastly want to thank Angela Maine for providing a home for me to live in and her own special care and friendship throughout the year. I hope you will pray for and give thanks to all of these faithful Christians, as I will continue to do. I also encourage you to pray for my successor, Vr. Amanda Spangler. Though I leave you, you will not be without a vicar for very long.

So, as I said before, how do I say goodbye to a congregation that has supported, nurtured, formed, and loved me for a year? I will follow St. Paul's example and simply pray and hope that, at the very least, I was able to proclaim and live out the good news of Christ Jesus and him crucified for and with you. Thank you for a wonderful year and know I take your love with me into the next year. And may almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and remain with you forever.

Your Brother in Christ Jesus,
Vr. Mac

DUKE LUTHERANS IN THE NEWS!

Even though it's summer now, Duke Lutherans students are busy as always, serving and leading in the community and around the globe. Of course, several of our graduate students are here in Durham, diligently continuing their research (they're good about reminding me that "breaks" aren't really a thing for them), while the Divinity students are experiencing field education and the undergrads are working at internships or other summer jobs to earn a little additional income. Keep reading to discover more student highlights!

Peace,
Pastor Amanda Highben



Sarah Ruiz, '22-'23 Duke Chapel Student Advisory Board

Sarah is a 3rd year PhD student in Electrical and Computer Engineering from California. She graduated from Grinnell College in 2018 with majors in Religious Studies and Physics. Sarah especially loves Morning and Evening Prayer, hiking in God's creation, and serving our monthly community meals at the Grace House on East campus.



Kristina Urberg, Helped to Select Winner for French Literary Prize

Kristina just completed her freshman year and is from Ft. Wayne, IN. This summer she's studying in France, and as a student last spring in "Reading Literature in French for the Choix Goncourt" (France's equivalent of the Pulitzer), she helped to select the winner of France's most prestigious literary prize. The students read all nine of the nominated novels in the original French and met some of the authors. As Kristina explains, there were two votes: one official vote at a ceremony in NYC attended by two Duke student delegates (together with students from NYU, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton), and another unofficial vote at Kristina's professor's house (see photo), when all the students deliberated and decided which books their Duke representatives should vouch for in NYC. Kristina will serve as the Duke Lutherans co-chair of outreach and fellowship/social events in the new academic year, along with fellow sophomore (and pre-med major) Camryn Johnson.



Magdalena Phillips, Rachel Carson Scholar, Duke Marine Lab, and NOAA summer intern

A Marine Biology major from Seattle, Magdalena is preparing for her senior year after studying for two semesters (spring and fall 2021) at Duke's marine lab in Beaufort. The lab brings together a small community of scholars on the island for experiential, hands-on, and interdisciplinary work and research. Magdalena also serves as the Duke

Lutherans Creation Care student leader and is working this summer for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). As an intern in the Protected Resources Division in Seattle, she analyzes data about how recreational salmon fisheries impact killer whales.



Avery Johnson and Max Miller, MDiv and Field Education Students

Now that they’ve completed their first year at Duke Divinity, Avery (Wauke, IA) and Max (Falls Church, VA) are fulfilling their field education requirements. Avery is serving at Christ the King in Cary and Max at First United Methodist in Elizabeth City. As part of their program, students explore their pastoral roles and identity, work to clarify and test their call, and build and strengthen their skills for ministry. Max also serves as the Duke Lutherans student leader for Prayer,



while Avery particularly enjoys Bible Study and studying Biblical Greek.

Preschool Pitter Patter

by Amanda Stoen



This summer, the preschool is offering four weeks of summer camp for our preschoolers. We have had a blast with our first two weeks in June and look forward to our



upcoming camp weeks this month. About 40 children are attending camp throughout the summer with most of our preschool staff working several or all four weeks. Summer camp is always a fun time for children and teachers as we create a more relaxed atmosphere with lots of water play!

In June, St. Paul’s also provided space for a neurodiversity camp for preschool



age children. Neurodiversity encompasses any way of thinking, being, or communicating which is sufficiently different from ‘the norm.’ Some forms of neurodiversity include Autism, ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorder, Developmental Language Disorder, Tourette Syndrome and more. This local group

created a program for children who might not be able to attend a typical summer camp. I am grateful that St. Paul’s was able to provide both indoor and outdoor spaces for this diverse group in our community. Every child matters and providing a safe and welcoming space supports the needs of neurodivergent children.

And finally, a huge thank you to our outgoing preschool board members, Kim Hoke, Heather Slane and Sharon Wilson. Thank you for your service to the preschool over many years, especially during the pandemic. The past two years have been challenging and the preschool board has made many decisions to support the program and keep things running as smoothly and safely as possible. Your commitment to the preschool program has been invaluable.

Dialogues on Race

On June 9th, our small-group study, organized around the curriculum “Dialogues on Race” held its final gathering. Over the previous seven weeks, we shared stories, encountered difficult history, learned from one another, and began to imagine ways for our congregation to become more representative of God’s kingdom. Some group members have reflected on our experiences and readings this way:

“Christianity and the Erasing of the Native American Stories”

The fourth chapter in this insightful book was particularly eye opening for me. It spoke to the horrific treatment of Native peoples since the beginning of our country’s formation. One fact particularly resonated, “The practice of native American spirituality was illegal until 1978.” (pg. 70) Imagine that. Imagine not being able to freely worship but just 44 years ago. Imagine your existence, your beliefs, and your ability to rejoice as you choose being illegal. This not changing until very recently in history made me truly come to terms with my white privilege, biases, and deep seeded racism that still prevails. I think we have a long way to go as a

church, and as a denomination, to admit our collective wrongdoing and begin to take the steps to dismantling white supremacy. Discussion groups like this are a great first step to experiencing new perspectives and I am grateful for the time and care this group offered together. – Claire Cooney

“Christmas Cookies from Cambodia”

This was week 3, but chapter 2 and it did a great job of helping push my white Lutheran blinders open to look at the internal problems and what I could do to change those problems. I appreciated how this chapter talked about immigration because sometimes (actually most of the time) we as Lutherans forget that we all came from immigrants also. It opened my eyes to the fact that even though we don’t understand an immigrant culture doesn’t mean we have to shut them out. Part of the ELCA saying is ALL are welcome no exceptions, so as an ELCA congregation we need to open the doors to ALL, not just those that are like us. I appreciated this group and the discussions we had, each topic that was covered helped me understand where I was hiding behind my white woman blinders and how I needed to rip off the blinders and allow the understanding of others to help me grow. – Megan Cunningham

“What Does it Mean to be White?”

A passage from Ijeoma Oluo was particularly was particularly vivid for me. She compares efforts to overcome racism with efforts to treat cancer. Just as we can’t cure cancer by simply treating its symptoms, we can’t battle racism as though it is simple prejudice. In other words, since the disease of racism is systemic: “niceness” and “understanding” will not address the fundamental imbalances which have – over generations – brought us to our current state, one of disproportionate advantages and disadvantages, allocated on the basis of skin color. Another vivid image from our study was equating the experience of “whiteness” with the water in which fish are swimming: when we are immersed, our environment can seem to be non-existent. I hope we can all learn to “see” the water, and to work toward the day opportunity and resources are equally open to all God’s people. – Bee Ellertson

If you are one of the folks who wanted to join us, but couldn’t this time, please send a note to Bee or to Alta: if there’s sufficient interest (at least six people), we could organize another study group later this year or sometime during 2023. There’s always more to learn and more growing to do.

My Stephen Minister

by Nan Treul

We recently received a note from a Stephen Ministry care receiver about how her Stephen Minister touched her life. Her words were so powerful that we got her permission to share them with you:

“I thank God every day for leading me to my Stephen Minister. When we began our caring relationship, I was slowly coming out of the numbness I felt after the shattering of my marriage. Her patience, her listening ear, and her willingness to serve have completely changed the trajectory of my life.

Without a doubt, accepting care from my church’s Stephen Ministry has been the best decision of my life. Everyone should be able to have a Stephen Minister when they need one—it’s an amazing model of how the body of Christ can work. God is truly being glorified through their service everywhere!”

This is just one example of the much-needed ministry that Stephen Ministers are providing every day, all over the world. Through their faithful service, people are experiencing life-transforming Christ-centered care during some of the most difficult times in life.

If you know of a member of St. Paul’s who might benefit from having a Stephen Minister, please let Pastor Scott, Kim Hoke, or Nan Treul know.

You Are a Compassionate Congregation

I have been overwhelmed with the outpouring of love by so many church friends who donated money to St. Paul’s Memorial Fund in honor of Tony! I think there were at least 20 families who very, graciously gifted the church in his memory!

When Pastor Scott and I discussed what to purchase with that memorial money, I suggested something that would be visible for all to see when they visited the chapel. I am pleased to say he came up with a wonderful idea that will last for years to come!

Here’s the great news. Sometime in August, the linens for both the altar and the small table behind the altar (now 35 years old) will be replaced by two sets of new ones! They will be custom manufactured by new England Pure Fair Linens and embroidered with crosses on all four corners.

In addition to these wonderful gifts, several other families earmarked their donations for the Stephen

Ministry which was for Tony and is for me “near and dear” to our hearts. Both of us trained to become ministers here at St. Paul’s and have volunteered our time to fellow congregants who confidentially needed caregivers to support them during particularly difficult times in their lives. It was a wonderful experience for us both.

Your loving support these last three months have given me strength. Thank you for being my Stephen Ministers without formal classroom training.

Your Sister in Christ,
Penni Perrotte

Memorials Received

We thank the following persons for their generous donations to St. Paul’s Memorials.

In memory of Jim Sackett, Carol Sackett, Lois Kinzie, Tony Perrotte, and JoAnn Bowman by Larry and Phyllis Jenkins, Durham

In memory of Tony Perrotte by:

Robin Winfree, Durham

Bonnie and Kirb Cooper, Durham

In memory of JoAnn Bowman by:

Michael Rice, Elizabeth City, NC

Phil and Sally Hart, Durham

Phyllis Little, Taylorsville, NC

Gus Holshouser, Durham

Janet Ravert, Durham

Camp Destiny

by Tim Hoke

In mid March I found a letter from the Synod that Pastor had put in my box as Council President. It was announcing this year’s grant program for the Peeler Casey grants. I talked to Pastor and did a quick study of what was required for the application process. The application had to be approved by the council and minutes of that meeting attached to the application.

Kim and I happened to have a lovely visit with Marilyn and Larry Hawley at their home. I brought up the grant opportunity and we brainstormed ideas for a suitable plan. Based on the desire to try and do something for the residents of McDougald Terrace we decided that it would be best if we could provide some life changing opportunities for some of the children residing there. Perhaps by offering special events for these children we could work towards building stronger relationships with their families.

Marilyn put me in touch with a couple of staff members at Burton Elementary, the school where many of the children attend. One is a social worker and the other is a counselor. With their help, Tameko Piggee

and Ponsella Brown, we hammered out a plan to create a summer camp for ten children. It was to be a two week camp where we could take them on field trips, introduce them to unique experiences and perhaps offer some tutoring assistance as well.

I quickly worked up a budget identifying trips, meals, and other expenses for the project. I also wrote up a description of our grant proposal. Both of these were sent to all of us working on the plan. The amount we were asking for was a rather modest ask for \$5,600. Once we all agreed on the parameters I sent out the proposal to the council. The council voted unanimously to approve our efforts. “Camp Destiny” is the name of our proposed summer camp and grant application. I then filled out the online grant application and submitted all required documents and a couple of news articles describing the ongoing challenges of the resident in McDougald Terrace.

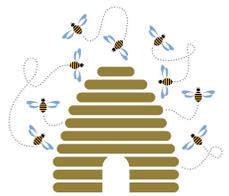
Although we had considered the camp to be an early summer adventure, we have subsequently met and decided it might be better to build it around a back to school camp. Obviously, we couldn’t do any firm planning because we wouldn’t know the outcome of our grant until the middle of June. Tameko and Ponsella have worked hard on selecting the students who might benefit most from our camp, but that is as far as we have gone. By this time, Katherine Trexler had joined the planning group. We talked about doing a scaled down camp even if we didn’t get the grant.

Last week, I was out of town and received an email on Wednesday from Michael DeNise from the Synod. We had been approved for our grant. What wonderful news. Now we need to move forward with finalizing plans for our camp. We will be looking for volunteers to help with activities and trips. Look for more details later on about our plans and needs.

Camp Destiny is in the works.

Honey and Bees!

St. Paul’s bees and the Durham County Beekeepers Association bees have been busy. On Saturday, June 11 the Beekeepers Association met at St. Paul’s to host a honey extraction in Trinity Hall. This was followed up on Sunday, June 12, when the St. Paul’s beekeepers met in Trinity to extract the honey from our own hives. St. Paul’s installed 2 hives on the back of the property near the storage trailer in early April of 2022. They extracted 43 pounds of honey from our hives. If you have questions about beekeeping, please feel free to speak to one of our three beekeepers: Tina Bessias, Theresa Oertel, and Bill Gresham. If you



or a group are interested in a closer experience with our hives, any of the three of us would be happy to coordinate schedules to meet with you at the hives.



The newsletter used to have an article titled “Saints of the Month.” I haven’t seen it recently but I do know there are saints among us. These saints have been providing me with transportation and food while I deal with illness and disability. Chief among the saints is Marcia Redman. She coordinates the transportation, no small tasks when I frequently have two or three appointments a week. She also does a lot of the driving herself. One time she had me at the hospital at 5:30 in the morning! If Marcia is the chief saint, then Sally Hart is the assistant chief saint. She has brought lots of food to me. I don’t know who makes the food, but it is good. Sally also does lots of the driving. Thanks to all of you.
Judy Schlegel

How Can I Ever Thank You Enough?!

God has truly blessed me with a compassionate “church family” who genuinely cares. I’ve been brought to tears many times by everyone’s generosity and acts of kindness during Tony’s last hospitalization and passing. So many member-friends at St. Paul’s have surrounded me with love that there are too many to mention by name! However, I will attempt to at least thank groups of them here in our newsletter. I pray I don’t forget any of you!

My heart was touched by the dozens of sympathy cards and notes I received every day for weeks. Of course they made me cry, but they also reminded me that I was loved and not forgotten. You will never know how much strength that afforded me to move forward.

The people on the Food Committee (subset of Nurturing Committee) and others were so wonderful in bringing me fresh meals during the two weeks Tony was in the ICU. Furthermore, they also delivered frozen casseroles that nourished me for some time thereafter. It was more than nice not to have to cook every evening when I was so stressed out and exhausted.

Pastor Scott and St. Paul’s staff came to my rescue in helping me plan a wonderful Christian Celebration of Life that gave me the means to honor Tony, my best friend and husband of 30 years. They helped me with every little detail, kept me focused and gave me advice all along the way.

As for the reception, again there were a LOT of people involved in organizing, setting up, preparing and

servicing the delicious “spread,” as well as cleaning up afterwards. I can’t tell you how many compliments I received from our out-of-town friends and family who made a point of saying our church members did a fantastic job of commemorating Tony.

The choir worked on very short notice to provide us with beautiful music, as usual! Then there were the technical people who made sure the microphones, audio/visual equipment and “slide show” successfully captured the essence of Tony’s life on that day AND for viewing anytime in the future on uTube!

It’s really hard to find the exact words to express my gratitude, so I will simply say Thank You to everyone who has loved, supported and prayed for Tony and I ever since we became members of St. Paul’s.

God bless you all...

Penni

Congratulations Graduates!



We would like to recognize our recent graduates. Wishing them all the best!

- ▶ **Cedric Lawrence Blanding Jr (CJ)** graduated from Carrington Middle School and now is a rising freshman at Northern High in Durham.
- ▶ **Ezra Lee Betts**, son of Sharon Demorest and Scott Betts, graduated this spring from C. E. Jordan High School in Durham. He will attend the University of Iowa in the fall and plans to double-major in history and German.
- ▶ **Jonathan Maine**, son of Angela Maine, graduated from Panther Creek High School in Morrisville, and plans to attend UNC Charlotte in the fall.
- ▶ **Belvia Yayo** just graduated from high school in Durham; she plans to attend Durham Tech this coming fall.
- ▶ **Angela Jean Park**, daughter of Jayce Getz and Heekyoung Hahn, graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Biology from the University of Rochester this year.
- ▶ **Heidi York**, daughter of Steve and Dawn York, graduated with a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN on May 13, 2022.
- ▶ **Hannah Shoaf**, daughter of Jim and Diana Shoaf, completed her coursework for medical school at Lincoln Memorial University in Tennessee. She received her white coat on April 30 and will begin her clinical Rotations near Ocala, FL in early July!

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, ELCA
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Summer Worship

For the summer, we have one service at 10:00 am, using Setting Six of the ELW. This service will be in-person, live-streamed and recorded. The link to watch the service live is: <https://vimeo.com/event/1478223>. The link to watch any services which have been recorded is: <https://vimeo.com/stpaulsdurham>- then choose the service date or event you wish to watch.

Sign-Up Genius Links

We still need worship assistants weekly. Please visit the Sign-Up Genius links which we use to enable volunteers to fill in where needed, now for both services. Click on the link and fill in your date(s).

◆ Devotions –

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c044eabad28a3fd0-daily1> Please send your devotions to Vicar Mac Mullins at vicar@stpaulsdurham.org

◆ Sunday Morning Worship Tasks

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0944a4a72fa5f58-sunday1>

Tasks include setting up, lector, worship assistant, sound, altar guild, video, etc.

◆ Sunday morning Communion Assistants and Lock-Up

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0944a4a72fa5f58-communion>

Croasdaile Worship

We will continue our Croasdaile worship on the fourth Thursdays of the month at 2:00 pm. Up next is July 28. Come join the service at Croasdaile.

Young In Spirit

The Young In Spirit group will meet on Wednesday, July 13 at 11:30 am for a Pot Luck Picnic in Trinity Hall. Bring a Pot Luck dish to share. There will be Fun and Games! Y'all come!

From the Refugee Support Group

by Morris Casper and Phil and Sally Hart

Following my temple talk earlier this year in which I asked interested members of the congregation to help me form a support group, five people stepped forward. The group that formed is made up of Bill Gresham, Phil and Sally Hart, Carolyn Ulrich, Jayce Getz, and myself, Morris Casper.

On April 29th, we met the family of Gul Wali Safi and Shakila Safi. they were originally residents of Jalalabad on the main road from Kabul to Peshawar, Pakistan. Gul Wali was a driver for the American Forces in the region. They have eight children; the 2 oldest are boys: Sher Wali, 16; and Wahidullah, 13. The younger six are all girls: Shaista, 12; Bibi Aisha, 10; Bibi Miriam, 7; Safa, 6; Madina, 3; and Yosra, 1.

They are living in Colonial Apartments on Chapel Hill Street in Durham. The group's tasks include providing some transportation, especially to medical appointments, language training, being a liaison to Lutheran Services of the Carolinas, providing miscellaneous information, and other tasks as required.

So far, the family seems to be doing well and adapting to life in Durham. Dad is working a night shift job in Cary while mom is at home with the children.

If you would like to help out, the family could use one adult boy's bicycle (26 inch wheels) and one girl's bicycle (20 inch wheels).

The Afghan Support Group could also use assistance driving the Safi family members to medical appointments. We are especially in need of female volunteer drivers. Because of Afghan customs and Lutheran Services Carolinas rules, only a female driver can drive the mother, Shakila, and no one can drive the children unless the mother or father accompany the children. With 8 children in the family this means that Shakila goes on most medical appointments which requires a female driver. Thank you for considering this volunteer opportunity.

As we learn more about the Safi family, we will let you know.