

2021

MEETING GUIDE

54th ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
WARD.CHURCH/2021-22

JUNE 8, 2022

2022

WC
WARD CHURCH

AGENDA

54TH ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
WARD EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NORTHVILLE, MI | JUNE 8, 2022 | 7:00 P.M.

1. Quorum and Call to Order

2. Preliminary Business

MOTION: to approve and receive as presented the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting held June 9, 2021, and the minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting held February 20, 2022.

3. Report of the Senior Pastor

4. Presentation of Nominees

a. Report of the Nominating Committee

MOTION: to accept the Report of the Nominating Committee.

b. Affirmation of Nominees

ELDER

Rick Martin
Steve McKinnie
Troy Morris
Gene Richards

TRUSTEE

Robert Joyce
Kurt Lipsky
Greg Middlemis
John Nowacki

DEACON

Julie Byrum
Claude Freel III
Debbie Freel
Mary Fuelling
Cheryl Garrett
Dave Garrett
Judy Lawniczak
Linda Marlow
Alida Shepherd
Sue Ventura
Jennalin White

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Gregg Black
Sara Joyce
Edie Lovell
David Morland
Greg Rubenson
Breanne Wainright
Pam Webber

MOTION: to affirm the candidates presented for Elder, Trustee, Deacons, and Nominating Committee.

c. Affirmation of Chris Ockerman as Ruling Elder (non-Session Member)

MOTION: to affirm Chris Ockerman as Ruling Elder (non-Session member).

d. Ordination and Installation of Officers

5. Ministry Reports and Plans Panel

6. Affirmation and Support of 2022 – 2023 Ministry Plan.

MOTION: to affirm as presented the 2022–2023 fiscal year budget of \$5,150,000.

7. Guided Prayer

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| IN MEMORIAM | 5 |
| MEETING MINUTES | |
| 53 RD ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING JUNE 9, 2021 | 6 |
| SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION FEBRUARY 20, 2021 | 8 |
| LEADERSHIP CANDIDATES | 9 |
| ELDERS | 10 |
| DEACONS | 13 |
| TRUSTEES | 20 |
| NOMINATING COMMITTEE | 23 |

Download this guide and the report online at ward.church/2021-22

IN MEMORIAM

JUNE 2021-MAY 2022

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Karen Albrecht | Mary Levergood |
| Abe Andres | Joann McClanahan |
| Edna Baker | Carl McConnell |
| Esther Baxter | Barbara Mansfield |
| Beverly Bennett | Ellen Murphy-Rowlands |
| Gordon Buyck | Dianne Phelps |
| Ginny Casey | Orville Philipp |
| Wen Chang | John Piggott |
| Esther Churella | Peggy Riley |
| Bill DeBoe | Beth Sanborn |
| Jack Durbin | Louise Seffens |
| Marvin Frederick | Tom Skorka |
| Donald Granda | Velma Thorhill |
| Judith Grant | Wanda Walters |
| Cornell Grosan | Germaine Wenderlich |
| Fanny Mae Kelly | Marianne Yapp |
| Leone Kiscaden | Norman Jackson |

MINUTES

53RD ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

WARD EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | NORTHVILLE, MI
JUNE 9, 2021 | 7:00 P.M. IN PERSON (SANCTUARY) AND VIA ZOOM

1. **Opened meeting** with singing and prayer.
2. **Rev. Dr. Scott McKee, moderator, provided welcome** and opening comments explaining the purpose of the meeting and who is permitted to speak to motions and vote.
3. **Call to order** - Quorum was established by the moderator
4. **Clerk of Session, Ron Cieslak, presented a motion** from Session to approve and receive the minutes of the 2020 Annual Meeting held June 18, 2020. *Motion approved.*
5. **Report of the Senior Pastor** – Rev. Dr. Scott McKee
6. **Rev. Dr. Scott McKee recognized Rev. Doug Thompson** as he plans to retire June 30, 2021, and Rev. Doug Thompson shared his thankfulness with those attending.
7. **Clerk of Session presented a motion from Session:** MOTION to dissolve the pastoral relationship between Associate Pastor Soon Pak at his request so he can pursue his new call as Pastor of Stonebridge Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC. *Motion approved.*
8. **Presentation of Nominees**
 - a. **Elder Chair Debbie Meagher gave the Report of the Nominating Committee** asking the members of Ward Church to affirm the nominations of the following individuals to the specified office:
 - Elder (3-year term):** Matt Baird, Dan Bird, Darcie Hurd and Gerri Sutherland (1-year term)
 - Deacon (3-year term):** Keely Bartel, Jane Botting, Tammy + Paul Clunis, Karen Fichtner, Gail Henderson, Vanessa Sykes, Susan Walthall, Isabelle Weak and Janet Wood
 - Trustee (3-year term):** Jana Czopek, Kelly Ann Rubenson, David Sykes and Teri Temby
 - Nominating Committee (1-year term):** Rill Currie, Evan Fathers, Alan Munday, Kirsan Quan, Larry Schwartz, Annika Sholander and Rachel Villaroman
 - b. **MOTION: to accept the report of the Nominating Committee.** *Motion approved.*
 - c. **MOTION: to approve the nominees for Elder, Trustee, Deacon and Nominating Committee.** *Motion approved.*
9. **Elder Clerk of Session Ron Cieslak provided a Report of Session** on church planting and presented a motion from Session.
 - a. **MOTION: to approve Jon Haden as Ruling Elder (non-Session member).** Jon Haden shared his sense of call to church planting. *Motion approved.*
 - b. **Rev. Dr. Scott McKee prayed** over Jon and Kirsten as they take these next steps in faith.
10. **Rev. Dr. Scott McKee called all newly elected Elders and Deacons** to the platform for ordination and installation of officers.
11. **Rev. Dr. Scott McKee called all newly elected Trustees and Nominating Committee members** to join the Elders and Deacons on the platform for a prayer of commissioning + ordination.

- 12. Rev. Dr. Scott McKee invited those making ministry reports and sharing ministry plans to the platform.**
- a. Trustee Dan Roberts** provided a report on the past year's finances.
 - b. Executive Director Kyle Nabors** reported on the retirement community and the previously discussed capital campaign.
 - c. Director of Outreach Sue Hanstad** reported on how God has worked this last year through Ward Church to those locally and globally, specifically through the missionaries Ward supports, and how we pray He will work this coming year.
 - d. Deacon Assistant Moderator Mille Dreisbach** reported on the work of the Deacons this past year.
 - e. Rev. Soon Pak** outlined some of the key changes that are a part of the 2021 – 2022 ministry plan.
 - f. Director of Administration Chris Ockerman** presented the program and personnel allocations of the 2021 – 2022 ministry plan.
- 13. Ron Cieslak, Elder Clerk of Session, presented the budget motion from Session**
- a. MOTION: to adopt the 2021/2022 fiscal year budget of \$4,700,000. Motion approved.**
- 14. Elder Jill Hemingway** led the Members in a time of guided prayer through the Lord's Prayer.
- 15. Meeting closed** with singing, prayer, and benediction.

Respectfully submitted,
Elder Clerk of Session Ron Cieslak

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

WARD EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH | NORTHVILLE, MI
FEBRUARY 20, 2022 | 10:00 A.M. IN PERSON (KNOX HALL) AND VIA ZOOM

1. **Call to Order** - Moderator, Rev. Dr. Scott McKee, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. There was a quorum met with nearly 300 in attendance in person and more than 100 online.
2. **Opening Prayer:** The meeting was opened in prayer by Clerk of Session, Melissa Overfield.
3. **Report of the Adoption Feasibility Team given by Elder Rick Martin who is a member of this team.**

MOTION: To receive the members, property, building, and mortgage of Grace Chapel as part of the "Better Together" adoption plan.

Seven clarifying questions were asked from in person and online members. One member spoke in favor of the Motion. Ward Member Greg Hemingway made a motion to "call the question."

MOTION: To "call the question" (to end debate and to proceed to a vote on the main motion). MOTION was seconded by several members and sustained by a vote of the congregation.

4. **Scott McKee restated the first MOTION brought by Rick Martin on behalf of session:**

MOTION: To receive the members, property, building, and mortgage of Grace Chapel as part of the "Better Together" adoption plan.

This MOTION was decided by a voice vote. The majority strongly favored passing the motion. Those members voting online concurred. **The MOTION was sustained** by an overwhelming majority. Voting was roughly 98% in favor.

5. **Rev. Sean Carroll closed in prayer.**
6. **Adjournment:** The Special Meeting of the Congregation was adjourned by Moderator Rev. Dr. Scott McKee at 10:28 am.

CANDIDATES

Each year, the Nominating Committee nominates from the congregation members who are qualified to serve the church on Session (Board of Elders), the Board of Trustees, the Board of Deacons, and the Nominating Committee. Through a season of prayer, deliberation and congregational recommendations, the Nominating Committee selects candidates according to biblical requirements, spiritual gifts, and ministry fit.

Your Nominating Committee has completed its work and will present the following candidates for congregational affirmation at the Annual Meeting on **Wednesday, June 8, 7:00 p.m.**

ELDERS (3-year term)

Rick Martin
Steve McKinnie
Troy Morris
Gene Richards

TRUSTEE (3-year term)

Robert Joyce
Kurt Lipsky
Greg Middlemis
John Nowacki

DEACON (3-year term)

Julie Byrum
Claude Freel III
Debbie Freel
Mary Fuelling
Cheryl Garrett
Dave Garrett
Judy Lawniczak
Linda Marlow
Alida Shepherd
Sue Ventura
Jennalin White

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (1-year term):

Gregg Black
Sara Joyce
Edie Lovell
David Morland
Greg Rubenson
Breanne Wainright
Pam Webber

ELDERS

The ministry of the Elders is one of spiritual oversight. The New Testament is clear that the church is to be led by a plurality of godly leaders under the oversight and watchful care of Elders. The Elders are given ultimate responsibility and authority to see that the church remains on a true course biblically, that its members are being appropriately shepherded, that the body is being fed through insightful and accurate biblical teaching, and that the life of the church is being well managed with the assistance of other competent and godly leaders.

They are to care about the spiritual and physical well-being of members, regularly praying for the sick. They are to guard the body against harmful influences, confronting those who are contradicting biblical truth or who are continuing in patterns of sinful behavior (1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9; James 5:14). In response to the biblical pattern of leadership, members of the body are taught in Scripture to lovingly support their leaders and submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-13).

Keep in mind that the Elders of Ward function primarily as discerners and shepherds. They serve as the conscience and guardians of the church. Our Elders are not expected to oversee specific projects or ministry areas in their capacity as Elders. Instead, they function as overseers for the entire church. Elders evaluate everything taking place in the church in light of our mission, resources, and doctrine.

ELDERS SLATE

Three-Year Term

Rick Martin
Steve McKinnie
Troy Morris
Gene Richards



RICK MARTIN

Nominated for: Elder

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: God put a restlessness in me for Him in my late teens. I began reading the Scriptures and attending a Bible study at the invitation of my future wife and in-laws, who invited me to their church. It was there at Ward that I was introduced to the God of the Bible and through an Advent sermon given by the pastor, I accepted Jesus as the Savior and the Lord of my life. Since then, Romans 8:35-39 have become the watchwords of my 40 year walk with Him! God has given me a great love and passion for His Church, His Word, and Him. My call as a ruling Elder is to aid our pastor in fulfilling the Great Commission and to guard our church in the challenging days and years ahead.

Biography: I was born and raised in Michigan spending most of my early years in the western Detroit suburbs and in Michigan's Thumb area. My wife Linda and I have been married for 42 years and have been blessed with three wonderful daughters and now four grandsons. I've spent the last 36 years of my career as an ASE-certified mechanic with Livonia Public Schools as a fleet truck and bus mechanic, garage foreman, and the last five years as fleet garage supervisor. Ward Church has been my home since 1977, and I have served in many ministries and leadership roles over the years. Currently, I am leading the Ward membership team and helping lead the Ward Farmington Hills Launch Team.



STEVE MCKINNIE

Nominated for: Elder

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I was raised in a Christian home and faith has always been an important part of my life. I accepted Christ as my personal Savior at a very young age. I am thankful for growing up in an environment where godly character and Christian values were demonstrated and discussed often. As I continue to grow in my faith and learn to be more like Jesus, I'm passionate about helping others grow and develop their faith. I have previously served as an Elder at Ward Church and am looking forward to seeing what God has planned for Ward over the next three years.

Biography: My earliest years were spent in a Christian Missionary Alliance church where I was taught to understand the importance of sharing the gospel with the world. Toward the end of my elementary years, my family switched to an Evangelical Presbyterian Church, and I continued to learn what it meant to follow Jesus. My wife Jeanette and I have been married for almost 20 years and we've been attending Ward together since 2003. We have two children, Carolyn and Brendan. I love being a WardStudents ministry volunteer and have also enjoyed being a small group leader.



TROY MORRIS

Nominated for: Elder

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office:

I believe that I have been called by my father in heaven to live and love like Jesus. While I consistently fall short of this call, there is no more important and meaningful endeavor in life than to pursue Jesus and to live out His will for me to the best of my ability.

My mission in life is to have a positive impact on this world by leading others to be better versions of themselves, primarily through a relationship with Christ, as well as help lead and serve the highest impact projects/initiatives/organizations to the best of my God-given ability.

Biography: I was raised in a household with a mother and father that loved me and loved Jesus but were not active in any church. In my teenage years, I felt the tug of God and the conviction that my life was meant for more. I responded to this call by being baptized and confirmed at the age of 18. I met several Christians at college that continued to challenge my lifestyle and faith. After meeting my now wife, Brittany, in college, we spent three years praying and seeking God’s will for us and what church/denomination to call home. We landed at Ward Church and continue to be challenged and encouraged by our church community in our faith journey.



NORMAN "GENE"
RICHARDS

Nominated for: Elder

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I came to faith in Jesus as a young boy through the teachings of my parents. I have endeavored to work out my faith, to grow in knowledge of Jesus, and to find ways to serve Him. I accept the nomination to the office of Elder as an opportunity to serve Jesus by serving fellow believers. It would be an honor to use my experience in various church ministries and a career in law to the benefit of the church.

Biography: I grew up in West Africa where my parents served as missionaries. After attending Bible College in Tennessee and earning a degree in Missions and Bible, I realized I didn’t have a calling to full-time ministry. My wife Patti and I moved to Michigan so I could go to law school. I’ve been an Elder law and estate planning attorney for 26 years. Patti and I have attended Ward for over 20 years and have been involved in various ministries — choir, worship team, Mali mission trips, various committees and Elder. We have three children and are thankful that they each love and serve God.

DEACONS

The ministry of the Deacons is one of sympathy and service. The office of Deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, concern for needs, and of serving others. The Board of Deacons is under the authority of the Church Session.

Duties: Provide pastoral care to people in crisis (sick, the grieving, the needy); Prepare the Lord's Supper for both corporate worship and home visits; Minister locally to people with material needs (single moms, unemployed, etc.); Host dinners or receptions for funerals and memorials; Serve in other duties as requested.

DEACONS SLATE

Three-Year Term

Julie Byrum
Claude Freel III
Debbie Freel
Mary Fuelling
Cheryl Garrett
Dave Garrett
Judy Lawniczak
Linda Marlow
Alida Shepherd
Sue Ventura
Jennalin White



JULIE BYRUM

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: My faith stands on the Word of God, Jesus Christ. He is my Lord and Savior, Redeemer, Purifier, Sanctifier and Lover of my soul. I feel led once again to this office. Much of this is due to when I was playing at a funeral, I met a woman who asked me for help and she mentioned I looked like a deacon. This took place just weeks before I was nominated. As I was seeking the Lord, He kept guiding me to the message of prayer. I accepted the calling.

Biography: I was raised in a Christian home and attended church services three times a week, in addition to social activities. Vacation Bible School was a summer event I attended, and I received Jesus as my Savior in the summer after 4th grade. The crucifixion of Jesus always has overwhelmed me. "Such Love, Such Wondrous Love" is one of the hymns I grew up listening to. Being saved at a young age seasoned me, but having so much life to live ahead of me, I fell into some pitfalls. When Jesus revealed to me that His salvation was for past, present and future, it was a Light of Truth that I clung to for many years. His "Amazing Grace" has brought me "Through It All."



CLAUDE FREEL III

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I believe in God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and The Holy Spirit. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior at an early age, joining Ward Church at 8 years old. I was blessed as I was brought up in a Christian home by my mother and father, members since Ward Memorial in Detroit. God has been leading me through my life by his Scriptures, and the teaching at Ward Church. I feel I am being called by my Lord to give of myself in a Deacons position to serve Ward Church.

Biography: My wife Debbie and I met at Ward Church and have been married for 10 and a half years. My daughter Mary is expecting my third grandchild in June. I have worked as a AAA Retention Insurance Agent for five years, working remotely out of the Dearborn headquarters. My career has included insurance, mortgage banking, and food and beverage.

I previously served in guest services as a greeter and at the information desks. I have attended various Wednesday night and Sunday School classes.



DEBBIE FREEL

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I was raised within a strict religious home that taught me I needed to adhere to many rules and regulations in order to be in the faith. I found grace and mercy at the cross of Christ at the age of 17. A high school friend opened up the Good News of the Gospel to me and in hearing it, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I believe that our God is one and exists in three distinct, equal persons. I believe the Bible is the inerrant word of God and I strive to live my imperfect life according to its precepts. I am so very thankful to Him. I desire to serve the Body of Christ at Ward as the office allows. The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve!

Biography: I became a member of Ward in 1993. I met my husband Claude here and we have been married for nearly 11 years. I have worked for 14 years in administration for an HVAC manufacturers stocking rep. It is a wonderful company and I have great coworkers. Prior to that, I worked many years in the mortgage banking industry. At Ward, I have served previously as a deacon, secretary for the deacons and on the pastoral care committee. I served many years in guest services at the information desk and with my husband. I also used to serve as service coordinator at Military Avenue once a month for Hunt Thru The Bible Sunday School class.



MARY FUELLING

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior in 1984 and our family became members of Ward Church in the early 1990s. I have served as deacon twice before and believe this personal outreach to the sick, hurting and grieving is both a responsibility and a privilege for the church body to show the love of God to our members and assist them as needed.

Biography: I have been married to my husband, Denny, for 53 years. We have four sons who are all married and have blessed us with 10 grandchildren who we love to see and visit with. I am a registered nurse by profession and worked for Ascension-Providence for over 25 years. I retired in 2018. I have been involved with various ministries throughout my years at Ward. Most recently, I helped my husband lead the Ward Military Ministry and worked with the Ward COVID Outreach. Presently, I assist with calls to first-time visitors, lead a non-denominational prayer group in my neighborhood, and co-lead a Zoom small group for the Community Bible Class.



CHERYL GARRETT

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: While I grew up in the church, my relationship with God became personal during my time in graduate school. I have come to rely on the Father, Son, and Spirit to guide my daily life. I am filled with wonder and gratitude for God’s love for me and the saving grace of Jesus. Many years ago, I created a mission statement that I still live by: “My mission is to create an environment that encourages, inspires and serves others in a way that they can see Christ’s love within me and discover Christ within themselves.” For many years, I have felt called to live out my mission as a teacher and mother. As a deacon, I hope to encourage others on their faith walk.

Biography: Originally from a small town in upstate New York, I moved to Michigan in the 1980s to pursue a graduate degree in molecular biology at the University of Michigan. After completing my degree, I taught first at Berea College in Kentucky, later at William Tyndale College in Farmington Hills, and finally these past 16 years at Henry Ford College in Dearborn. In 1998, my husband, Dave, and I were married in Ward’s chapel, and I became a member of Ward Church shortly thereafter. Dave and I have two adult children in their twenties, Joanna and Paul.



DAVE GARRETT

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I accepted Christ in the 8th grade but had a unclear view of a Christ-centered life. While living in Indiana, my understanding of how Christ desired to be a daily part of my life developed through the encouragement of two older men at my church and a co-worker. They helped me understand what a daily relationship with Christ was, and the value of keeping strong Christ-centered Christians active in my life. When left to my own choices, I am a flawed and self-centered person. I am grateful for God’s unending patience with me as I have moved through life. Having seen the value of mentors in my life, I see being a deacon as a means of reaching out and encouraging others.

Biography: I was born, raised and educated in Pennsylvania. After college graduation, I spent 10 years working in central Indiana as an engineer before moving to Michigan in 1990. I have been a member of Ward Church since then and was previously a deacon at my Indiana church in the mid 80s and at Ward in the late 90s. I married my wife Cheryl in 1998 and we have two children (Joanna and Paul) who are in their early 20s. I worked at Ford Motor in engineering from 1990 until 2020. Since retiring from Ford, I serve as a Detroit SOAR reading mentor volunteer and a BSA Boy Scout Troop leader.



JUDY LAWNICZAK

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I am honored to be nominated for the position of deacon at Ward Church. I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal savior at a young age and have loved Him ever since. I have not always been a member of the body of believers but I do know how much better my life is when I am. I feel called to step up to this position and, with God's help, will prayerfully help care for the needs of God's people as I continue to grow in faith.

Biography: I moved to Northville in 2003 with my husband Dan Adams. We joined Ward Church in the fall of 2005. Dan and I are both retired, like to travel, and especially enjoy spending time with our three grandchildren. I also like to read, listen to music, and play my flute. I joined the Ward Orchestra in the spring of 2018.



LINDA MARLOW

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I accepted Christ as my Savior when I was 16 years old. Although I was confident that I would spend eternity in heaven, I had no idea how my decision needed to also impact my daily life. As a college sophomore, a friend invited me to her church's weekly young adult Bible study group. This was when my mind and heart were opened to seriously studying God's Word, earnestly seeking His will for my life and learning how to share His promises with others. I feel that I've been called to be a deacon as I believe that we are to help others during times of sadness and uncertainty, to rejoice with them for answered prayers and encourage them in their walk with the Lord.

Biography: My husband and I came to Ward in 1973 just to visit and we stayed and raised our family here. I became a member in 1974. In the past, I've served as a deacon, taught at VBS, taught Sunday School in the early childhood classes, was a member of a Women's Circle, been a member of several adult Sunday School classes, participated in a prayer walk in Morocco with Ward Missions, taught ESL at Ward and was a member of the Ward World Vision Team at the Detroit Free Press Half-Marathon. Currently, I serve as an usher, attend the Generations Class on Sunday mornings and the Tuesday Women's AM Bible Study class. I also teach English to Muslim women and witness to them with fellow believers in east Dearborn.



ALIDA SHEPHERD

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I believe in God the Father, Jesus, His only Son and my Savior, and the Holy Spirit. I came to know Jesus as my Savior well into my adult years even though I was a church goer since infancy! I need Him every day. I know I can be used by God to comfort others, pray with and for others, and stand with them in good and not-so-good situations.

Biography:

I was born and raised in a small town in the State of Washington. After I graduated from high school, I started nursing school in Tacoma, Washington. It was while I was there that I met my husband John Shepherd. After he returned from Vietnam, we married and moved to Michigan. I have worked as an RN for well over 40 years in neonatal and pediatric departments. I retired when my husband was unable to care for himself in 2014. He went to be with his Lord in 2016. We had been part of the same home Bible study for 30 plus years and I continue to meet with them now. I gather with the widows group.



SUE VENTURA

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior in October 1977. I was in the Ward membership class at the time but didn't know I could have or needed to have a personal relationship with Jesus. Members from Ward came to my home and prayed with me. That night, I began my walk of faith in Jesus because of the faithfulness of those Ward members. I feel called to be a deacon to serve God wholeheartedly and faithfully in love and gratitude for what He has done for me. He suffered and died on a cross for me — an unfaithful sinner saved by the faithful, sinless Son of God, Jesus Christ.

Biography: I became a member of Ward in 1977. As a family, we attended Sunday morning and evening services and Wednesday night dinners and classes. In 1978, I began volunteering at Ward in the Toddler Sunday School program and VBS and did so for many years. In 1990, I began working at Ford in various HR positions until my retirement in 2009. After retirement, I joined a Ward couple's Bible study group, which my husband and I are still members of. I also joined Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) and have been a children's leader since 2012. My relationship with the Lord continues to grow through Bible study, prayer and fellowship with other believers. I currently serve Him at Ward and in BSF.



JENNALIN WHITE

Nominated for: Deacon

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: God is the Lord of my life. I am a sinner, but God loves me so much that He sent His Son to die as a perfect sacrifice for all who accept the gift. I have a personal relationship with God and the gift of the Holy Spirit. God's word is true and when I'm no longer on earth, my spirit will live eternally in heaven. Many would feel that it is bad timing to receive a call from the Nominating Committee the day after our daughter unexpectedly passed away. Surprisingly, I felt God's timing was perfect as I processed what this call to serving would look like for me. Freshly grieving our loss, I've found myself with eyes wide open, searching for other hurting people around me.

Biography: Jim and I married in 2015 and live in Northville with our blended family of: Madeline (19), Isabella (17), Brielle (14), Koen (13), Claire (6), Jameson (3), and Rachel, who is in heaven. Ward has been our church home for over five years. During my journey at Ward, I've served as usher, with the Preschool Advisory Council, as a MOPS group leader, in small/life groups/Bible studies, and with Simple Serve. I'm grateful that God is giving me the courage and boldness to step outside of my comfort zone. I would be humbled to serve as God's hands and feet. This ministry provides a vehicle to provide helpful resources in a tangible way. God has been equipping me to serve others in times of need with my heart of empathy.

TRUSTEES

The ministry of the Trustees is one of provision. The Trustees enable the ministry of others by providing three important “tools” for ministry: facilities, finances, and legal affairs. Normally, the Board of Trustees is made up of men and women who have some expertise in these areas and who desire to advance the work of the church by providing these foundational elements.

TRUSTEES SLATE

Three-Year Term

Robert Joyce
Kurt Lipsky
Greg Middlemis
John Nowacki



ROBERT JOYCE

Nominated for: Trustee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: Jesus Christ is my personal Savior and Lord and I know that it is through His grace that I am saved. I was blessed to have grown up in a Christian home and was involved in our family church in Dallas since birth. Throughout the years, my relationship and love for Christ has grown. He has always been faithful to me even in periods of my life when I have not been. Jesus is present in my daily life and since coming to Ward Church, my faith has continued to grow. I have prayed about the position of trustee and I feel this is another way I can serve, not only the Lord, but also Ward Church.

Biography: I have been married to my wonderful wife Sara for almost 11 years. We have three children, Caroline (5), Mark (2), and Michael (7 months) that keeps us surprisingly busy. Sara and I are both native Texans. After graduate school in 2015, we moved to Detroit so that I could start work at Ford Motor Company. We started attending Ward shortly after our move and we became members six years ago. During that time, I have been a member of Homebuilders and a part of a small group. I have also previously served as a first grade leader in WardKids and currently serve in guest services.



KURT LIPSKY

Nominated for: Trustee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: My journey as a Christian started when God knew me (before I was born). I strive to put God first in my life — sometimes successfully, sometimes not. In addition to hearing God calling me as a trustee, I feel that I am ready to grow on my reliance and faith of what lies ahead. I have come to the realization that Jesus has been patiently waiting for me, to “ask in His name” (John 14:12-13) and do great things to glorify God and His Kingdom. “..whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified..”

Biography: I am a very lucky man...married for 35 plus years to Kim, and father of four wonderful children, Matt (and his wife Emily and their sons, Charlie & James), Justin (and his wife Alyssa), Trevor and Hannah. I work in management for a small electronics manufacturing firm in Wixom. Kim and I have been attending Ward for about 15 years, where I have served as an Elder, trustee, and helped out a bit with the Open Doors ministry.



GREG MIDDLEMIS

Nominated for: Trustee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: After growing up active in a church but not hearing the gospel, I heard the gospel for the first time at a charismatic, nondenominational prayer meeting in 1977. My wife and I kept attending that prayer meeting for a number of months and I accepted Christ as my Savior that year. We were attending the church I had grown up in, but realized that we needed a church that we could grow in. We started attending Ward in 1978 and became members in 1979. I have served in many capacities at Ward over the years, including bus driver, usher, Sunday School teacher, Ward staff volunteer, as well as a deacon, Elder and trustee. I think my gifts are best utilized on the Board of Trustees.

Biography: I have lived in the Detroit area my entire life. I grew up in Dearborn and then went off to college for four years. I returned and spent most of my working life at Ford, much of that time in purchasing. I met my wife Sue during my senior year of college and we were married in 1973. We have two adult children (who grew up at Ward) and two young grandsons. Ward has been my church home for over 40 years. I retired from Ford in 2011. In 2012, I saw a new opportunity to serve Ward, since I had quite a bit of free time, and have been working as a volunteer in the Ward office a couple days a week for the past 10 years.



JOHN NOWACKI

Nominated for: Trustee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I have been a believer since the age of reason and submitted my life to the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. Through His spiritual gifts to me of administration, stewardship and a desire to draw others to Christ, I feel these gifts will allow me as a Ward trustee to shepherd the facilities and finances for His glory and the discipleship of others.

Biography: My wife Carol and I have been members of Ward since 1987 and reside nearby in Country Club Village. I have served as an Elder on Session multiple times in the past, including roles as Clerk and Assistant Clerk. More recently, I served on the Ward staff as the Director of Campus Services from 2012 until my retirement at the end of 2020. My background as an architect, combined with my experience in the corporate world and on staff at Ward, give me valuable insight and knowledge of the facilities and campus and as a guide for the new endeavors in Farmington Hills. I look forward to working with the other trustees for the benefit of Ward, its staff, members and guests.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Each year the Nominating Committee nominates from the congregation members who are qualified to serve the church on the Church Session (Board of Elders), the Board of Trustees, the Board of Deacons, and the Nominating Committee. Through a season of prayer, deliberation, and congregational recommendations, the Nominating Committee selects candidates according to biblical requirements, spiritual gifts, and ministry fit.

The Nominating Committee consists of at least 11 people (two Elders, one Deacon, one Trustee, and at least seven members at large). The pastor is an ex-officio member of the committee without vote. Each member at large is elected by the congregation to a one-year term on a rotating basis.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE SLATE

One-Year Term

Gregg Black
Sara Joyce
Edie Lovell
David Morland
Greg Rubenson
Breanne Wainright
Pam Webber



GREGG BLACK

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I believe that Jesus Christ is the unique man of history who was the God of Creation in human flesh. I trust Him and accept His sacrifice in my place, recognizing it to be my only means of salvation and life here and for eternity. I endeavor to live in such a way to glorify God with the time that he provides me here on earth. I am an imperfect follower who is in constant need of grace, repentance and forgiveness. I have prayed about the possibility of serving on the Nominating Committee at Ward Church and feel that the Lord has encouraged me to step into this role. I am willing to allow Him to place me in this role if He sees fit.

Biography: I trusted Jesus as my Savior and Lord the summer before 6th grade. I recommitted my life to Him while in college and have been active in the local church, as there has been opportunity, since that time. My wife Jane and I have been members at Ward since 1985. I have had the opportunity to be part of WardStudents, New Members Class, various Sunday School classes, and as an Elder/member of Session. I have also taught 5th / 6th grade Sunday School, and served with Kids Kamp, via music ministries (worship leadership, orchestra, kids music), on short-term missions and have generally been available for whatever needs to get done.



SARA JOYCE

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I am a sinner that has been saved by my Heavenly Father, who is full of mercy and grace. I am truly blessed that I was raised in a Christian home and very involved in my church growing up. However, despite knowing the ways I should go, I still need my Savior daily. The church is such a foundational part of my upbringing, current life, and my childrens' lives. As part of the Nominating Committee, I can be a small part in discovering the next leaders for Ward Church to continue its legacy and ultimately further the kingdom of Christ.

Biography: I am a native Texan who has been in Michigan for eight years now, and still not adjusted to snow! I have been married to my amazing husband Robert for almost 11 years. I am a former educator, but now stay at home with my three kids: Caroline (5), Mark (2), Michael (7 months). We have been at Ward for almost six years now. I have been leading a small group for five years, been a part of Homebuilders, MOPS, Tuesday Morning Bible study, and my daughter attends Ward Preschool. I serve in the elementary area, teaching on Sunday mornings.



EDIE LOVELL

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I am a sinner solely saved by God's grace. I strive to live each day in a way that honors my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I believe in the sovereignty of God, and salvation by the Christ, as evidenced in Scripture. Through the many offerings and teachings over the years at Ward, Bible study, fellowship and prayer, I continue to grow in my Christian faith. It is important to have believing leaders in the church. After praying, I felt God's leading to accept this nomination. Being a member for so long, I have met many people who would be qualified to serve. After prayerful consideration, I believe the Lord will reveal those names to me.

Biography: I have been a Ward member since 1982. I have served on Ward staff from 1984-2012 as Director of Congregational Care Programs. I have also served on the Mali Medical Team (1998-2019), on the Nominating Committee, as a deacon, and on the decorations committee for various Ward functions. I now serve at the Tuesday Women's Community Bible Class as a group leader, am a member of a Ward small group, and regularly attend the Generations Sunday morning life group.



DAVID MORLAND

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I believe that Jesus lived and died for us to atone for our sins and take our place. I believe the Bible is the living word of God and that it teaches about the history and the future of the world, as well as teaching lessons on how to live a more God-centered life. I feel God has called me to this office as a way to force me to address some of my shortcomings. I have an introverted, analytical nature but also suffer from knowing faces rather than names, and only surface details about a person. This position will force me to learn about people more deeply, and better understand those in our congregation.

Biography: I consider myself to have been an active Christian for 20 years. I have been married for 13 years and have two children. I work out of my basement for an IT company in Tennessee which makes and supports software for churches. I have been at Ward for about five years and a member for three years. At Ward, I currently serve on the security team and on the production team.



GREG RUBENSON

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I believe that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. I came to faith through an invitation from my sister when I was a sophomore in college and my relationship with Jesus has grown since that time, thanks to His grace. Jesus has been with me through good times and bad and I'm humbled and grateful for that. I believe that my time as a member of Ward Church and the ministries, small groups and relationships I've had the opportunity to experience have made me a good candidate for the Nominating committee. I've found community at Ward and I believe the network I've developed will serve well in this position.

Biography: I've been married to my wife Kelly Ann for 28 years and we have been Ward members for 20 years, raising our four daughters during that time. I spent seven years as as a volunteer in the middle school and high school ministries after being part of the men's ministry previously. I have worked for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan for 20 years and currently serve as a manager for a project and reporting group in the customer service operations division.



BREANNE WAINRIGHT

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I grew up in the Reformed faith in Grand Rapids where I was baptized and professed my faith in Christ at a young age. Growing up, church was my second home. I was always there helping with some program or another. It wasn't until I went to college and engaged with God's Word through classes, fellow students and professors that I truly started to understand God's compassion for His people. As a member of the Nominating Committee, I feel called to represent and recognize others and their God-given abilities and gifts to encourage and uplift others.

Biography: I grew up in Grand Rapids where I attended Kuyper College. At Kuyper, I double-majored in English and Bible/Theology and earned my certification in TESOL. Teaching English is my passion and I love working with women and children of underserved communities. My husband and I moved to Livonia seven years ago where we started attending Ward. I took a job in Dearborn coordinating family programs for immigrant and refugee populations. Currently, I am a stay-at-home mom to three kids, all under three years old. I love being a part of Ward and all the wonderful ministries that lift up women, kids and families. I volunteer with FX: Family Experience, MOPS, and the worship team.



PAM WEBBER

Nominated for:
Nominating Committee

Statement of faith and why you feel called to this office: I was raised in a Christian home and accepted Christ as my Savior at a church-related summer camp at age eight. As a high school student, my faith became more personal and alive. Ministry in the church and in para-church organizations has always been part of my life and continues to be a priority. With the Grace Chapel adoption and new church launch, I understand unity between the two locations will be vital. Good representation from both campuses in decisions going forward will help enable us to be Better Together. The Nominating Committee is an important part in helping this happen. I will seek to be led by the Spirit as I serve.

Biography: I met my husband at Southfield Christian School and we married during our college years. We happily celebrate 45 years of marriage this year, have four married children, and 14 grandchildren. I enjoy quilting, gardening, camping and spending time with our children and grandchildren. Church membership and missions involvement has always been a priority for us and continues to drive our decisions as we near retirement. I currently work from home for Compassion Evangelical Hospital (mission hospital in West Africa) and Seed Company (Wycliffe Bible Translation affiliate). It is my hope and prayer to continue to serve Christ, as He directs, in family, church, community and abroad.



40000 Six Mile Road | Northville, Michigan 48168
248.374.7400 | www.ward.church