

ELIZABETH MULLINS

Background:

Tell us about your new role: At the beginning of this year, I was hired to work with the GCI media team as the Publications Coordinator. One of my main focuses is editor of Update, our online newsletter for members.

What do you want people to know about working with the Home Office? They practice what they preach, so to speak. The home office operates as Team Based. The team I am a part of – the Media team – specifically operates collaboratively. I feel very supported by my supervisor, Michelle Fleming, who demonstrates the qualities of a healthy leader. And I’m just so grateful that my coworkers are also my friends.

What excites you about this new role? It excites me to be a part of something so global and diverse as GCI. We truly are a worldwide fellowship. One of the ways my second voice (Guardian) gets expressed is to ask whose voices and stories are not being included? I love seeing us move away from being U.S.-centric and demonstrating that all our global regions are valued. For the ten Update devotionals during Ordinary Time, I recruited writers from around the world. I’m proud of that!

What are the challenges? What challenges me is the same as what excites me: including diverse voices. I’ve jokingly referred of myself as a curator of stories. But collecting a variety of stories is not always easy. When my predecessor, Charlotte Rakestraw, mentored me to be the Update editor, she said, "Everyone has a story." But she and I have both lamented that not everyone believes it. When I try to solicit a story, in addition to "I don't have a story," one response I hear is, "I'm not a writer." I tell people that we need them to share their voice. I ask people to write from the heart, and our team can always help edit it. Another common response is, "What we tried wasn't successful." We're trying to shift the culture and to redefine what success looks like. Success is not merely measured by whether or not a lot of people showed up at your engagement activity. I would suggest success is paying close attention to your place, attempting to love your neighbors well, and taking a risk to try something new! There is no innovation without trial and error. I get excited about stories of congregations who are innovating, and stories that answer the questions: How was it meaningful? What did we learn? What would we do differently? How did we experience God's presence?

GCI Publications Coordinator
Durham, NC



Get to Know Elizabeth



Media Team bonding time!



Neighborhood pool - daughter + granddaughter



Work from home desk - bay window

1.

What makes you a good fit for your new role?

As someone who speaks Creative (Giant Worldwide's 5 Voices) as my dominant voice, I love to write. And I love to draw stories out of others! I also love Jesus' church. I've been thinking deeply and wrestling with these concepts of building community and connection and belonging within his body for a long time, so it's fun to highlight these concepts as my vocation.

2.

What skills do you bring to the role?

I worked for nearly a decade as a subcontractor at a Google data center in document control. Working as a copy editor for a team of technical writers, I honed my attention to detail. I managed the workflow of scheduled document publication, while coordinating with technical writers and editors around the globe. Although I enjoyed it, publishing stories about Jesus' church is much more meaningful than editing and writing

standard operating procedures (SOPs) for generator maintenance or wastewater management!

3.

How are you learning to be rooted in place?

Less than a year ago, Anthony and I moved to a new town, Durham, North Carolina. So, we're currently "exegeting" our place. We live in a townhome village where we go to the community swimming pool and take walks to meet our neighbors. As I said, I work from home, and I placed my desk facing a big bay window. It allows me to observe the rhythms of my neighborhood while I work. But being friendly and being friends are two different things. As an extrovert, I can feel lonely in a new place. I try to remember that building friendships is a slow, gradual process. When I moved to Hickory, I didn't make friends overnight. But after three years, I had many dear friends whom I was sad to leave when we moved. It requires a

commitment for the long haul. For now, we're being students of our neighborhood. What are the strengths? What are the needs? What matters to our neighbors? We're trying to make friends and discern what it could look like to plant a GCI church in this new town.

4.

What is something people don't know about you?

As I've had the opportunity to travel around the U.S. with my husband, Anthony, I have realized how many people think we live in or near Charlotte, North Carolina and physically work in the home office. People have been surprised to learn we live almost three hours away and work remotely.

5.

What else is important for our readers to know?

To the extent that I'm able, I understand the struggles. After being intimately invested in the relaunch of GC Hickory in 2018, we experienced its closing four years later. Was it a

failure? Or was it merely an ending? Of course, we made mistakes, but the life cycle of every organism includes change and death. This is why I believe it's important to include stories that celebrate pastors' retirements and final celebrations of churches in Update.

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