

**Diana Meinecke**  
Hospitality Team Leader and Chancel Choir Assistant



As part of our Hospitality Team, Diana Meinecke presently leads the Hospitality Area of Canton First, which includes finding Greeters and Hosts for the Welcome Desk. In addition, Diana assists the Choir Director, Don Stafford, by filing music, sending out announcements concerning practices, and keeping choir members up-to-date on birthdays and family situations to ask for prayers.

Diana is a retired school teacher and married to a terrific person, John. Together they have 3 grown daughters and 8 grandchildren. Their dog, Tramp, is the focus of much of their time. He is 14 years old and great company to them. Diana's "hobby" is volunteering. She not only serves at church, but with the Laurel Canyon Optimists Club raising funds for the youth of Cherokee County.

We asked Diana, why is it important to you to volunteer at Canton First? She responded, *"My thoughts on this are that if you belong to any organization, you serve or work."*

*Pastor Kenny has addressed this quite well when stating that we don't come to church for what it does for us. We come to take away knowledge and use it in our family, friends, and communities to help others know Christ."*

There have been many meaningful moments for Diana while volunteering at the church. She shared that there are so many wonderful people that make her volunteer role meaningful. *"It is only through these selfless folks that I can help Canton First. I have known so many "saints" over the 5 years I have done this. However, one does come to mind, and that is a gentleman who refused to serve only one Sunday a month, as I had organized the positions. During his time, he served every Sunday without fail. He was not a healthy person, and without warning he was taken to the hospital and passed away. This left a huge "hole" in my heart and spirit. I cried and asked God "Why?" The answer became clear to me, that this gentleman had done the "work" God had planned for him, and he was taken home to a much better place."*

When we asked Diana, what do you enjoy most about volunteering in your area of Ministry, she responded, *"I can say that I enjoy the people!"*

*"The amazing aspect about volunteering is what 'you' as a person receive while serving!"* Diana encourages others to get involved in serving. *"Canton First does need more volunteers, you can never have too many. My way of encouragement would be to simply say try being a Greeter, or learn about the Welcome Desk, or any other volunteer activity for a month or two. Then, we can talk about how it changes the person's church experience."*

In closing Diana shared, *"I was not certain how organizing these volunteer services would be after the pandemic. Time after time, as I made contact with volunteers, the comment was made that they had missed the handshakes, the hugs, and the feeling of purpose that had become a part of them!"*

### **Fun facts about Diana:**

**Favorite Ice Cream:** I like all ice cream--I never tried one I didn't enjoy!

**Dream Vacation:** My dream vacation is right here with my family and friends.

**Favorite Sports Team:** I have been a fan of the Florida State Seminoles for years. I admired Bobby Bowden as a teacher, coach, and spiritual leader for the young men.

**Favorite Bible Verse:** "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

**Favorite Book:** I taught Language Arts for 36 years and dealt largely with the Classics. I could never select a favorite!