

“Miss Kathy” has been the Director of Roanoke Island Presbyterian Church’s child care mission since August 1992, nearly from its beginnings. She retired very briefly in 2000, but couldn’t stay away and returned within a few months. In the early days, Kathy collaborated with representatives from other agencies to care for the infants and toddlers of teen parents still in high school and to provide support to the parents and their families. Many of those early babies have since served as student leaders at the same high school, have graduated, and are now in college or the workforce. Over the years, Kathy led the development of what has become a 5-star child care program for children birth to three who are at-risk for a variety of reasons. The mission’s priority is to provide high quality care not only for children of high school parents but also for those in foster care, with a history of domestic violence or substance abuse, or with disabilities and developmental delays.

Kathy is the face, the heart, and the church’s vital link to its holy work and call to love into wholeness these young children and their families. During the last twenty-two years, she has cared for over 200 high-needs children and their families while also mentoring over 30 child care providers and nearly 50 high school interns studying early childhood development. She goes far beyond the call of duty, caring for children “off the clock,” maintaining relationships with families well after they have moved on, attending their special events, quietly spending personal funds for celebrations and needs that come to her attention, providing a compassionate and listening ear to providers and family members alike. She has cooked thousands of meals, changed tens of thousands of diapers, wiped hundreds of noses, dried tears, painted walls, scrubbed floors and cleaned toilets. Each day she exemplifies the love that I Corinthians 13 describes. Truly, her life shows forth the fruits of the spirit.

In addition to directing the child care mission, Kathy currently serves on RIPC’s Spiritual Nurture and Outreach Team and on Dare County’s Community Child Protection Team and the Child Fatality Review Team. She has also served on the Board of Directors for the Children and Youth Partnership for Dare. In 2006, she received the Child Care Provider in the Spotlight Award from Dare County’s Child Care Resource and Referral Program. In 2009, she received Children and Youth Partnership’s prestigious Champions for Children Award “in recognition for her outstanding contributions to the well-being of young children and their families in Dare County.”