

It is the Mission of Grace Episcopal Church to bring glory to God, build the spirituality of our people and bring Christ to our community.

Grace Notes is the monthly newsletter for Grace Episcopal Church in Spring Hill. If you would like to contribute an article or comment, please reach out to a member of the Grace Notes committee: Peggy Roberts, Carol Martinez, and LaRue Schmelzer.

Services & Continuing Events

Sun.	10 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10 AM	Children’s Church
Sun.	10 AM	Facebook Live Service
Tues. & Fri.	7:00 PM	AA Meeting
Wed.	10:00 AM	Daughters of The King (2 nd & 4 th Wed.)
	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	11:30 – 3:00 PM	Father Joe, Office Hrs.
Thur.	9:00 AM	Crochet Club
Thur.	9:00 AM	Men’s Breakfast, Grecian Restaurant

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Events and Dates of Note

Here are just some of the dates to note on the church calendar. Information on activities and programs at Grace will be sent to you via email and Facebook.

Jan. 1		New Years Day, Holy Name of Jesus The Epiphany
Jan. 6		Holy Eucharist
Jan. 7	10:00 AM	Children's Church
	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
Jan. 14	10:00 AM	Children's Church
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
	11:30 AM	Grace Annual Meeting
Jan. 18		Confession of St. Peter the Apostle
Jan. 21	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
Jan. 25		Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle
Jan. 28	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
Feb. 2		Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple
Feb. 2	Noon	Ladies Potluck Lunch Faith Hall
Feb. 13	6:00 PM	Pancake Supper at Grace
Feb. 14		Ash Wednesday
Feb. 19		Last Sunday after the Epiphany
Feb. 24		St. Matthias The Apostle





Vicar's Vagaries

Most of you know I taught school for two years before going to seminary. Did you also know that I enjoy making out tests? Here is a Christmas Quiz you might enjoy taking. You might want to ask the members of your family gathering over the Christmas holiday to help answer the questions. Some of the questions are pretty tricky. Almost all can be answered with a Bible, a Book of Common Prayer, or an Ashby Episcopal Church calendar, which you can pick up at church for the year 2024.

1. Which gospel tells of the Wise Men?
2. Which gospel tells about angels singing to shepherds?
3. What part of the normal Sunday liturgy contains the words of the angels to the shepherds?
4. What line in the Nicene Creed mentions a biblical doctrine about Mary?
5. Which gospel tells nothing about the birth of Jesus?
6. Which gospel calls the second person of the Holy Trinity "the Word" and then tells us that "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us?"
7. Where in the Bible do we learn about the ox, the donkey, and the camels that are such a familiar part of our nativity scenes and Christmas cards? (Hint: The answer is not in the New Testament.)
8. Does God have a mother? If so, who is she?
9. When did the Son of God enter our world physically?
10. What are the twelve days of Christmas? What are their dates?
11. Can you find biblical support for the doctrine of the immaculate conception?
12. Can you find biblical support for the doctrine of the virgin birth?
13. What is the etymology of the word *Christmas*?
14. Who were the Holy Innocents, and when do we celebrate their feast?
15. What happened to Jesus on the day we celebrate as the Feast of the Holy Name?
16. What animals were offered in the place of the baby Jesus at his presentation in the Temple forty days after his birth?

17. Can you "have Christmas" without presents?
18. Why does Santa Claus have a red hat, and where does it come from?
19. What is your favorite Christmas carol?
20. What is your favorite Christmas movie?

May you all have a blessed last few days of Advent and a Happy New Year.

Father Joe

A Note on Upcoming Dates

Remember that this Sunday morning, December 24, is still Advent. We celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent at 10:00 a.m. The gospel is the reading about the Annunciation of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, one of the most beautiful passages in the New Testament.

At sunset begins the next day, according to the way the family of Jesus would have reckoned time. So Christmas starts after sunset. Our Christmas Eve service begins at 5:30 p.m. with the singing of Christmas carols in the church. The Eucharist starts at 6:00 p.m. There will be no additional service on Christmas Day.

On December 27, a Wednesday and the third day of Christmas, please join us at noon for the Feast of St. John the Evangelist. He wrote John's Gospel.

On Wednesday, January 2, we will celebrate the noon Eucharist with anointing of the sick and prayers for healing.

There will be no inquirers' class for the next two Tuesdays, December 19 and 27. We will meet next on Tuesday, January 2 at 3:00 p.m.

Our Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, January 14, immediately following the 10:00 a.m. service. At this meeting, we will hear from representatives of the ministries of our church. Fr. Joe will give his annual vicar's report, and Carol Martinez will give her senior warden's report. We will elect two new members of the mission council. James Dallas has agreed to accept nomination for mission council. There will be another nominee.

Father Joe



TOP TEN Favorite Grace Hymns!

One of my very favorite things is when someone tells me that we sang a hymn that was meaningful to them. Sometimes it might be a hymn they have loved since childhood, or it was a favorite of a beloved family member or friend.

I have many, many stories to tell about hymns which have followed me throughout my life. One of my early memories is of the hymn “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah.” I was about six years old, sitting in a worship service with my mother. My family was attending a weeklong camp, and at the evening service we were sitting in the middle of about 700 people, singing at the top of our voices! Remembering this never fails to raise numerous goose bumps, even after more than 60 years! Being surrounded by all these people, singing praises to God, contributed to setting the course of my life.

Please let me know which hymns you love, and I will be happy to include them as part of the service music. Be sure to let me know of any stories you must tell—I love to find out why these hymns are so meaningful to you!


Deanie Moore, Music Director



We found ourselves driving very slowly behind an endless string of cars through downtown Spring Hill every day this week like everyone else. But when passing The Well, 5306 Main Street, my heart had a strange sinking feeling. The entire parking lot was packed with cars and people waiting for food at The Well during this Christmas time! Presents, shopping, celebrations, food, surprises, and old friends should be their number one concern, but it should not be being hungry, finding food somewhere, staying safe,

and being warm.

However, many members at Grace Episcopal Church should rest easier knowing our monthly gifts have a noticeably significant impact on local families that are struggling during the holidays. Our Community Outreach efforts have totaled 1,359 lbs. of food and staples and donations of \$200 during 2023.

In the next couple of weeks, the Grace families have also volunteered to shop and purchase for four financially stressed families’ Christmas gifts. All “Grace Santas” are asked to leave their wrapped packages in Faith Hall by Dec. 21 and a few ‘Grace men with trucks’  will deliver them to the families on Dec. 22.

Merry Christmas from Grace!

Peggy Roberts, Communications



Meet Your Supply Priest! †

Grace Church Family & Friends,

First, I want to say how blessed my wife, Ginger, and I have been the past 5 years by being here at Grace Church among such gracious people who always make us feel welcome when we are able to be with you. We moved to Spring Hill at the end of 2018 to help our youngest daughter Meredith, and her husband John, who lives in Franklin and have produced five of our grandchildren. It has truly been a blessing to share in the lives of our children and grandchildren and at the same time, be available to help when needed. I have been asked to share a little about myself and my journey to Faith in the Church. The operative word is to share a “little,” so here goes!

I was born in Flushing, New York in the borough of Queens in 1951 to a Christian family of a father, mother, sister, and a grandfather (who lived downstairs). I was baptized a month after birth at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Flushing and later confirmed in 1963 by Bishop Sherman in the Diocese of Long Island. We had moved from the city to the north shore of Long Island to a town of 7,000 population in East Northport when I was five years old. I was loved as a child by my parents, sister and a grandfather who had immigrated from Germany just before WWI broke out. My grandfather, Paul, was a

barber, hair stylist and inventor, having opened his shop in NYC and invented one of the earliest hair curling machines for which our family still has the US Patent. My Dad had a medical heart defect and was turned down to serve in the military in WWII, but he did the next best thing to support the war effort and went to work for Grumman Aerospace. I mention my family roots because, I believe, they played a major role in my vocational call. Being loved and showing love as a child with Christian parents was the best I could have asked for in my young life as they instilled a love of God and His Church that made the difference in me. I was confirmed at age 12, received the Blessed Sacrament for the first time and could serve as an acolyte at God's altar. I remember dashing home after school on my bike every month, to see how many times I was scheduled to serve at the altar.

In the summer of 1965, my family moved, along with my five-year-old younger brother, to Arlington, TX due to my Dad receiving a job transfer. I finished Arlington High School and graduated in 1969 before entering the University of TX in Arlington. I continued to serve as an acolyte from age 12 and 60 years later I am still serving at the altar, having served on the vestry at age 18 and then at 21, helping start a renewal program with my parish priest called "Happening", which turned into a renewal movement for High School youth that went national and then international. God was working on me to come and work for Him as I was surrounded by many faithful Priests and Bishops.

While attending college I was encouraged to work for the City of Fort Worth, TX to be a police cadet and at age 21, I attended and graduated from the police academy and worked as a patrolman in Fort Worth until I discovered I was in the wrong place doing the wrong thing with my life, due to the corruption within the department and the lack of moral fiber among my fellow officers. I worked in the poorest, poverty-stricken areas of Fort Worth and gained a lifetime of experience and developed a heart for the downtrodden in life. I returned to college to finish my undergraduate degree in Criminal Justice while catching shoplifters at the local Target store, which paid for the rest of my bachelor's degree, and

allowed me to live in my own apartment. Attending my home parish, St. Alban's in Arlington, TX, I was asked to be the Acolyte Master before being made Diocesan Acolyte Master for the Diocese of Dallas. I met a fellow parishioner that was an ex-FBI Special Agent, who talked me out of applying with the FBI and going to work for him doing investigations for banks, attorneys, and firms that did not have anyone to do investigations and security consulting. I attended Cursillo and had the opportunity to meet my future wife, Ginger, through renewal programs and mutual friends. After a short one-year engagement, we got married and I worked overseeing security for some large retail outlets such as Target and Pier One and 334 7-Eleven stores in the DFW north TX area. God was still working on me and after several buyouts and mergers, Ginger said to me in 1985, "maybe now is the time to go and discern how you are called to serve God". For the next three years from 1986-89, I attended Nashotah House seminary in Wisconsin, moving our family of two young daughters aged 2 and 7, and began a new journey of faith as I was ordained a Deacon in my senior year.

In the summer of 1989, I was called to serve as a Curate to then Father Keith L. Ackerman, SSC, before he was elected the Bishop of Quincy, in Illinois. Other parishes I served included St. Francis of Assisi in Willow Park, TX; Grace Church in Monroe, LA; St. John's Church, Quincy, IL and St. David of Wales, Denton, TX. I have served over 30 years as a trustee and later as Alumni Warden and other leadership positions at Nashotah House and remain on the Board to this day. Our Lord used the gifts and talents I had received from Him for the advantage and expansion of His Kingdom. In the early 1990's, Nashotah House came calling and asked me to use some of my investigative skills to look into a sad case of abuse that returned five indictments from a grand jury in Wisconsin. God used the skills and talents I had received from Him for the benefit of the Church. In 2002, lightning struck St. John's Church, the former Cathedral, and it burned down in a five-alarm fire. It took four years to rebuild. God was glorified. In 2017, I was advised that tests had revealed I had colon cancer, but God was good once again and surgery removed the cancer and I have

remained cancer free to this day. 2018 saw me retire after almost 30 years as a priest to Tennessee to be close to grandchildren. In 2022, Nashotah House conferred an Honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree to me in thanksgiving for God's having His way with this priest. I love people and I especially love children, among them my two daughters, six grandchildren and several foster grandchildren in TX. God spared two of our grandchildren who were students at Covenant School that day this year on March 27th, when a shooter showed up at the Nashville school. Six innocent lives were taken that day that will never be forgotten: three students and three adults.

God is being glorified all around us, every day of our lives and I have been blessed by His grace and mercy. One does not need to be called as a priest to serve God in His Church as He has called each of us by virtue of our baptism to spread the Good News. Thank you for letting me share this and for taking the time to read it. God is good.

Faithfully, The Rev'd Canon H.W. Sandy Herrmann, SSC, DD

The Importance of the Tithe

Have you ever really thought about it—the importance of the tithe? God says in Malachi 3:10: “Bring the full tithes into the storehouse that there may be food in my house and prove me now by it,” says the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

A blessing where there will not be enough room to receive it! Boy that sounds good. My husband Robert and I adhere to this monthly. We tithe with an attitude of gratitude and joy expecting our needs to be met abundantly. After all, does not God promise us in Philippians 4:19: “And my God will liberally supply your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

We believe the promises in the Bible, and we have always found them to come true. Trusting God and what he says in his Word is a great challenge but has proved to be as sweet as honey. We are richly blessed in every way. We have all the material

possessions we could possibly ask for and we are spiritually rich as we read the Bible regularly and watch God come through every trial and challenge with provisions where we could see no way.

God does not want us to be in bondage. He wants us to be free. That is why he sent Jesus, and why Jesus died for us. He died to redeem us of our sins and to give us health and prosperity.

All he asks is for us to trust him; and as it says in Malachi—“Prove me and see what I will do.”

Stana Chapman

Faces of Grace Directory – News

New Member at Grace:
Eleanor Geary

Newest Baptized Member of Grace:
Mani Baskar

Please keep Grace updated on any changes in email, phone numbers, and/or address. Contact Peggy Roberts, 931.625.6069, proberts000@charter.net. Please correct your current directory to reflect these changes.

Brian Klammer, 615.972.9396 (C)

Lizz Klammer, 615.973.0036 (C)

Larry & Peg Agrimonti, 910.859.4245

**Pat Mayo, 1253 Carriage Park Dr.,
Franklin TN 37064**

Grace Finances for October 2023

Although October's revenues fell short of its expenses, the difference was not extreme. The month graced us with \$9,255 in revenue, and expenses came to \$9,953.42, resulting in a shortfall of \$698.42. We had a shortfall in the preceding months, which we covered with transfers from the undesignated and organ funds portions of savings, cleaning out the former and reducing the latter fund by \$4,000.

For your information, the organ fund balance held for us by the Diocese was \$9,892 as of September 30. That fund fluctuates other than from our withdrawals, as it is in an interest-bearing account. We will request another reimbursement for organ expenses after Wednesday's approval of the minutes from last month.

We are doing well on our pledges for 2024. We had 31 pledges for 2023. A couple of weeks into the 2024 pledge campaign, we have received 12 pledges, and several members have increased their giving. We are at 54% of the funding level achieved for 2023 with 38% of the number of responses.

Grace Financial Position for October 2023

Pledged offerings:	\$7,888.00
Plate offerings:	\$781.00
Priest discretionary fund:	\$361.00
Flowers:	\$100.00
Facilities rental:	\$125.00
Total revenue:	\$9,255.00

Total revenue: \$9,255.00

Total expenses: \$9,953.42

November net total: -\$698.42

Banking balances:

First Horizon checking account:	\$7,510.94
First Horizon savings account:	\$40,928.84

Savings Account Fund Breakdown:

Organ fund:	\$19,500.00
Building fund:	\$20,650.00
Undesignated fund:	\$760.50
Interest earned:	\$18.34

Total available funds, plus savings: **\$48,439.78**

David Thomas, Treasurer

October Mission Council Minutes

Attendance: Father Joseph Davis, Carol Martinez (Sr. Warden), Bill Rieger, (Jr. Warden), Charles Cochran, Peggy Roberts, and Robert Chapman.

Fr. Joe recognized a quorum was present and gave an opening prayer at 6:05 PM.

Scribe's Report –The minutes for the July 2023 meeting of the Mission Council were reviewed and accepted as corrected. The Mission Council did not

meet during August and there are no minutes for September because a quorum was not present.

Treasurer's Report: David Thomas, Treasurer. David sent the July, August, and September financial reports to the mission council members. He presented the reports in detail. As of the year ending September 30, 2023, our approved budget was expected to be a shortfall of -\$5,375.09.

We have another organ upkeep bill that needs to be paid. Carol Martinez moved to submit another request for funds from our account at the diocese for \$420.00. Seconded by Charles Cochran. After discussion, the motion was approved.

As of the date of this meeting, we do not have enough funds in our checking account to pay the current bills and routine disbursements. Carol Martinez moved to transfer the following from the Organ Fund to the Operating Fund to cover the shortfall, as follows: Bill Rieger seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion passed.

Vicar's Report: Fr. Joe shared the following items. Fr. Joe shared pastoral care information with the Mission Council. Letter of Agreement – nothing further to report. Blessing of the Animals – good turnout with several dogs, 1 cat and 1 bird.

Inquirer's Class – 5 people are participating in this class. Fr. Joe encouraged members of the Mission Council to attend the Diocesan Anti-Racism Course. The Diocesan Day of Prayer is scheduled for this Saturday, Oct. 21. Delegates for the Diocesan Annual Convention must be selected. Grace needs to send two delegates and have two alternate delegates submitted to the Diocese. Lessons and Carols is scheduled for Dec. 10, with Fr. Sandy Herrmann serving while Fr. Joe attends the wedding of his older son in New York City. It is time to appoint the Mission Council Nominating Committee and the Stewardship Committee. Please give Fr. Joe your thoughts on filling these important positions.

Senior Warden's Report: Carol Martinez. Peephole installation in the exterior door of Faith Hall is in progress. Carol reported ongoing plans to invite a member of the local police department to speak on security issues. Financial report to the congregation. Carol asked the Mission Council if they felt there was

a need to speak to the congregation about our current financial position and ask for additional support. She will do this at this coming Sunday's service announcements. Carol has recruited 3 members of the congregation to speak at Sunday services about Stewardship during the campaign. Fr. Joe will draft the annual Stewardship Letter to the congregation.

Jr. Warden's Report: Bill Rieger. Fall Cleanup is scheduled for Nov. 18, both inside the church and the outside grounds. Bill suggested the cleaning of the building's floors alternate weekly between the sanctuary and Faith Hall.

Liaison Reports: Carol Martinez. Communications – Peggy Roberts. We have had several visitors with multiple visits. Grace Notes will be out in the next few days. Should we consider additional signage to encourage visitors, so they know this is an active congregation, not a museum?

Children's Ministry – Carol Martinez for Will Pomeroy. Will is working on a new permission form. Outreach – Charles Cochran. Grace Church members have donated 1,016 lbs. of food and \$200 as of the end of Sept. 2023. The Well has not yet called for assistance for Christmas gifts for needy families. Charles will let folks know when they do.

Congregational Life – Robert Chapman. Robert expressed his dissatisfaction with the way his article for Grace Notes was edited. Fr. Joe apologized for any misunderstanding, stating that it was his responsibility to edit content as well. Carol Martinez also stated that it was the role of any editor to modify submissions for the newsletter. Fr. Joe thanked Robert for speaking up rather than keeping his feelings bottled up.

Old Business: The Audit Committee, chaired by Chuck Warnick, finished their work on the 2022 Financial Review and completed the form requested by the Diocese. All paperwork for the Diocese is ready to be sent. Only minor problems were found. Suggestions for the Treasurer and for the Financial Administrator will be shared. Thanks to Susan Browning for having the files ready for review and being ready to speak with the committee by phone if needed. Thanks also to David Thomas for his attendance and efforts. Also, thanks to Susan Austin

and John Harvey for serving on the Audit Committee. Special Thanks: Thanks to the Schmelzer Family for their donation of the new dishwasher for Faith Hall.

Next Mission Council Meetings: Nov. 15, December 13, and the Annual Meeting on Jan. 14, 2024.

Fr. Joe closed the meeting with a blessing at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Chuck Warnick, Scribe

Clergy and Staff

The R. Rev. Dr. John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop
The Rev. Joseph N. Davis, Vicar
Deanie Moore, Dir. of Music
Susan Browning, Financial Administrator

The Mission Council

Carol Martinez, Sr. Warden
Bill Rieger, Jr. Warden
David Thomas, Treas.
Will Pomeroy, Christian Education & Children's Ministry
Charles Cochran, Community Outreach
Peggy Roberts, Communications
Robert Chapman, Congregational Life

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<https://graceepiscopalspringhill.org/#giving>.

