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# Grace Notes

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*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 congregational newsletter for Grace Episcopal Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee. If you would like to contribute an article or comment, please contact James Dallas or Fr. Joe Davis.

## Services & Continuing Events

Sun.	10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 a.m.	Children's Church
	10:00 a.m.	Facebook Live Service
Wed.	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	11:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Father Joe, Office
Tues. & Fri.	7:00 p.m.	AA Meetings
Sundays	After Church	Daughters of The King (most weeks)
Thur.	9:00 p.m.	Crochet Club
Thur.	9:00 p.m.	Men's Breakfast, Grecian Restaurant

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## Upcoming Events and Dates of Notes

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.

<b>March 2</b>	<b>Last Sunday after the Epiphany</b>
<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Holy Eucharist</b>
<b>March 4</b>	<b>6:00 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper</b>
<b>March 5</b>	<b>Noon and 6:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday</b>
<b>March 9</b>	<b>Bishop's Annual Visit</b>
<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Holy Eucharist</b>
	<i>Reception will be held in Faith Hall after</i>
<b>Mar. 12</b>	<b>5:30 p.m. Evening Prayer</b>
<b>6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Lenten Book Study</b>
	<i>(repeats every Wednesday through April 9)</i>
<b>Mar. 16</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist</b>
Mar. 19	St. Joseph
Mar. 20	Mission Council Meeting
<b>Mar. 23</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist</b>
Mar. 25	Feast of the Annunciation
<b>Mar. 30</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist</b>
<b>April 6</b>	<b>10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist</b>
April 8	Mission Council Meeting
<b>April 13</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b>

## Vicar's Vagaries

*Fr. Joe attended a clergy silent retreat in Sewanee from February 10 – 13.*

I have just come home from the clergy silent retreat that was held at St. Mary's Retreat and Conference Center in Sewanee, Tennessee from Monday through Thursday morning. I had been looking forward to the retreat for a long time. Finally,

Monday arrived. I left early so I could get there and begin to unwind before Evening Prayer at 5:30 p.m.

It's a good thing I left early. My calm first day of retreat was about to get a lot more exciting. When I was near Tullahoma, my car told me through its self-monitoring system that the air pressure in the right rear tire was low. I pushed a button, and I could see the tire pressure was right for the other three tires, but it was 0 on the right rear. I slowed down and began to pull over. Only then did I feel the car leaning a bit to the right rear, and I could now hear the flat tire as the car rolled to a stop.

Since I had never had a flat tire on my Mini Cooper, I checked the owner's manual for information. I learned that I didn't have a spare tire. I did have AAA and my trusty smart phone, so I looked up the nearest tire store, which was 5 miles away in Manchester. I reached a AAA agent, and soon Chandler with All Towed Up in Tullahoma called to tell me he was on his way.

In the meantime, a nice State Trooper pulled up behind me. This time, I was very glad to see him. He was going to volunteer to change my tire for me. How good of him! But as I had no spare, there was nothing he could do but wish me well. He also told me that I can call the State Troopers for help anytime by dialing \*THP (\*847). Maybe you should put that number into your phone, as I did.

As I sat there, I could feel the vibrations and the powerful gusts of wind as the semi-trucks flew by at 70 mph. I have seen smaller houses. I sat in my little car, feeling very "mini," by the side of the interstate praying that no car or truck would fly out of control and turn me (and my car) into little more than a bug on their windshield. I felt incredibly vulnerable and a little afraid. To pass the time, I put my car maintenance receipts in order by date. Then I saw Chandler's big black truck pull over just in front of me. As I sat in his truck, he loaded up my car; and we were on our way to Gateway Tires in Manchester. Prayers of thanksgiving abounded.

Steven at Gateway fixed me up with two new tires. I wanted to get two so they would be matched, and the other rear tire wasn't in great shape anyway. Steve told me I must have run over something because he found a hole in the flat tire about the size of his pinkie fingertip.

As I drove off and accelerated onto I-24 towards Sewanee, I felt extremely grateful for the

help of all these people who had been doing their jobs and had helped me out. May they have a blessed life helping others as they helped me.

Soon I was at the retreat center having dinner with my fellow clergy. I had missed Evening Prayer, but I would be praying a lot the next few days. On second thought, I think maybe I did the Evening Prayer service I was supposed to do when I was having my little adventure.

### *Mardi Gras and Ash Wednesday*

On Tuesday evening, March 4, we will have our traditional pancake supper and Mardi Gras celebration. In the old days, everybody fasted for Lent by not eating meat or any animal by-products, not even butter, milk, or eggs for the whole 40 days. They would have pancakes to use up the butter, milk, and eggs. I suppose they also finished off the old sausage and bacon while they were at it. Sometime that Tuesday I will burn palms from our Palm Sunday celebration last spring to make ashes for the next day, which is Ash Wednesday. And I will try to play some Dixieland music from New Orleans at home and perhaps at the Pancake Supper.

The best way to start off your Lent, if you can, is to come to church on Ash Wednesday and take part with the whole church in an act of corporate penance, confession, receiving of ashes, and communion. I will sign the cross with ashes on your forehead and say, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return." It is good to have this yearly reminder that God made us of the dust of the earth. He it was who breathed life into Adam and made Eve, and he is the giver and sustainer of life for you and me. We owe him all our life, and in death we can give ourselves to him completely when our life is done. Remembering our complete dependence on God, we begin to walk these 40 days of Lent with Jesus so that we may rejoice in his resurrection as we celebrate Easter for the Great Fifty Days until Pentecost.

Our Ash Wednesday, services will be at 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m. I hope you can make it to one of these.

### *Bring In Your Palms*

If you have been saving your palms since Palm Sunday, please bring them to church before Shrove Tuesday, and I will burn them to make the ashes for the Ash Wednesday service.

### *Bishop's Visit and Confirmations*

On the first Sunday in Lent, March 9, Bishop John Bauerschmidt will make his annual visitation at Grace and confirm our eligible confirmands. Please pray for those who are to be confirmed: Kate Klunk, Joan Jackson, Michael McGuire, Liam Henderson, and Kelley Jenkins. There will be a reception following the ceremony in the parish hall. There will then be a brief mission council meeting in the church before we bid the bishop farewell. Please try to be present for this great day in the life of our church. Everyone will be asked, "Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?" I hope you will give a resounding, "We will!"

### *Lenten Series*

Our Lenten Series this year will be focused on reading and discussing David Brooks's 2023 book, *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*. I selected this book because I have for years read reports of an epidemic of loneliness among the people of our country, and we have not always done a good job of learning or teaching the social arts of connecting with others. We need to sharpen our ability to make and maintain real friendships. Within the body of Christ, we are called to serve as Christ in the world. We can better love those whom Christ loves if we get better at knowing and seeing others more deeply.

We will connect our lessons with passages in Scripture throughout these five sessions. We may listen to David Brooks talking about his book in an interview. Group participation will be encouraged. You can find a copy of this book in most bookstores or for \$16.50 currently on Amazon.com. Brooks himself reads the book on Audible.

Each Wednesday in Lent from March 12 through April 9, we will gather at 5:30 for Evening Prayer in the church. Different volunteers will sign up to bring dinner each week. We should be able to work this out by taking turns and helping each other out as needed. Dinner will be at 6:00 p.m., and the class will follow at around 6:35 and last an hour. We should all be able to leave before 8:00 p.m.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the parish hall for those who want to come to this class.

### *Newly Licensed Eucharistic Visitors*

I want everyone to know that Carol Martinez and Chuck Warnick are our newly licensed Eucharistic Visitors. They are now licensed by the bishop to take communion from one of our celebrations of the Eucharist on Sunday to people who are not able to come to church. They will be helping me take our Lord in the blessed sacrament to those who can't be with us in person. The bishop granted these licenses at my recommendation. Carol and Chuck will be a great help to me in reaching out in the name of Christ and Grace Church to those who need our support.

Father Joe,  
Vicar Vagarious

### **Daughters of the King Updates**

The bylaws of the Order of the Daughters of the King requires a preparatory study. The Daughters of Grace began this twelve-week study with Kathleen Klunk and Lizz Klammer on Sunday, February 9.

This preparation period distinguishes The Order of the Daughters of the King from other Christian women's organizations. It helps women understand what it means to be a member of our Order, and to find their calling from God to make this commitment.

Prospective members are encouraged to use this time for reflection and discernment.

Carolyn Warnick  
Daughters of the King

## **Journey through the Hymnal: “Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”**

Epiphany hymns are (to me) some of the most difficult to select and schedule, as they are mostly unfamiliar to us.

Let's start with the definition of epiphany: In ecclesiastical settings, it is comparable to the word manifest—as in the appearance or manifestation of a divine being. The season of Epiphany focuses on the times in the scripture in which Jesus' appearance and identity were revealed to those around him. His birth, and the understanding of the magi; his baptism with the tearing open of heaven and the Holy Spirit descending; turning water into wine at the wedding in Cana; healing those who were sick and injured; the Transfiguration, along with the appearances of Elijah and Moses.

A favorite Epiphany hymn of mine is #135, “Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”. It was authored by Christopher Wordsworth, born in 1807, and nephew of poet laureate William Wordsworth. He was a scholar, having attended Winchester and Trinity College Cambridge, winning prizes and medals in mathematics and classical studies.

He was also a writer on many subjects, including a book titled *Holy Year, or, Hymns for Sundays, Holidays, and other occasions throughout the year*. He looked upon hymns as “a valuable means of stamping permanently upon the memory the great doctrines of the Christian Church. It is the first duty of a hymn-writer to teach sound doctrine, and thus to save souls.”

“Songs of Thankfulness and Praise” is clearly scripturally based, the first stanza being based upon Matthew 2:1-12 and the visit of the Magi; the second stanza refers to John 2:1-11 and the wedding at Cana; the third stanza refers to Matthew 4:23-24 and Jesus' healing ministry; and stanza 4 is based on Mark 9: 2-10, the account of the Transfiguration. The hymn is set to the tune of “Salzburg” by Jakob Hintze.

Jesus reveals himself to us in numerous ways in our daily lives. Be looking for these epiphanies!

Deanie Moore,  
Music Director

## **Meet The Mission Council: Senior Warden**

My grandson calls me Jar Jar. He comes from a family of *Star Wars* enthusiasts, and most everyone has a *Star Wars* name. For example, Leon's other grandfather is called Obi, as in Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Leon's grandmother is called BB, as in BB-7 or BB- 8. When asked how I chose Jar Jar, I often jokingly respond that I chose last, implying that Jar Jar was the only name remaining. You see, not many *Star Wars* fans would choose to be called “Jar Jar,” because Binks is a much maligned character, and is mostly loathed in greater *Star Wars* culture.

The truth is that I like Jar Jar Binks. I view Jar Jar as the cosmic fool stumbling through the universe, and despite his clumsiness and ineptitude, things almost always seem to go his way. Now, there is that business where the evil Emperor Palpatine unwittingly tricked Jar Jar, leading to some very dark times, but I suppose being duped by a politician can happen to the best of us, and I forgive Jar Jar for that. Jar Jar Binks was an underdog, and I like to root for the underdog. Everyone celebrates when the lesser succeed. Jar Jar was a banished outlier among his people, yet he rose to the rank of General and later became a Senator.

When asked to write a short biography for *Grace Notes* I suppose I could have stuck with the standard fare, 62 years old, married 37 years, 3 kids, 1 grandson, retired 3 years ago. I'm a cradle Episcopalian, although there are some missing years. Our family moved to Spring Hill from Atlanta in 1999. We first attended Grace in 2004. This is my fourth three-year term on the Mission Council... If I were to dig deeper into rote biography, I might say that I value harmony, or that I listen far more than I speak. Like many, from my greatest weakness comes my greatest strength. In my case I'm quick to judge, but even quicker to forgive.

*Star Wars* creator George Lucas uses the metaphor of “the force” to broadly describe the relationship between good and evil. The George Lucas force has a dark side and a light side. Like many people, I consider the force to be an allegory for faith, religion, and God.

Grace is a small church, and, in some ways, we resemble the underdog. We have a lot going for us. Perhaps one of the best things about Grace in my view is that due to our small size we're able to know everyone and care for everyone, and we love each other. The downside to our small size is that we don't always have the resources to do all that we want to accomplish.

Occasionally, when looking through the lens of the dark side, I wonder how in the world we're going to stay operable beyond the next 3 years. We simply don't have the financial resources, and we barely get by today. It's like we're living paycheck to paycheck.

We don't use the force in the Episcopal Church. We have something better than the force. We have the real deal. We have faith. We have faith, and we rely on it. There is a reason Faith Hall was named Faith Hall, and there is a reason why Grace Church was named Grace Church. Grace has survived as a mission church (as opposed to a Parish) for over 145 years. Somehow, I'm sure we will keep going. I have faith. God has always provided the means. I will continue my petitions to the Lord for strength and wisdom to guide us forward, and for grace. Or as Jar Jar Binks might say: about it, "mesa gonna pray."

Bill Rieger,  
Senior Warden

### **Diocesan Convention Report**

Fr. Joe, Carol Martinez, John Harvey, and I attended the Diocesan Convention last month at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Brentwood. This was my first time attending such a gathering, and it was a fascinating experience.

We had wonderful teaching from Bishop John Bauerschmidt as well as our distinguished visitor, the Rt. Rev. Gregory Brewer, formerly Bishop of the Diocese of Central Florida. Both bishops preached on the importance of being persistent witnesses of Christ. Bishop Brewer spoke about his experiences ministering to the diverse survivors of the Pulse

nightclub shooting a few years ago in Orlando, and how the Church can help communities heal.

This was particularly important, I think, as the Episcopal Church had just gotten quite a bit of attention as the result of the sermon preached by Bishop Mariann Budde during the National Cathedral service following the presidential inauguration. The national controversy over her call for empathy and mercy were on our minds at the opening of the Diocesan Convention, and I believe the bishops dealt with that topic appropriately.

Though most of the items on the agenda passed unanimously, I am particularly proud of Fr. Joe for speaking his mind on a particular resolution regarding who may vote during annual meetings. Sometimes, it requires a little bit of courage to disagree when one is in a minority.

I was also impressed by the wonderful music and the hard work of many clergy and lay people in our Diocese. I learned about some events and committees in our Diocese that I might want to get involved in some day.

The Diocesan Convention is an annual event, and we will always need volunteers to fill our two delegate, and alternate positions. I strongly encourage you to consider serving as a delegate in the future.

James Dallas

### **Technology Updates**

The theme of our technology efforts recently has been "trying to better use software that we are already paying for."

Over the past few months, I have been working to add more information to our website calendar. I have added many of the saints' days and other important feasts to our calendar out through the year 2050. We will also be putting information about services during Lent and Holy Week on the website. I definitely value suggestions for new content.

David Thomas and others have also been checking out what we can do with Realm. You may know Realm as the site we use to process online donations. But there are other features that we have used in the past, and we are investigating whether

those features may help us to communicate more effectively with the congregation in the future.

David, Carol Martinez, and others, have of course also been doing fantastic work keeping us up to date on our Facebook group.

James Dallas,  
Website Administrator

**“REMEMBER THE WELL!”**

*Food donations for our neighbors are always being collected in Faith Hall and are periodically blessed and taken to The Well.*

**Clergy and Staff**

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

**The Mission Council**

Bill Rieger, Jr., Senior Warden  
David Thomas, Junior Warden  
Brian Klammer, Treasurer  
Nicole Poirier, Christian Ed. & Children’s Ministry  
James Dallas, Communications  
Teri Mai, Congregational Life  
Eleanor Geary, Scribe

*Approved Mission Council minutes and presented Treasurer’s reports will be posted on the bulletin board in Faith Hall.*

You may contribute to Grace Church at this link or by using the QR code below:

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

