

Grace Episcopal Church
 5291 N. Main St.
 Spring Hill, TN 37174
 931-486-3223
 Office@grace4sh.org

Grace Notes

Volume VI, Issue 5
 May 2023

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 and Continuing Events

Sun.	10 AM	Holy Eucharist & Children's Church
Sun.	10 AM	Facebook Live Service
Mon.	1:00 PM	Creative Mondays (2 nd & 4 th Mondays)
Tues. & Fri.	7:00 PM	AA Meeting
Wed.	10:00 AM	DOK
Wed.	Noon	Holy Eucharist,
	11:00-3:00	Fr. Joe, Office Hrs.
Thur.	9:00 AM	Crochet Club
Thur.	9:00 AM	Men's Coffee Clutch, Grecian Family Restaurant

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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 the members via email and Facebook.

May 18	6:00 PM	Ascension Day Eucharist & 145 Anniversary
May 21		Seventh Sunday of Easter
May 22	1:00 PM	Creative Mondays
May 24	6:00 PM	Mission Council Meeting
May 28		Day of Pentecost
May 29		Memorial Day
June 1		Ladies Luncheon, Faith Hall
June 4		First Sunday after Pentecost, Trinity Sunday
June 11		Second Sunday after Pentecost
June 12	1:00 PM	Creative Monday
June 18		Third Sunday after Pentecost
June 21	6:00 PM	Mission Council Meeting
June 24		Nativity of St. John The Baptist
June 25		Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
June 26	1:00 PM	Creative Monday
June 29		St's. Peter & Paul

Vicar's Vagaries: Sermon Writing

The writing of sermons is a great mystery to me. It is like prayer, in that the more I do it, the less I think I know about it. But both prayer and sermons work. Prayer keeps us in touch with God; and sermons help us to grow in our understanding of Christian faith and life.

When I was a boy, our priest's sermons were both riveting and beyond my understanding. He passionately believed in what he was saying, and I knew him to be a man of great integrity. His words went through me like water through a sieve. I held

onto what meaning I could, and the rest was usually not accessible to my conscious mind after the service was over. However, I believe that being present for these sermons was a crucial part of my spiritual formation as a child. These were extended periods when I gave all my attention to following my priest's thoughts and prayers about God and how to live the Christian life. I believe I was learning to pray during these sermons.

When I write sermons, I get my writing pad, my books, and a cup of coffee. I start reading the lessons, or a commentary on one of the lessons, or a book about a topic relevant to what I am searching for. I look for some kind of spark to ignite an idea. After many years, I have learned what kinds of ideas could have sermons built around them. My recent sermon on the Real Presence was built around the idea that my dog is happy just to be in the room with me, and I know where he is at all times myself, no matter what I am doing. He wants me to be truly present to him; and I am aware of his presence to me. Similarly, the sanctuary candle tells us that Jesus is present in the sacrament reserved in the aumbry or tabernacle in the sanctuary of a church. When we see a candle burning in the sanctuary, we know that Jesus is present in the sacrament there. The place is different for us because of that candle and the presence it signifies, just as a room is different when my dog finds me and comes in to take a nap on the sofa, as he is doing at this moment. Though I wondered about the appropriateness of using my presence to a dog in an analogy about the presence of Christ in the sacrament, I knew that people would understand what I myself had understood from the experience I had had. So I went with the idea, not knowing if people would think it was silly or if they would like it for the wrong reasons. I have to trust what I am given, because I don't have anything else to work with. And I trust the Holy Spirit to give you the best understanding of what I am trying to say.

When an idea presents itself to me, I have to write it down, or I will probably forget it. I can work for many hours and never get the spark of an idea; and I can get an idea when I am running away from the duties of being the vicar of a church. (Going to a bookstore, taking a walk, and watching movies have

inspired many sermon ideas, as have the theological pronouncements of children.) I have very little to do with whether or not an idea comes to me; though I need to be paying attention, or I will miss it. Learning how to pay attention is the important part, as it was for learning how to listen to sermons when I was a boy.

One lay Eucharistic minister recently said, "I don't see how you do it every Sunday, year after year." I don't either, except I can tell you what happens most of the time. I do some preliminary reading of the lessons by Thursday or Friday each week. Friday afternoon, I try to some reading about the lesson I am interested in preaching on. I write down any interesting points that come to me as I read. I can go from a hopeless mood ("I will never have a sermon this week!") to excitement over an idea ("They are going to love this!") in a matter of seconds. Usually, at some point in the process, I consciously pray that God will help me find the sermon he wants me to preach. This prayer always helps.

Early Saturday morning, I do Morning Prayer, which warms me up and gets me in tune to listen for what God has for me. Then I sit down with my coffee and books to read and write notes. If a spark ignites, I start writing, and I write until I am through. Words come to me. They seem to fall into sentences, and sometimes the sentences make paragraphs. When several paragraphs happen, I keep on going, as though running to help a kite gain altitude, because this could be my sermon. Sometimes I write for an hour and a half without stopping. After I am done, I ponder how I feel about what just happened. Is that a sermon I have just written? Has it led me to my sermon? Should I keep it or throw it all out? If I use what I have just written, will I need a beginning or an ending?

After about 3 hours of work on Saturday morning, I leave what I have done and do something else for a while. In the afternoon, I have another session in which I evaluate what I wrote. I may type it up on the computer and edit as I go. I usually revisit the notes before bed. I go through everything early Sunday morning and get myself ready for church. I may not know if what I have is really a sermon, but I trust God

to create a sermon out of what I have done, and to help me to say what he wants me to say as I preach.

When you listen, you help the sermon be born. Without your attentive ears, it would be nothing.

The Rev. Joseph N. Davis, Vicar

Services for Fr. Peter Whalen

A Celebration of Life service for the Reverend Father Peter James Whalen recently took place at The Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Shelbyville, and a Diocesan celebration led by Bishop John Bauerschmidt and Rev. Canon Jody Howard took place days later at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Nashville.

Father Peter was born on July 24, 1939, and passed away in peace on Sunday morning Dec. 13, 2020. He is survived by his beloved wife Barbara Whalen, daughter Christi Canada (Jared), and son Christopher Whalen (Davina). He is also survived by two sisters, Joan Whalen and Sue Carlson, and Sue's two sons Jason and Aaron Carlson.

Father Peter was a man of the community but most of all he was a servant in God's' Church. He served the Lord as a Priest for more than 50 years in many parishes, both Roman Catholic and Episcopal. For almost 40 years he served in the Diocese of Tennessee.

Father Peter served at Grace Episcopal Church from the Summer of 2016 to March 26, 2017. Members of Grace who attended the memorial service in Shelbyville were Fr. Joe Davis, Sheila Flynn, John Harvey, Carol Martinez, and Lynn and Bill Rieger.

Father Peter loved God, his church, his brother and sister pastors, and his community. When he concluded his ministry at the Church of the Redeemer, Father Peter said "I am always willing to help out if called upon...God has given me a gift and I am more than willing to share that as long as there is a need that I can fulfill."

Daughters of the King Spring Assembly

The DOK Spring Assembly was held on Saturday, April 15 at St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Columbia, TN. Teri Mai and I attended along with other members of the order throughout the diocese.

Bishop Bauerschmidt celebrated the Holy Eucharist. Rita Warner, our Diocesan President, welcomed us and conducted the business meeting. The guest speaker, Rev. Margery Kennelly of St. George's, Nashville, gave an interesting talk. She shared a poem entitled "Pardon Me, Pilgrim," to a Luna Moth, by Dana Gioia and invited us to see if we identified more closely with the Luna moth or the pilgrim. Teri Mai identified with the moth and I with the pilgrim. It caused me to start singing in my head, "We are pilgrims on a journey..., from 'The Servant Song'." Does the moth or the pilgrim more closely resemble you?

Nancie Schweikert, Diocesan DOK Historian, prepared a report on "Heart and Home." She was the guest speaker at the Spring Assembly 26 years earlier and presented a "How-To" program on planning chapter programs. She referenced a pamphlet entitled "My Heart, Christ's Home," by Robert Boyd Munger. I ordered a copy from Amazon for our Grace chapter's use.

Nancie writes: "Imagining what it would be like to have Jesus come to the home of our hearts, the author moves room by room considering what Christ desires for us. In the living room we prepare to meet Christ daily. In the dining room we examine together what appetites should and should not control us. We even explore the closets in our lives that Christ can help us clean out."

I'm very grateful for the time spent in fellowship with Teri and our sisters in Christ and fellow daughters. It was a wonderful Spring Assembly and the DOK Chapter at St. Peter's were so hospitable. If any women of Grace are interested in learning more about the Daughters of The King, please see me, or Teri Mai; Carolyn Warnick, co-president, or Lynn Rieger.

For His Sake,
Sheila Flynn, DOK President

The Significance of Grace Church Children's Ministry—A Parent's Perspective

The weight of leading a child to a life following Christ is on our shoulders as parents. It is important to understand that children are not "miniature adults." Their development and ability to understand concepts are not the same as adults and therefore children have different learning needs. It is important to recognize this if we are to establish a church

community that is inclusive of all people across the lifespan that will thrive for years to come. As parents we can lead them to church but then the Church must also provide a welcoming, safe space to stoke their spark of curiosity and their need to understand what it means to be a Christian. Unfortunately, these days our children's brains are flooded with competing activities and excessive stimuli. We need an age-appropriate avenue to tap-into this space, or the opportunity may be lost to teach them about how much God loves them.

My interest in the Children's Ministry is twofold—as a parent, because of Children's Church, I feel more equipped to lead my children to follow in the path of Christ. I admit I have even learned a thing or two from the lessons. As a child of God and part of the church community, I am an instrument of His word by volunteering my time and talent to the ministry. I am exceedingly grateful for these opportunities.

The Children's Ministry at Grace Church supports and equips families as they pursue Christ every day in their homes and communities. Through it, children learn that church can be fun. I want my children to live a life rooted in the teachings of the Bible that goes beyond acclimating to the structured Sunday worship. It is well known that children learn through play. Children's Church at Grace follows a curriculum that integrates interactive teaching methods that relate to the Gospel for the day. This solidifies the children's understanding of the message and how it applies to their life. Evidence of the commitment that the CC leaders put forth in fulfilling their vital role lies in the excitement of my kids and their eagerness to attend every Sunday, despite the absence of their coveted screen time and video games. My 9-year-old son says "CC teaches us to love Jesus, and this is important because He is the Son of God. CC is fun. We get to do arts and crafts. It helps me understand the stories in the Bible better. It's fun when the leaders act out stories and sometimes, we (the kids) get to act them out too." We are very excited to have two of our leaders attend the upcoming Children's Ministry informative meeting on May 20 at St. Paul's in Murfreesboro, TN.

We are hoping to gain some important insight and inspiration on how to grow our Children's Church and create the best environment for our children.
Nicole Poirier, Children's Church Liaison

Coronation Hymns & Anthems

For the last few weeks there have been unending discussions about the coronation of King Charles III—who would/would not be there, the symbolism of all of the crowns and garments, the traditions that have been followed for hundreds of years and their meaning, etc. I have been wondering what music would be played and sung, as well as who the composers and performers would be.

Two hymns which were sung by the congregation were "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven," and "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation." Both hymns call us to worship the King of heaven, the foundation and cornerstone; and they describe God's characteristics as a loving father, and our response to his majesty.

Much of the music that was commissioned for the coronation was written for specific parts of the service. There was an Agnus Dei by Tarik O'Regan, a Sanctus by Roxanna Panufnik, and (my personal favorite!) a Kyrie by Welsh composer Paul Mealor. It is the first work to be sung in Welsh at a coronation. It was performed by Welsh baritone, Bryn Terfel.

King Charles III has said that his favorite hymn is "Be Thou My Vision," so an orchestral version of the song was composed by Nigel Hess, Roderick Williams, and Shirley J. Thompson.

I hope you will search on YouTube for video clips of the music from the coronation. The beautiful hymns, anthems, and liturgy are a glorious celebration!

Deanie Moore, Director of Music

Recycling Bottle Caps to Make Benches

Community outreach and recycling are two of the programs that are important to the congregation at Grace Episcopal church. Recently, the Daughters of the King learned about a new program - recycling bottle caps into benches.

Grace is able to work with GFWC Spring Station Women's Club Chapter and other community organizations to bring new benches to the community. We will be collecting plastic screw tops/lids from beverage bottles, deodorant, laundry detergent, dish soap, and more. If it floats it should be collected.

The lids do not go into recycling, so this is a clever way to keep them out of the landfill. There is a clear container in Faith Hall that will accept the bottle caps. If you have any questions or need additional information, please reach out to Sheila Flynn, co-President, Daughters of the King, or Carol Martinez, Senior Warden. Grace will continue to collect food for The Well.

“Almighty God, we thank you for reminding us of the importance of recycling as part of a new creation. We pray this day that we will go out into the world and spread the Good News about the wonders of God’s creation to our friends and relatives and all that we meet. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

(The prayer is from the Anglican Youth of Southern Africa.)

Carol Martinez, Senior Warden



Generosity of Grace Folks

Thanks again to all the benevolent members of Grace Church for their March donations of food to The Well. Charles Cochran delivered our donation of 143 lbs. of staples that was received by appreciative workers.

When passing The Well on Tuesday of this last week, it appeared to be a parking lot of cars each waiting for needed food. We were told by a Well employee that the number of people needing food has increased and more companies are donating to help fill this need. It does take a village!

Treasury Report for March 2023

March brought revenues of \$8,162.00, which fell slightly shy of its \$8,935.87 in expenses. For the first quarter of 2023, expenses have exceeded revenues by \$1,780.18. We hope the coming months will improve that picture. For all of 2022 and the first quarter of this year, we have not touched the savings funds. The following is the general breakdown of funds, and the detailed information on accounts is attached.

Finances for March 2023 are as follows:

Pledged Offerings: \$6,533.00
 Plate Offerings: \$809.00
 Priest Discretionary fund: \$200.00

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Easter gifts: \$150.00
 Memorial fund: \$50.00
 Flowers: \$285.00
 Reimbursement from Vendors: \$10.00
 Facilities Rental: \$125.00
Total Revenues: \$8,162.00
Total Expenses: \$8,935.87
March Net Total: -\$773.87

Banking Balances:

First Horizon Checking Account: \$5,707.96
 First Horizon Savings Account: \$48,307.48

Savings Account Fund Breakdown

Organ Fund: \$23,500.00
 Building Fund: \$20,650.00

Undesignated Fund: \$4,151.33
 Interest earned: \$6.15

Total Available Funds, plus savings: \$54,015.44

David Thomas, Treasurer

Mission Council Minutes – March 16, 2023

Attendance: Father Joseph Davis, Bill Rieger (Jr. Warden), David Thomas (Treasurer), Charles Cochran, Peggy Roberts, Robert Chapman, Will Pomeroy, and Chuck Warnick. Fr. Joe gave an opening prayer.

Scribe’s Report – Chuck Warnick: The minutes for the January 2023 Annual Meeting and the minutes for the Mission Council Meeting of January 25, 2023, were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer’s Report: Please see the specific reports for line-item analysis.

Summary:

Category	Month January 2023	YTD February 2023
Revenue:	\$6,444.00	\$20,985.00
Expenses:	7,815.09	16,366.31
Net:	-\$1,371.09	\$ 4,618.69

After discussion, the Treasurer’s reports were accepted.

Vicar's Report: Fr. Joe shared the following items.

- ❖ Bill Rieger moved to have the financial reports reflect that the Vicar's compensation be listed as Housing Allowance. After discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.
- ❖ Grace has had the first Lenten Series since the start of the COVID19 pandemic. Fr. Joe reported good attendance and participation.
- ❖ The Bishop's Day with vestries and mission councils is scheduled for Saturday, March 25, 2023.
- ❖ Chuck Warnick has been appointed Lay Eucharistic Minister.
- ❖ Holy Week – Services and Activities
 - Palm Sunday – April 2, Maundy Thursday – April 6, and Good Friday – April 7.
 - The Daughters of the King will have prayers and flowering of the cross Saturday in preparation for Easter Sunday.
- ❖ Fr. Joe has started work on the Annual Parochial Report.
- ❖ The 145 Anniversary of Grace Episcopal Church is May 16, 2023. Fr. Joe proposed celebrating the anniversary two days later on Ascension Day, May 18, with a 6:00 PM Eucharist followed by a dinner. Carol Martinez will share plans at our next meeting.

Senior Warden's Report: Carol Martinez

- ❖ It was noted that Sam Isbell has volunteered to help plan the next Divine Swine event. More details to follow.

Jr. Warden's Report: Bill Rieger

- ❖ Bill reported he had found one cleaning crew – Carol's Cleaner. Will Pomeroy said he had one other vendor for consideration.
- ❖ There is a large hole in the exterior Sacristy door that needs immediate attention. If the wood is questionable, a new door may be needed.
- ❖ The City of Spring Hill requires a security alarm permit for residential and commercial users.

Liaison Reports: Carol Martinez stressed the need to recruit members for service to these ministries.

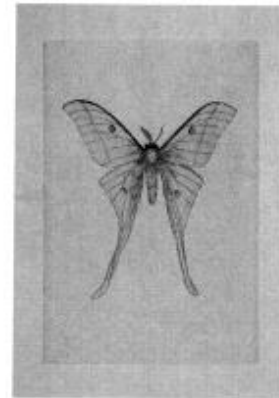
- ❖ Children's Ministry – Will Pomeroy
 - There will be no Children's Church for Easter Sunday. For Palm Sunday, the children will

process into the church and then go to Children's Church.

- ❖ Communications – Peggy Roberts
 - The Diocese will be offering Anti-Racism Training as a single-attendance day. Classes will be offered on April 22, May 20, August 22, and November 4.
 - James is updating the report of activity on Facebook.
 - Work is near completion on the Member Directory.
- ❖ Community Outreach – Charles Cochran
 - Spring Hill Fire Department has asked for a donation to support fire safety for children. Fr. Joe will send a check from his Discretionary Fund.
 - Grace donated 255.5 pounds of food year-to-date as of February.
- ❖ Congregational Life – Robert Chapman
 - The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was an immense success.
 - Plans will be made for the Fifth Sunday of the Brunch, April 30.

Next Mission Council Meetings: May 24

Chuck Warnick, Scribe



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

Carol Martinez, Senior Warden
Bill Rieger, Junior Warden
David Thomas, Treasurer
Robert Chapman, Congregational Life
Charles Cochran, Community Outreach
Peggy Roberts, Communications
Will Pomeroy, Christian Education & Children's
Ministry
Charles Warnick, Scribe

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