

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: Carol Martinez, John Harvey, and Peggy Roberts. *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.*

Dec. 21 St. Thomas the Apostle
 Dec. 24 6:00 p.m. Christmas Service
 Dec. 25 Christmas Day
 Dec. 26 1st Sunday after Christmas
 January 1 Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus

Services and Continuing Events

Sun.	10 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
Sun.	10 a.m.	Facebook Live Service
Mon.	(Paused)	Creative Mondays, Faith Hall, 2nd & 4th weeks
Tues. & Fri.	7 p.m.	AA Meeting
Wed.	11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	Father Joe, Office hours
Wed.	12:00 Noon	Holy Eucharist

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Events and Dates of Notes

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

Nov. 25	Thanksgiving Day
Nov. 28	The First Sunday of Advent
Nov. 30	St. Andrew the Apostle
Dec. 1	Wed. Noon Eucharist w. Healing

The Vicar's Vagaries:

Loving the Lord With All Your Mind

Some of my earliest memories are of my father telling me stories before going to bed, and my mother reading stories to me and my brother. Dad told me and my older brother wonderful stories of Greek myths and of imagined hunting adventures. (I don't remember him ever telling me a Bible story!) Mom (who read like mad but never finished college) read us books by Edith Nesbit (*The Book of Dragons*), Ernest Thompson Seton (*Wild Animals I Have Known*, *The Biography of a Grizzly*) and Rudyard Kipling (*The Jungle Book*), among others. To me as a young child, reading was synonymous with being loved and sharing the wonder of living in a family. One of the striking events of my life was when my mother read me the Book of Job when I had a series of earaches at the age of eight. How did she get that idea? It seems so strange to me now...yet it changed me forever.

When I got a little older, my brother's collection of books dazzled my imagination, and it was not long before I read (or tried to read) his favorite books. I loved Tarzan books and J.R.R. Tolkien because my brother conveyed his enthusiasm to me.

Years later, books were an essential aspect of courting my wife. *Brideshead Revisited*, by Evelyn Waugh, may have been the first gift I ever gave her, along with a pint of rum raisin ice cream. Still later, one way I loved my sons was by reading to them when they went to bed every night in their childhood. Now, many years later, I am still reading books as part of experiencing the love of family; but

now, I realize that reading is more than entertainment and escape. It can also be a way of loving the Lord my God with all my heart and with all my mind.

My father was a great devotee of Civil War history. I devoted September 2019 through December 2020 to reading the three volumes of Shelby Foote's *The Civil War*. That was a transformative experience. I can't drive anywhere in Tennessee without remembering the many battles fought, the heroism of both sides, and the precious lives tragically lost. And most of those who fought and suffered were our fellow Christians.

But I was not through with the Civil War at the end of 2020. My son Paschall gave me for Christmas last year *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*, by David Blight. That was the perfect book to read next. It took me six months, but it was worth it. This book gave me a complete course in the parts of American history I never learned in school; and it is the perfect balance to the hero worship I learned as a child for such leaders as Bedford Forrest and Robert E. Lee. This book also taught me that without voting rights, people cannot be free; and I learned that black people were prevented from voting for much of the time *since* the Civil War. I had thought the slaves had been freed, but if they couldn't vote, they could still be held in a type of bondage, and they did not have their full constitutional and human rights as American citizens. This was done by Christians, to Christians.

My next book was one I had given my wife: *The Soul of America*, by Jon Meacham. She had told me countless times as she read the book, "You have to read this book!" It's hard to make a brief comment about this one---but I will say that it gave me hope for our country through the very dark parts of 2021. I find it to be a balanced and clear compendium of stories about our country's history which I was not taught in school, and you may not have been, either.

I am out of time and space, though I have about six books left to tell you about. Maybe I will write about these another time. For now, I want to encourage you to read books that will challenge you to learn things you have not learned about before.

The last few years have taught us at least this: that our current problems and difficulties are part of a very long story of the fall of man. For us to labor on the side of the angels in the struggles that we will face in the next few years, we need to be willing to stretch beyond what we already think we know.

A happy and blessed Thanksgiving to all. I hope you have a chance to take a bit of time out to read, and to give thanks for your mind and the interests God has given you.

Father Joe

December Is Coming

It seems impossible that we are over halfway through November and Thanksgiving will have come and gone in short order. I suppose the falling leaves and some crisp mornings should have been a tipoff. At any rate, December will soon be here, and the holiday season will kick into full gear. One of the holiday events to take place is the *Maury Christmas Historic Home Tour*, which will take place Friday and Saturday, December 3-4, from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. This event started in 1951 as the "Majestic Middle Tennessee Tour of Homes" and has evolved over the years into its present format held the first weekend in December. The tour headquarters is the Athenaeum, found at 808 Athenaeum Street, Columbia, TN 38401, and the tour sponsor is the Maury County Association for the Preservation of Tennessee Antiquities, who owns and operates the Athenaeum. Proceeds go to the maintenance and operation of the historic site. The 2021 tour consists of nine historic homes in Columbia and Spring Hill. In addition, First Presbyterian Church in Columbia and our own Grace Episcopal Church are included. For more information, including tickets sales, go to maurychristmas.org.

If anyone is interested in helping at Grace in a pre-tour spruce up, either Friday or Saturday during the tour, please give me a call.

Just a week later, on Saturday, December 11, after being canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic, the *Spring Hill Christmas Parade* returns. Sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Spring Hill/Thompson's Station, the theme for this year's event is "Sounds

of the Season,” The parade will start at 5:00 p.m. and takes a different route this year. Line up begins at 3:00 p.m. at Evans Park. It will then turn onto Beechcroft Road and travel east to the starting point at the intersection of Beechcroft and Main Street, traveling south on Main Street to finish just south of Spring Hill Elementary School. For more information, please see this website: www.springhillkiwanis.com/2021parade.

This is a wonderful opportunity to show our community we are indeed a functioning congregation. Thanks to Lynn Rieger for volunteering to take the point. Due to COVID, things will be a bit different, with no crowded indoor activities. Not to worry, as I am confident Lynn will produce innovative and safe ways to greet our neighbors. I suspect she will be recruiting some helpers, so now is your chance to become involved. Just raise your hand!

Christ’s Peace,
John Harvey, Sr. Warden

Altar Guild Holiday Update

It is hard to believe that the season of Advent is upon us. The weather is finally cooling off, the leaves are turning colors and falling, and soon we will be scurrying about gathering presents for our family and friends. And of course, we will be wondering if we can all get together this year. During the past two years of Covid stress we have all suffered from separation anxiety and a feeling of not being free to go about our lives though it does appear that we are freer now.

All through these past two years the Altar Guild has silently, faithfully, and lovingly gone to church each week and setup for the Eucharist whether that be online only or in person. We usually work alone in the quiet of our beautiful sanctuary. Personally, I love that time. I can pray and think about things, and it makes me feel closer to God. I feel as if I am contributing to not only everyone who takes Communion but doing something so vital for our worship.

I would like to express to our ladies of the Altar Guild a very sincere “thank you” and let them know how much I appreciate them. Unfortunately, two or

our members must be off duty for a while, one due to work pressures and the other to an injury. Since there are only five of us, this leaves us needing help. At this time, I am asking that help from anyone who would like to join us either temporarily or permanently. We would be happy to have you join us. My contact information is below.

Regarding Advent, we will be decorating as usual with poinsettias. We would be grateful to anyone for a contribution to the Poinsettia Fund. Any donation will be appreciated. Please make checks payable to Grace Episcopal Church with “Poinsettia Fund” in the memo area. You can give your check in the offering plate, to a Mission Council Member or mail it to me at the address below. I thank everyone in advance. Also, if you would like to give in memory of a loved one or friend, please let Karyl Beal (who does our weekly bulletin) know of this dedication either by email or mail. Her contact information is: *Karyl Beal, 703 Clay Court, Spring Hill, TN 37174*, karylofcolumbia@cs.com.

Please do not send her money but only your dedication information. She needs it by December 18 for the Christmas Eve bulletin.

The Altar Guild appreciates you all and we wish for you a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas! Linda Colmore, 1111 Mooresville Pike, Columbia, TN 38401, 615-403-7498 (*Please leave a message*), lcolmore@aol.com.

Homeschooling and Hymns

Homeschooling is a big topic right now—whether you have always tutored your children at home, or you are supervising them as they attend school virtually.

How is instructing children at home connected to hymns? Good question! One of the most gifted hymn writers was Charles Wesley. Hymns that inspire us today such as “O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing My Great Redeemer’s Praise,” “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus,” “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” “Christ the Lord is Risen Today,” were written by him. Hymnologists say that he wrote thousands in his lifetime.

Charles and his brother John (who founded Methodism) and their siblings were homeschooled

by their mother, Susanna Annesley Wesley. She was very well-educated and deeply spiritual, giving her children a solid foundation. Included in their daily studies of languages, science, and math, they sang Psalms, read the Bible, and learned theology.

Of the nineteen children in the family, ten survived into adulthood. Of necessity, Susanna was a very organized mother. She wrote her own teaching method books. She had a list of about twenty rules for her children, and the top three were to Love God, to Work Hard, and to Cry Softly!

Her teaching continued after her children were grown. Many of her letters to her adult children are theological treatises, sharing what she had learned through decades of her own study and prayer.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about Susanna Wesley. If you would like to find out more details, there are many websites you can find through Google. I encourage you to do a search and get to know her better!

(This article originally appeared in Grace Notes in September 2020.)

Deanie Moore

“What is this Realm They are Talking About?”

Realm is a member database and accounting program that aids in church administration, accounting, and community management. This program has multiple security layers for member information, financial transactions, and registration payments. Grace Episcopal Church has been using Realm since 2012 after it was introduced to us by the Diocese as the program that would be the best choice for us (as well as several Episcopal churches in the area) to utilize. Since initializing the program, there have been many changes in how we use the different options provided. The most utilized components of the program are the member database and the accounting program.

I maintain the member database regularly in order to keep an accurate directory of members and former members. In order to keep the database, I will from time to time ask for information from members, i.e., dates of birth, anniversaries, and new contact information. So, if you move, get married, or change phone numbers, please remember to

contact me so we can keep your information up to date. We are also able to send out email announcements to all members via this database, so it is very important that we have your correct email address.

The accounting program will monitor our bank accounts, pay bills, supply financial statements, keep an accurate accounting of member contributions (stewardship and gifts) as well as provide quarterly giving statements to Grace members.

Susan Browning

Grace Finances October 2021

As we finished another nail-biting chapter of the 2021 thriller, October was more promising. Our revenue for the month matched expenses, with only a \$353 deficit. This was particularly refreshing after three months of larger deficits.

We have been able to cut back on expenses a bit, this year and last. We are spending less on payroll beginning in 2020 and the telephone/internet expense early in 2021. Still for 2021 as of Oct. 31, we are \$9,149 short of covering operating costs. This shortage was supported by several transfers from the undesignated funds in savings.

This deficit is primarily related to the pandemic-reduced attendance. Grace has been blessed because our pledging members have met or exceeded their commitment. Sadly, some of our pledging members moved away this year. We can expect a greater shortfall in 2022, in the absence of increased commitment from members, or new members.

As of Oct. 31, our balances for the month are as follows:

Total contributions:	\$ 7,409.00
Total expenses:	\$7,761.97

First Horizon checking balance:	\$812.78
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First Horizon savings balance:	\$55,264.73
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Our savings account total breaks down as follows:

Organ fund:	\$23,500.00
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Building fund:	\$20,650.00
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Undesignated funds:	\$11,117.97
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Total assets October 31, 2021:	\$56,077.51
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David Thomas, Treasurer

Trucker's Kindness

I am certain we can all remember when COVID was so very challenging last year, Father Joe's family was going through some difficult pandemic times, and then he wrecked his car going back to Nashville after worship on a miserable Sunday afternoon. A very kind trucker seeing him trying to hike back to Nashville, picked him up and then drove out of his way to deliver Father Joe all the way home explaining he tried to do three acts of kindness each week, and Father was lucky enough to be one of the beneficiaries. The caring trucker kept track of his weekly "kindness" successes with just three quarters.

That all seemed so simple in a hurried trucker's life that I just knew anyone could do that. Dick and I talked and decided if an "over the road" trucker could help three people a week two of us could certainly do five a week? So since last year we have five quarters on our dresser on Monday morning and a brass bowl nearby, as constant reminders to reach out to people that might need kindness or our help. Sometimes it takes such little effort, but it always feels so good inside. Examples of our efforts might be:

- Sending a card.
- Phone call to someone we miss.
- Buying coffee for the person behind us in the Panera line.
- Help someone carrying a heavy load.
- Extra tips in the tip jar.
- Buying diapers for a young mother with a newborn.
- Taking food to The Well each week.
- Care package to a granddaughter in college.
- Small balloons on Mother's Day to our neighbors.
- Allowing someone to go before you in traffic or in line.
- On a rainy day we bought a small tarp and bungee cords for a fast food worker with a Miata filling with water because of it didn't have a top. (Boy, were we disappointed when she drove away in the rain before we could get back).

The very greatest thing about this superb example of "Trucker Kindness" is it makes Dick and me constantly aware of the people around us and for whom we might make things easier. If I am honest though, there are times we get to Friday and there are still four quarters that haven't made it in the bowl. Even then, kindness can come in holding a door for someone, sending cards, notes and making telephone calls. There are always ways to move those quarters and it feels so good!

Peggy Roberts

Mission Council Meeting

Grace Church Mission Council met November 17, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. David Thomas, Treasurer, said Grace has had a rough few months. Susan Browning informed David the stewardship pledge cards are now available online. October financial numbers are improved, but a transfer of \$2,000 was still necessary. Shortfall for 2021 is \$11,500, but we are hopeful Christmas, and the end of 2021 fiscal year will improve the deficit. Father Joe said Susan Austin will speak on Stewardship during this Sunday's worship. The Diocesan Convention will be held January 21 and 22 at St. George's. Two delegates attending this year will be Carol Martinez and Diann Schneider, and one alternative will also be chosen. Grace will have a Christmas Eve worship this year, December 24 at 6:00 p.m. Father said he will be taking December 26 off, and Father Sandy Herrmann will be the supply priest. Father expects to take off January 2 also. Sr. Warden, John Harvey, said Carol Martinez has agreed to be nominated for Mission Council 2022. Les Bennett said he will not be available to serve next year, and other members were suggested. John reminded the council that the Maury Christmas Historic Home Tour will be held the weekend of December 3 and 4th and Alicia Fitts will be the lead person. The Spring Hill Christmas Parade will be December 11, 4:00-6:00 p.m., Lynn Reiger will be the Grace lead person, and the parade will begin in Evans Park and proceed to the Beechcroft and Main intersection. It will continue south on Main and end at the Spring Hill Elementary School. Susan Austin thanked Lynn Rieger, Laurie McNutt, and the Altar Guild

for their work cleaning the Church and Faith Hall. Susan Austin requested help raking fall leaves around the church. She is also open to help putting the Christmas garland on the fence before the parade December 11.

- *Communications:* Will Pomeroy mentioned a coworker who expressed interest in Grace Church. He agreed to invite him to attend and to contact the vicar if he would like.
- *Congregational Life:* Laurie McNutt and The Daughters of The King visited the Nashville Thistle Farms' gift shop and restaurant. Thistle Farms employs and benefits women survivors of trafficking, prostitution, and addiction. Laurie said there is damage to the new floor in Faith Hall caused by movement of the metal chairs. Susan Austin will contact the flooring company concerning the damage.
- *Community Outreach:* Les Bennett did not receive a call back about the Grace Christmas project for The Center of Hope. He and John Harvey will visit the Center next week. Members will be notified by email about projects due to Christmas time constraints.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 and the next meeting will be December 15, 6:30 p.m. Father Joe closed the meeting with a blessing. Peggy Roberts and Father Joe.

The Rev. Joseph N. Davis, Vicar
Deanie Moore, Director of Music
Susan Browning, Financial Administrator

The Mission Council

John Harvey, Senior Warden
Susan Austin, Junior Warden
David Thomas, Treasurer
Laurie McNutt, Congregation Life
Les Bennett, Community Outreach
Will Pomeroy, Communications
Diann Schneider, Christian Education

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

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



Clergy and Staff

The R. Rev. Dr. John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop