

Grace Episcopal Church
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Grace Notes

Volume III, Issue 12
August 2020

Grace Notes is the monthly newsletter for Grace Episcopal Church in Spring Hill. It is emailed or mailed to members and friends of the church and given to visitors and interested individuals. If you would like to contribute an article or comment, please reach out to a member of the Grace Notes committee: Carol Martinez, Pat Mayo, John Harvey, Ed Strong, 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.*

Events and Dates of Notes

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

Aug. 15	St. Mary, Virgin
Aug. 24	St. Bartholomew the Apostle
Sept. 14	Holy Cross Day
Sept. 21	St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist
Sept. 29	St. Michael and All Angels

Services and Continuing Events

Sun. at 10 a.m.	In-person service at Grace; e-mail Susan Austin, sjanawicz@aol.com , to reserve physical distancing seating.
Sun. at 10 a.m.	Online Eucharist via Facebook Live
Sun. at 11 a.m.	Coffee Hour via Zoom Live
Tues. at 10 a.m.	Bible Study via Zoom
Tues. & Fri.	AA Meeting, 7 p.m.

The following services and events will resume after the statewide quarantine changes:

Sundays at 8 and 10:00 a.m.,	Holy Eucharist (Children's Church at 10 a.m.)
(Class for children age 9 and above,	Third Sunday of each month, 9:30 to 10 a.m.)
Wed. Noon	Holy Eucharist & Healing, Rite II
2 nd & 4 th Mon.	Creative Monday, 1 to 3 p.m.

Vicar's Vagaries

August 15, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

A Sermon Sidebar: When I work on my sermons, I write them in longhand on a yellow lined pad. I try to bring my thoughts to a conclusion that might work in a sermon and leave the pad alone for a while. When I come back to it, I may develop a new thought somewhere in the middle of the sermon. I guess this would be called a sidebar. Usually, I leave out the sidebars, but I tell myself, "Maybe I can use this another time."

Last week, I wrote a complete sidebar down the left-hand margin of a page. It was about a conversation Jesus and the Pharisees had just before our gospel for last Sunday began. The text is Matthew 15:1-9. It is about how you can go through the right motions to appear perfectly pious or virtuous, and yet your heart can be far from God. Jesus quotes Isaiah saying, "This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines." (15:8-9).

Jesus mentions the practice of declaring something of value to be "korban," or dedicated to the Temple, so that one is not obligated to use the value of this item for the support of his or her parents. Jesus cuts through the abuse of this rule by citing the fundamental divine law, "Honor your father and mother." Evidently, people had been avoiding their obligations to care for their aging parents by declaring portions of their wealth to be "korban," or dedicated to a higher purpose, something more important than caring for their parents. To Jesus, this is hardly realistic. They rationalize their deeds and tell their parents, "Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God." How could such an action please God? What is more important than honoring your father and mother?

More questions came my way. What do we owe to God? And what do we owe our parents, or any of the people we love? Money? Time? Service? Attention?

The last time I had seen my father, I noticed he needed my help with shaving. Though he has good people to help him, no one is quite as meticulous about his shaving as I am. I had things I needed to do for work, so I began calculating how I might plan my visit for early the next week. Then I read this passage. I had that feeling I get when I know our Lord is talking to

me. It's not a good feeling, especially when I can tell he thinks I am acting like the Pharisees who oppose him in a debate.

I say, "I have a lot to do to get ready for Sunday."

He says, "You're telling me, and on a Friday? Tell me this. Were you able to get your exercise and watch your shows last week?"

I have to say, "Well, yes, I was."

He asks, "How many meals have you missed? Have you gone hungry? And sleep. Did you stay up late or rise before the sun to take care of all those obligations?"

"No, I haven't missed any meals, and I have slept well."

He pauses and says, "So what do *you* think you ought to do?"

I pick up my phone and say, "I'll just give him a call and tell him I'll be over in a few minutes."

He says, "Umm Hmmm."

Soon, I am at Dad's house, where he sits at the breakfast room table, slowly working on a small bowl of popcorn while Coco Gauf plays tennis on the little television across the room. He switched it over to the Tennis Channel when I told him about the match before I left home. I am glad to see that he finished breakfast a while ago. It's about 3:20 p.m.

I tell him I have come to help him shave, and he looks at me with this puzzled look on his face. Soon, we have him in the bathroom, a towel around his neck, and I am holding his new bright blue electric razor that I got him about a year ago. We start to work on his beard. Soon he gets into it himself. He can tell what needs to be done. I switch to the clipper function to work on other parts of the job. When we are done, I feel his chin and say, "Your face is so nice and smooth, like a baby's bottom. Just feel that!" And he does.

We make our way back to the breakfast room for a little more tennis and conversation. As often happens, he asks if I ever play tennis anymore. "I sure do. Usually, three times a week, when I can." As always, he asks if I will help gather the whole family so he can take us all out to dinner at his favorite place to eat. Once again, I remind him how the pandemic makes it unsafe for us to do that right now. When I get up to leave, I stand by his chair with my hand on his back and tell him I love him. He says, "I love you too. Come as often as you can. I am lucky to have you for a son."

I tell him, "That's about the sweetest thing anyone has ever said to me."

In the car on the way home, I wonder why I was thinking I had other things I needed to do that were so important. I can just see our Lord, sitting wherever he

sits when we have these talks, with that wry look on his face. I tell him, "Thank you for getting me there."

He just nods and says, "Umm hmm."

Faithfully, Father Joe

Praise the Creator with Song

Psalm 148 is the basis for the poem "All Creatures of Our God and King," which was written by Francis of Assisi. Written in 1225 Francis' poem was not translated and paraphrased into English until 1919 by Rev. William H. Draper, who wanted to use it for a children's worship festival in Leeds, England.

Since we have all been under quarantine, we have had the time to see and listen to nature as it praises God all around us. Tom and I had a few days when our AC wasn't working, so our windows were open to birds singing during the day, and the serenades of frogs and insects at night. I had forgotten how soothing it was, even with the heat and humidity!

Scientists have catalogued more than 5,000 species of singing animals, from tiny insects to whales. Many animals have the capacity to learn songs, improvise melodies, and compose new turns. A species known at the New Guinea Singing Dog sounds as if it is harmonizing with its pack mates!

We have been created to praise our Creator, along with the burning sun, the sliver moon, rushing wind and clouds, the lights of evening, flowing water, and fire.

*"Let all things their Creator bless, and worship
Him in humbleness,
O praise Him! Alleluia!
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
And praise the Spirit, Three in One!
O praise Him, O praise Him!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"*

By Deanie Moore

You Don't Have to Go to Church to Go to Heaven

The Covid-19 pandemic we are living in at this time seems to have caused a novel approach to daily life for most of us. We may feel confused, lost, alone, anxious, depressed, or stressed. Watching the news can disturb us, but not knowing what is going on can be even more upsetting. Feelings of safety and security may elude us.

Unfortunately, there is a problem for those of us who want to attend church. In Tennessee, religious leaders have been told to not open their doors to everyone as they have always done. The Episcopal Church has

issued strict guidelines to help minimize the spread of the virus among church members. The social changes that have been forced upon us seem to increase the awareness of isolation in our lives rather than reduce it.

The new guidelines designed to keep us safe physically seem to be taking us away from a place that offers us spiritual comfort, spiritual connection, and spiritual peace.

The key word in the sentence above, however, is “seem.” When churches were first put on the list of places where we should avoid congregating, we may not have immediately recognized that today, we can connect within a sphere that goes beyond the walls of a building. The reality is that in the year 2020, thanks to the Internet and amazing technology, there are other options to help us connect and congregate.

Father Joe and his talented helpers have worked out the details so that we can hold church services that are transmitted directly into our homes via the Internet. We can attend these services while we sit in our living rooms, kitchens, offices, or even patios. We can attend services and feel the collective spirit of all the others who are attending with us – both in person and online.

For those of you who have not attended actual church services recently or who have not joined us online, I have compiled two lists to help you see the differences and similarities.

During the Pandemic, attending the service in person:

- You put on decent clothes and fix your hair.
- You drive to the church, find a parking place, and walk into the building quietly, wearing your face mask or face shield.
- As you enter the building, you pick up a paper bulletin with the outline of the service.
- You find a place to sit in an area that is designated safely distant from others.
- You kneel or nod your head in reverence to the cross before you take a seat. Then you kneel on the kneeling rail and pray. During the service, you kneel for prayer, sit for instruction, and stand to praise.
- You watch and listen to Father Joe and the readers as you follow along in the prayer book. You participate in responsive readings.
- You listen to the sermon. Then, you pray with Father Joe as he prepares Holy Communion.
- Father Joe walks down the aisle carrying a muffin tin holding the consecrated bread so people who are present can carefully pick up a host when he reaches them.
- During the service, you listen to music or sing along mentally.

- You wish peace to other people by nodding your head or waving at them.
- You watch the volunteers ring the bell at the end of the service, and you may speak to Father Joe outside as you leave the church.
- Attendees may socialize a little while in the parking lot after the service. (Those who leave and get home quickly may then log on to the Internet and join the Virtual coffee hour.)
- During the Pandemic, watching the service via the Internet (FaceBook Live):
- You wear anything you want to participate in the church service – even your jammies or your bikini - since no one can see you anyway.
- You sit down in a comfortable chair and turn on the computer. After you connect to the Internet, you pull up FaceBook, check your own FaceBook page, and then go to the GraceChurchSH page.
- You pull up the link to the bulletin – a pdf file. You also pick up your prayer book so it will be ready. (Or you can just plan to listen without following along in the prayer book.)
- You watch for the video to appear on the screen with “Live” written at the top, and you make sure your speaker is turned on.
- You type a comment so others will know that you are present.
- You follow the bulletin and prayer book during the service. You watch and listen to Father Joe and the readers, responding at appropriate times.
- During the service, you listen to the music - or you may sing along as loudly as you would like. (Note: The bulletin includes links to click to take you the words of the songs.)
- You can also cuddle with your kitty or doggy during the service since they may enjoy attending with you.
- After Father Joe has consecrated the bread and wine, you watch him walk down the aisle and offer the bread to the people who are physically present during the service.
- During the peace, you may type “Peace” (or something similar) in the comment box.
- Optional: You may join the others in the Zoom room for the virtual coffee hour that follows the service.
- We encourage you to embrace the options offered so you can connect with the congregation of Grace Episcopal Church in Spring Hill on Sunday morning, even if the world around you seems to be uncertain.

To quote Vinton and Mama from the old television series “Mama’s Family”. *Vinton*: “Now Mama, you

don't have to go to church to go to heaven". *Mama*: "Well, you don't have to wear a parachute to jump out of an airplane either, but it certainly helps".

By Karyl Chastain Beal

Financial Update July 2020

We had a particularly good July. Our expenses included the support for Susan Browning upon the passing of her brother. She remains in our prayers. The church provided \$800 to support funeral expenses. Including what has been contributed in August so far, we have had contributions toward that expense in the amount of \$655. There is still time to add to the effort either through on-line giving (using the drop-down tab for special offering) or through checks, noted for this purpose.

July Financial Summary

Income:	\$9,498
Anticipated Giving:	\$1,000
Total Income:	\$10,498
Expenses:	<u>\$9,587</u>
Diff:	\$911

You will note a new line in our summary for anticipated giving. We have some giving that is received in lump sums. We have enough history to be confident that this giving will be received by the end of the year. To give a realistic picture of where we stand, it seems reasonable to include it even though we do not have it in hand yet.

We remain in a solid cash position through the generous support of a loving congregation. Please keep Grace Church in your prayers as all of us go through these trying times.

Ed Strong, Treasurer

Technical Notes

We have added a "Technical Support" page to our Web site with instructions for installing the Facebook app on common devices. This may be helpful to anyone interested in joining our Facebook group. Additional instructions and demos will be added as needed. The address for that page is:

<https://graceepiscopalspringhill.org/2020/08/10/technical-support-page/>

Streaming of our Sunday services has moved from our now-defunct Facebook page to our Facebook discussion group. Please join our group if you have not

done so already. The link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/167751256593068/>

James Dallas

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

John Harvey, Senior Warden
Susan Austin, Junior Warden
Jessica Farmer, Congregational Life
Mark Henderson, Communications
Richard Hawarah, Community Outreach
Diann Schneider, Christian Education
Ed Strong, Treasurer
David Thomas, Assistant Treasurer
Michele Gibson O'Grady, Clerk

To give to Grace Church online:

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

