

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.*

Services and Continuing Events

Sun.	10 a.m.	Holy Eucharist and 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

Dec. 24	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Service
Dec. 25		Christmas Day
Dec. 26		1 st Sunday after Christmas
Jan. 1		Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus
Jan. 5		No Eucharist this Wednesday
Jan. 6	Noon, Thur.	Epiphany Eucharist
Jan. 9		First Sunday after the Epiphany: The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Jan. 9		Grace Episcopal Annual Meeting following the 10:00 a.m. service.
Jan. 18		Confession of St. Peter the Apostle
Jan. 22-23		189th Convention of the Diocese of TN
Jan. 25		Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle

Jan. 30 Bishop John Bauerschmidt visits Grace
 Feb. 2 Presentation of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Vicar's Vagaries:

Christmas Season and In the New Year

A blessed end of Advent to all of you, and a very merry Christmas!

Our Christmas service will be at 6:00 p.m. As the procession comes into the church, we will sing "O Come All Ye Faithful," and the Baby Jesus will be placed in the creche. From that moment on, we will celebrate together the first Christ Mass of the season. The first day of Christmas will have begun. It will be Christmas Season for twelve days, right up until the Eve of Epiphany, called "Twelfth Night" in some places.

The next two Sundays are both within the Christmas Season. The Church continues to celebrate the birth of Jesus into our world and the implications of his incarnation. The Feast of the Holy Name is the day on which Jesus was circumcised, showing his obedience to the law of the Jews. It is also the day when he was given his name officially—Jesus, a Greek form of Yashua, meaning God saves his people.

We will not have a celebration of the Eucharist on Wednesday, December 29. We will make an exception in the next week by having our weekday celebration of the Eucharist on Thursday, January 6 at noon for the Feast of the Epiphany instead of on Wednesday that week, since Epiphany is not a movable feast.

On Sunday the 9th, the Feast of the Baptism of Christ, we will get in the swing of the New Year by holding our **annual congregational meeting** after the 10:00 Eucharist. Carol Martinez and Charles Cochran have accepted nomination to the mission council. Ministry leaders will make reports, and the senior warden and the vicar make their addresses at

that time. This will be the last congregational meeting in the mission council terms of Les Bennett and John Harvey. We appreciate how Les stepped up and fulfilled an unexpired term for a person who had to resign earlier this year from the council. And all of us are most grateful to John Harvey for his four years of faithful service as senior warden. He will be missed, but new leaders will be just waiting to step into leadership for Grace Church.

The Diocesan Convention will be held at St. George's Church, Nashville on Friday and Saturday, January 21-22. Diann Schneider and Carol Martinez are our delegates to the convention this year.

We conclude the eventful first month of the year with Bishop Bauerschmidt's visitation to Grace Church. Bishop John will preach and celebrate at the 10:00 service. We are not clear about the situation with Covid 19, so we will update you later on whether there will be any kind of reception after the service.

By that time, we will be well launched into our New Year. May God bless us all as we end this year that has been so difficult for many, and may God lead us through the winter of 2022 into a beautiful safe and healthy spring.

Father Joe

My Stewardship Talk: Laurie McNutt

My first visit to Grace was on Easter Sunday, April 2019. I had just moved from Florida to Columbia, TN the day before. I had lost my husband in January of that year and decided to move to Tennessee to be nearer my daughter who lives in Linden and my granddaughter who lives in Nashville. I picked Columbia because it was somewhere in between. I went online looking for Episcopal churches in Columbia and found St. Peter's, so I thought that would be my new church home. But my daughter told me that she had driven by Grace Church in Spring Hill and thought I would like it because it looked a lot like our church in Florida, which was Holy Comforter in Crescent City. Holy Comforter is about half the size of Grace. It was built in 1878 in the same Carpenter

Gothic architectural style as Grace. So, my daughter and I visited Grace that Easter morning.

Everyone was so gracious, so friendly, and so welcoming, especially Richard and Marsha Hawarah. They took me under their wing. One visit to Grace was all it took for me to forget about St. Peter's.

Before Florida, I lived in Houston for forty-two years and attended several different churches. Most of them were medium-sized churches, and I didn't get really involved in many church activities. I always dreaded stewardship campaigns because I knew I wasn't giving as much as I should. So, I came up with a plan that eventually worked for me. First, I did the math to see exactly what percentage of my income I was giving; and I was embarrassed! So, I decided to increase my giving by one percent every month until I reached 10%.

I was glad I had dealt with this problem before 2001, when I remarried and my new husband, Dan, was a life-long tither. He said his mama had taught him as a little boy that he must give 10% of his \$1,000 allowance to Sunday School. He lived by that teaching all of his life.

Our church in Florida was the first really small church I had attended, and it was the first time I felt really needed in a church. I feel needed here at Grace, and I hope that you do, too, because in a small church we are all truly needed.

Another thing that is helping me increase my giving is learning about the "required minimum distribution" of my IRA. If you are seventy and a half years old, you must withdraw a certain amount from your IRA every year. I knew that, but I didn't know until recently that you can donate any or all of that amount to your church or other qualifying charity, and you don't have to pay federal income taxes on the donated amount. Although, the way our government is spending, the government needs the money more than our church does, but we won't go there! The donation must be sent directly from the financial institution to the charity, so you need to meet with your financial advisor to set this up. You must be seventy and a half years old to take advantage of this plan, so maybe you young folks have something to look forward to!

Daughters of Grace, The Order of
The Daughters of the King

Father Joe installed our DOK officers on November 21, 2021-- Sheila Flynn, President and Lynn Rieger, Vice President.

Our small chapter is dedicated to living out our vows of prayer, service, and evangelization. Here are some of the ways we are doing that:

- Laurie McNutt is on Mission Council, an Altar Guild member, and more.
- Carolyn Warnick sends out greeting cards and prayer grams.
- Lynn Rieger is the long-standing leader of Children's Church and is active in many other areas at Grace.
- Sheila Flynn is on the Garden Committee to help keep our landscape seasonally and helps in other areas of church.

Some of the activities we have been involved in include:

- A trip to Thistle Farms in Nashville to support their work of supplying a path for physical, mental, and economic freedom for women survivors. We went to Thistle Farms in November to do some Christmas shopping and have lunch.
- We visited church member Bernice Haug at NHC in Columbia on December 5. We had a nice visit and promised Bernice a return visit and phone calls in the interim. We told her of Fr. Joe's prayers for her; she was delighted and said, "I love Fr. Joe."
- Lynn and Laurie along with Altar Guild members cleaned the sacristy and other areas of the church.
- Lynn and others helped decorate Grace for Christmas and the Home Tours.

Sheila and Laurie planted tulip, daffodil, and hyacinth bulbs along with a few annuals and trimmed some shrubs.

Sheila sends out prayer request texts to members and reaches out to those for whom we are praying. Our December meeting will be at Sheila's home for fellowship and a potluck.

We will start a book study in January. *The Way of Love – A Practical Guide to Following Jesus* by Scott Gunn, foreword by Michael B. Curry.

We are in planning stages of a quiet Saturday morning (in February) at Grace to talk about Episcopal prayer beads. This might be a parish project of praying with these beads. We'd like to present various prayers to pray on the beads, some history of the beads, and making beads with those who are interested. It is our hope that we, the Grace community, commit to praying at home during the forty days of Lent, which might create a new practice of praying with our Episcopal prayer beads.

We will also schedule with the Altar Guild a workday before Holy Week to ready the church for Easter. We plan to help out at The Well also. Laurie has already been there to volunteer.

We welcome every woman of Grace Church who feels called to The Daughters of the King to contact one of us. This is our invitation to you to do so. It is a beautiful way to serve our loving and mighty Lord.

For His Sake,
Sheila Flynn

November 2021 Treasury Report

November was not one of Grace's best months. October seemed promising after a substantial three month slump, but revenues dipped again in November. The month ended with a \$3,404 shortage in expenses covered.

2021 has been a tough year. For the first 11 months of the year, total revenues were \$79,902.65 and total expenses were \$104,371.36, for a deficit of \$24,468.71. We are fortunate to have savings allowing us to transfer \$10,500 to cover expenses.

Hopefully, December will prove a better month for us. The Stewardship Committee has found several pledges that can be completed by the end of 2021. If those are completed by year's end, that will net another \$4,397 toward balancing funds a bit more.

On a more promising notes, stewardship is doing well. We had only 32 pledges in 2021 and now have 20 for 2022. And of those committing for 2022 that pledged in 2021, most have increased their pledge.

As of November 30th, our balances for the month are as follows

Total contributions:	\$ 4,221.00
Total expenses:	\$7,925.76
First Horizon checking balance:	\$800.02
First Horizon savings balance:	\$53,265.17

Broken down, we have the following earmarked funds in savings:

Organ fund:	\$23,500.00
Building fund:	\$20,650.00
Undesignated funds:	\$9,114.93
Total assets October 31, 2021:	\$54,065.19

David Thomas, Treasurer

Mission Council Meeting

Grace Church Mission Council met December 15, 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. All Mission Council members were present, and they unanimously approved November minutes. David Thomas, Treasurer, said November was not our worst financial month this year but it was also a deficit. David transferred \$2,500 from savings this week. December may be a better month for giving as it typically has been. John has talked to Susan Abington of the Diocesan office about our “fair share” of support to the Diocese for 2022. John Harvey announced candidates for Mission Council are Carol Martinez and Charles Cochran. John also reminded members that we have adopted six families from The Well. All gifts need to be in by Monday, December 20th and will be delivered to the families on December 21 along with food donations from The Well.

Father adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The next meeting will be held January 19 at 6:30 p.m. Father Joe closed the meeting with a blessing.
Peggy Roberts

Merry Christmas to All!

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
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,](https://graceepiscopalspringhill.org/#giving)

