

Grace Episcopal Church
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Grace Notes

Volume IV, Issue 7
July 2022

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 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
Sun.	10 a.m.	Facebook Live Service
Mon.	1:00 p.m.	Creative Mondays (2 nd & 4 th Mondays)
Tues. & Fri.	7 p.m.	AA Meeting
Wed.	11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.	Father Joe, <i>Office Hours</i>
Wed.	12:00 Noon	Holy Eucharist

Newsletter Articles

Vicar's Vagaries	Pg. 1-2
God of Our Fathers	Pg. 2
Grace Hosts Three	Pg. 3
Baptisms	
Greeting Card Ministry	Pg. 3
Update from The Well	Pg. 4-5
Grace Library Returns	Pg. 5
Newcomer Newsflash	Pg. 5
Treasurer's Report	Pg. 4-5
Mission Council Minutes	Pg. 5-6

Events and Dates of Note

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.

July 17	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
July 22	St. Mary Magdalene

July 25	St. James the Apostle
July 31	Blessing of Food Donations to The Well
July 31	5th Sunday Potluck Brunch (After the service; sign up)
Aug. 4	Ladies Luncheon
August 6	The Transfiguration
Aug. 15	St. Mary the Virgin
Aug. 24	St. Bartholomew the Apostle
Aug 28	Blessing of Food Donation for Well

Vicar's Vagaries

Justice, Peace, and Dignity

One of the promises we make as part of our baptismal covenant on p. 305 of the Book of Common Prayer is to "strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being." Over the years, this promise has worked on my soul. In spite of the news of disease, wars, mass shootings, arguments about abortion and life, disagreements on race matters, police shootings and use of excessive force, issues of sexuality and gender identity, and the long, perhaps impossible-to-reverse, increase in the temperature of our planet, I believe, and we say that we believe, that God created all things, and that Jesus is truly the incarnate Son who died and rose again to redeem us all from sin and death, and that we all have new life in his name. We say we believe that every single human life has worth in the eyes of God. That's what the "dignity of every human being" means.

Though these times are enough to challenge anyone's ability to keep hope, I would like to pass on to you some of my thoughts on how to respond to these times.

First, striving for justice means we are called to be fair to one another. We are not to judge other people's motives, because we can't get inside their

souls. So we give one another the benefit of the doubt. This applies to our family members, and it applies to people we hear about on the news, as well as the newscasters themselves. Striving for justice also means staying away from muck rakers, people who just stir up anger and fear without offering any positive way forward or grounding their opinions in reason and truth.

Second, we are not to be cruel to other people, not even on social media, where there are no rules and the environment seems so unreal that we may feel that we can get away with anything. We can't. Our harsh comments harm other people, and they harm us, ourselves. And when they hurt people that Jesus loves, they hurt Jesus.

Third, we are called by God to be sons and daughters of peace. We are not to stir up anger and hatred of anyone, because anger and hatred create more anger and hatred until they erupt in cruelty and violence. As sons and daughters of peace, we are to trust in the way of Jesus, who never spread hatred or anger to anyone, and who always left other people free, even those he knew were wrong and in danger.

Fourth, we are called to practice mercy. Mercy comes out of compassion. It is born in the knowledge that each person is made in the image and likeness of God and that we all have a purpose in God's universe. Mercy leads us to be kind to strangers, foreigners, and those who can't help themselves. A Christian should never heap pain and suffering upon other people, no matter who they are; for as we forgive other people, so shall we be forgiven; and if we do not treat others with kindness, why should we expect others to be kind to us when we are vulnerable and in need? But the main reason to be kind is that our Lord was kind to all, especially the poor, the sick, the outcast, and the needy.

Remember, it is within our grasp to treat others as if they were Jesus himself; and it is possible that through our acts of kindness and generosity, others may meet Jesus incarnate when and where they never expected to.

Finally, praising, loving, and knowing God is not only our duty; it is our lifeline. No matter what

befalls you or your loved ones, keep the prayers and the adoration of God going. He will outlast all temporary suffering, and he will have you with him forever because he loves you and will never abandon you. We have life in his Son, and nothing can take that away from us.

Father Joe

God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand

A favorite patriotic hymn of ours is "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand" by Daniel C. Roberts. He was born in Bridgehampton, Long Island, NY in 1876, educated at Gambier College in Ohio, and served in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was ordained in the Episcopal Church as a Priest in 1866 and served several parishes in Vermont and Massachusetts. In 1878 he began serving St. Paul Church in Concord, New Hampshire, and was there for 23 years.

While serving St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Brandon, Vermont, Fr. Roberts wrote this text for his church to sing on July 4, 1876, honoring the hundredth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. (Although originally sung to the tune RUSSIAN HYMN, the present melody is NATIONAL HYMN). It was later used as the theme hymn for celebrations of the hundredth anniversary of the adoption of the U.S. Constitution.

The tune was written in 1892 specifically for this text, by George W. Warren. A popular feature of this tune is the trumpet fanfare before each phrase.

This patriotic text keeps our focus on God. This is a God who created the universe, leads and governs his people, is our protector, and refreshes his people with divine love. We sing this hymn in order to recognize the national association we have on earth, but also to remember that the practice of true religion (stanza 3) transcends earthly loyalties and promotes our citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Deanie Moore, Music Director

Grace Hosts Three Baptisms

“N., you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ’s own forever.” BCP p.308

Baptism is a necessary sacrament in the Episcopal Church. (The other necessary sacrament is the Holy Eucharist). It is fundamental to our life in the Episcopal Church. We have been fortunate to have three recent baptisms in the church, most recently Peter Nolan Carper, Braxton Kupa’aikaika Pomeroy, and, my first grandchild, Leon Alexander Mott.

Most people consider the Baptism by Water part of the ceremony to be the crowning point. It is certainly the most memorable. It is the essence of the service. In the instant the water is administered the candidate becomes a member of Christ’s Body.

Personally, I find the beginning of the Baptismal liturgy to be exceptionally moving. I am speaking first of the Presentation and Examination of the Candidates and then the renewal of our Baptismal Covenant.

I used to take the Presentation and Examination of the Candidates at face value. The candidates are presented and we, the congregation, examine or look them over. The more I reflect, I believe the Examination works to the other definition of examination, and the candidates are literally being quizzed or tested. After all, they are asked a series of questions they must respond to. When infants and children are being baptized, it is the parents and godparents who respond. Parents and godparents must first respond that they are responsible and committed to guide the candidate through their Christian development. All candidates must correctly answer a half dozen weighty questions that crystalize the seriousness of the sacrament and begin to lay the foundation for the celebration of Baptism.

And then, adding another layer to the foundation, the Celebrant asks the congregation “Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons* in *their* life in Christ?” I find tremendous power and resonance in the witnesses’ response “We will.” For me that is the moment when the ceremony comes alive. In that moment, the candidate is connected to the people of the church, and if it wasn’t already clear, the baptism is about far more than the person being baptized. Baptism is a communal event.

From the pivotal “We will,” we quickly add to the foundation by renewing our Baptismal Covenant. The Baptismal liturgy is a masterpiece of liturgy. It is precise and deliberate in defining what Baptism is in the church. Placing the Baptismal Covenant following the “We will” is like saying to all present, “Let’s be clear about what we are talking about here.” The Baptismal Covenant is a series of affirmations and promises. It reaffirms our beliefs and also brings a daily guide for us to follow. It is at once mysterious and tangible.

Having Leon baptized into the Body of Christ at Grace was very special for our family. Baptism is a beautiful moment in anyone’s life. Now that Leon has been initiated into the family of Christ at Grace, we know that Leon has a loving and nurturing space to learn and grow as he begins his Christian life.

Bill Rieger

Greeting Card Ministry Update

Greeting cards make us feel all warm and fuzzy and special on our birthdays. Have you received a birthday card from your church family? This important ministry is managed lovingly by Carolyn Warnick, and we so appreciate her efforts. Before Carolyn so graciously agreed to take on this responsibility, Cheryl Cline had faithfully carried it out for more than 10 years. Many thanks to both of these lovely ladies!

Laurie McNutt, Congregational Life

Update from The Well Outreach

In June 2022, The Well Outreach provided 648 families in need with the gift of food. That is the organization’s biggest serving month in 14 years and is up 24 percent over June 2021 and 20 percent over May 2022.

Here is a message from the organization: “People are hurting ... rising gas and food costs are making it tough. Those with fixed income have no margin left. Please consider supporting The Well so we can support our community.” Please think of The Well each time you go to the grocery store. Think of others as part of your thanksgiving for all of God’s bounty. Are we not called to share his bounty with others?

Grace members may place their food donations in a box in Faith Hall or in a donation box at the entry to the church. Please give financial donations to

Charles Cochran or a member of the mission council.

Ways to help:

Food drive - Food is always needed.

Volunteering - The Well Outreach offers walk-up orientations at their 5306 Main St. location on Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Financial gifts - A family of four can be provided with groceries for one week for as little as \$35.

For more information on The Well, please visit springhillwell.org.

Charles Cochran, Outreach Ministry

Grace Library Returns

When you are in the new and much improved version of Faith Hall, please stop and spend some time looking at the many books that are available for you to borrow, read, and return.

One day while Susan Austin was busy painting, cleaning and putting the room in fabulous shape, Pat Mayo, Laurie McNutt and I turned our attention to putting the books back on the shelves.

The top shelf on the right side features books recommended by our own Father Joe. On the shelf when I authored this article was, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* a novel by Khaled Hosseini; *Blue Like Jazz* by Donald Miller, and three best-selling works of C.S. Lewis in one volume: *The Pilgrim's Regress*, *Christian Reflections*, and *God in the Dock*. Fr. Joe would be happy to explain why he chose these three books to recommend, if you would like to ask.

Also, the shelves hold *A Year of Thanksgivings*, the memoir of Sally Read Hicks written by Fr. Joe from over fifteen hours of interviews he conducted with her. Currently, there is an unofficial waitlist for it. (See Laurie McNutt to add your name to the list; she has the book now.) All five volumes of *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, a thorough reference work owned by Fr. Joe, are available along with Bibles, prayer books, hymnals, fiction, and nonfiction.

Books for children may be found in the children's classroom. The collection for the younger set includes the recently-published *Lord, Thanks*. It was written by Stana Snodgrass Chapman, with graphics by Robert Chapman. The couple, who are members of Grace, donated a copy of their book to the

children of Grace. Both *Lord, Thanks* and *A Year of Thanksgivings* can be bought on Amazon.com if you want to add them to your home library.

Unfortunately, at this time Grace does not have the space to grow the book collection, so we are not taking donations. If you have books that need a new home, you might want to take them to the Spring Hill Library. Some of the books are added to the library collection and other volumes are sold at the quarterly Friends of the Library Book Sale. The next book sale will take place on Saturday, July 30 at the Library, found on Kedron Road.

Happy reading to all of us who like the feel of a genuine book in our hands and relish turning the pages.

Carol Martinez, Communications

Newcomer Newsflash

Grace Episcopal continues to welcome new guests each Sunday to worship with our church family. 2022 is sure to bring an impressive number of new and potential members to worship. Current attendees at weekly Mass warmly encircle unfamiliar faces extending a personal welcome and answering any questions asked. Visitors are also given a Grace coffee mug and invited to Faith Hall to share coffee and doughnuts before going home. Father Joe stands under the maple tree outside the red door greeting all persons on their way out.

Also joining Grace Sunday worship are those members of Grace that attend online via Facebook and YouTube, and with them are added guests worshipping and often leaving comments for all to read. Last Sunday, over 50 households viewed the service. COVID has taught us new ways of sharing Jesus' message with many more people **everywhere**.

Let us all remember to be grateful for his answer to our continued prayers to spread his word. Also, if anyone would like to be a part of the Newcomers Committee, please email me at proberts000@charter.net.

Peggy Roberts

Treasury Report for May

May was another month in the black for Grace. Thankfully, we've seen increased attendance and

some regular fresh faces this year. Grace has always had a generous membership and annual pledges have held steady, but plate income makes a marked difference in our bottom line.

May brought us \$9,289.52 in revenue and \$7,667.54 in expenses. We ended the month with a positive balance of \$1,621.98. We moved nearly \$25,000 from savings over the past two years to cover operating costs. This year, the savings account has slowly increased a bit. At month's end, the total when checking and savings account balances are combined was \$60,846.63. This information is for May - the most current reporting.

Finances for May 2022 are as follows

Pledged gifts:	\$7,228.00
Plate gifts:	\$1,812.00
Special gifts:	\$149.52
Total donor gifts:	\$9,189.52
Facilities rental:	\$100.00
Total revenue:	\$9,289.52
Total expenses:	\$7,667.54
Net total:	\$1,621.98

Banking balances:

Checking balance:	\$12,579.07
Savings balance:	\$48,267.17

Breakdown of savings:

Organ fund:	\$23,500.00
Building fund:	\$20,650.00
Undesignated fund:	\$4,117.17
Interest earned:	\$0.39

Total Cash: **\$60,846.63**

David Thomas, Treasurer

Mission Council Minutes

May 18, 2022 @ 6:00p.m.

Treasurer's Report – Dave Thomas, Treasurer. Revenue exceeded expenses by \$7,548.38. Year-to-date, Revenue has exceeded Expenses by \$11,209.30. Revenue may taper off as the year progresses.

Vicar's Report – Fr. Joe Davis.

Fr. Joe has completed the 2021 Special Report of Episcopal Congregations and Missions (Parochial Report).

A scammer has attempted to defraud some of our members of their money in the name of Fr. Joe. We caught the scam in time and no one was robbed. We want everyone to know that Fr. Joe will not ask you for financial help, and he will never ask you for contributions by text or email. Contact him in case you are unsure about a request for contributions.

Senior Warden's Report – Diann Schneider

The outline for responsibilities of the Mission Council Member of the Day was reviewed by Diann Schneider and Susan Austin.

Jr. Warden's Report – Susan Austin Susan reported the following items:

* The Maury County Historical Society grant application was submitted. We asked for \$705 to repaint areas of the facility.

* The defibrillator equipment is being phased out – no replacement for attachments or repairs will be available. Susan is investigating unit replacement costs.

* The electrician replaced the large light and timer for the front exterior of the church. The light for the banner has also been repaired.

* Susan has been working with Shelia, planning for our exterior flower gardens. Special thanks for Sheila's work will be mentioned by Susan during announcements at a service soon.

Ministry Liaison Reports

Children's Ministry & Christian Education
Children's Church will resume in June. *Communications* (Carol Martinez, report given by Fr Joe in her absence.)

* The Grace Facebook group continues to grow in the number of participants and the number of views and likes.

* Karyl Beal, James Dallas, and Peggy Roberts have all contacted me (Carol) recently with ideas and suggestions for the Grace website and expressed willingness to help implement these changes.

Outreach

* The Well needs more food contributions, for the demand is growing.

Congregational Life

* Ladies Luncheon was held on May 5, 2022. Fifteen were in attendance.

* Our first potluck luncheon after church in two years was a big success. Alicia Fitts spoke on the history of Grace Church.

Old Business

* Organ Refurbishment – A task force, composed of Diann Schneider, Susan Austin, and Bill Rieger, will study, and develop a plan for moving forward on this task.

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

Diann Schneider, Senior Warden
Susan Austin, Junior Warden
David Thomas, Treasurer
Laurie McNutt, Congregation Life
Charles Cochran, Community Outreach
Carol Martinez, Communications
Will Pomeroy, Christian Education

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

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

