

Grace Episcopal Church
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Grace Notes

Volume VI, Issue 8
 August 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 & Continuing Events

Sun.	10 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10 AM	No Children's Church, (Summer Vacation)
Sun.	10 AM	Facebook Live Service
Tues. & Fri.	7:00 PM	AA Meeting
Wed.	10:00 AM	Daughters of The King (2 nd & 4 th Wed.)
	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	1:00 – 4 PM	Father Joe, Office Hrs.
Thur.	9:00 AM	Crochet Club
Thur.	9:00 AM	Men's Coffee Clutch, Grecian 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 you via email and Facebook.

Aug. 20	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
Aug. 24		St. Bartholomew, The Apostle
Aug. 27	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
Aug. 30	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	1:00 – 4:00 PM	Fr. Joe, Office Hours
Sept. 3	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
Sept. 4		Labor Day
Sept. 6	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	1:00 – 4:00 PM	Office Hours, Fr. Joe
Sept. 7	Noon	Ladies Luncheon
		TBA
Sept. 10	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
Sept. 13	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	1:00 PM	Office Hours, Fr. Joe
Sept. 17	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
Sept. 20	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	1:00 – 4:00	Office Hours, Fr. Joe
Sept. 21		St. Matthew, Apostle & Evangelist
Sept. 24	10:00 AM	Holy Eucharist
	10:00 AM	Children's Church
Sept. 27	Noon	Holy Eucharist
	1:00 PM	Office Hours, Fr. Joe
Sept. 29		St. Michael & All Angels



Vicar's Vagaries

Father Joe is taking some time off for continuing education along with a trip to the beach for relaxation. We wish you and Cindy a very enjoyable time.

The Beauty & Goodness of Flowers

I have always had a particular fondness for flowers. Growing up my family didn't have flowers in the home – they reminded my mom of death and funerals – but my grandmother grew roses, lilies of the valley, daffodils, hyacinths, and lilacs in her yard. I still recall the smell of those hyacinths, heavy and sweet, and the softness of the rose petals against my nose. When I went to a wedding for the first time around the age of 6 or 7, unlike most girls, the bride's gown wasn't what impressed me. It was the flowers! The bride and her bridesmaids got to carry all those gorgeous flowers! Then there was the flower girl, tossing flowers! And the men *wore flowers* on their jackets, there were giant sprays of them at the altar... flowers, flowers everywhere! It was a small transcendent experience of clear and true beauty for me as a child.

Later as a young woman, I worked near a small outdoor flower stand, that offered weekly specials. A nice bouquet wrapped in pretty tissue went for \$5.00! I developed the habit of “splurging” on Fridays after work, picking up one of these lovely bouquets on my way home. It was a way to celebrate the start of the weekend, and the little vase of posies added a sparkle of light, life, and color to my sparsely appointed apartment.

Upon careful examination of a flower, each stem and leaf, petal and thorn display the geometric design of our world. There are circles, spirals, triads to decads, each small evidence of the creative mind and hand of God on Earth.

In church, flowers or other live plants are present at the altar as a gift to God as a show of our love for him, and to decorate the chancel for the celebration of the Eucharist. They mark the importance of the act of the Eucharist as a special and sacred event.

In some churches, flowers are ordered weekly from professional florists. At Grace Episcopal Church, the Altar Guild members choose and arrange the chancel botanicals. Sometimes a Guild member will provide these adornments as a donation to the church, and other times they are reimbursed from the church budget. Once in a while a congregant will request a special arrangement to commemorate an event like a loved one's birthday, graduation, anniversary, or

death, and they provide funds to cover the cost of the florals.

As an Altar Guild member, I always enjoy shopping for and designing altar vases. I like to inspect and admire the leaves and blooms of each plant, inhale their scents, and admire their patterns of color. It's like a little nature walk for me! But when someone makes a special request, the process becomes even more enjoyable. I feel like I'm on a unique assignment to help that church family member celebrate his or her special occasion.

Our world and our lives today are complicated and often difficult. We all benefit from celebrating the small appearances of truth, beauty, and goodness that are presented to us. So, the next time you have a special occasion or remembrance of a beloved person who has blessed your life, think about making a special request to the Altar Guild for the Sunday flowers. Let our whole church family celebrate your personal meaningful event with you, while honoring the Eucharist and our devotion to God 😊
Peace be upon you, Michele Gibson-O'Grady



Bryson Farmer

“I have attended church since I was nine months old and taken an active part in the service since my fifth birthday”. Although this special person is now 12 years old and reaching teen years, our active Grace member generously shared how he enjoys the Episcopal church service.

He feels best about his academic accomplishments, such as the Honor Club, winning a blue ribbon in 4-H and winning a countywide essay contest with newspaper coverage including a photograph. Bryson continues to eagerly learn new things and, of course, hang out with friends. His future plans include an engineering degree.

This motivated, adventuresome, talented active member of Grace is also “crucifer”, “acolyte”, or “altar attendant” on Sundays at Grace. Bryson

Farmer has been crucifer for Grace Episcopal Church for about a year now. Trained by Father Joe, he works with Jerry Schmelzer, and Chuck Warnick.

A young man of few words did share, “I feel special carrying the cross in the church procession. It reminds me of the sacrifice Jesus made for us”.

Thank you, Bryson, for the gift you give to God, Fr. Joe, and the members of Grace.

Any youth hoping to assist as altar server, please contact Father Joe.

Karyl Chastain Beal & Peggy Roberts

This is an additional article in an occasional series introducing us to the people who are members of the Grace Episcopal Church family. If you would like to be featured or have a recommendation on who should be featured, please reach out to Carol Martinez.

Miracles in Everyday Life

During the summer session of Children’s Church, we’ve been focusing on some of the stories from the Old Testament. This included discussions about several miracles such as the burning bush or parting of the seas.


These discussions got me thinking about miracles that I have witnessed in my own life. No, I haven’t witnessed something as dramatic as a bush that was blazing, yet not consumed. But what I did witness was just as profound and very personal to my life. If I ever had any doubt about a benevolent God who is always at our side in our darkest hours, those doubts were instantly and permanently erased.

In my bedroom, I have a framed note. It’s written in a young child’s scrawling penmanship, using colorful markers. The author of this note is my oldest granddaughter, Emily, who had just turned 7 years old only a few weeks prior to it being written.

This event took place shortly after my husband, Tony’s (Emily’s Papa) death. I was experiencing enormous grief, to such a degree, I sought professional counseling. One of my counselor’s suggestions was to keep a daily journal. The journal was just for me and shared with no one. Sometimes I would write only about the benign things that took place during the day. But much of the time, I would

talk to Tony about how I was feeling at the moment. One notable recurring theme was my need to know that wherever Tony was now, that he was okay and happy. If only I knew he was at peace and happy, I might be able to bear the weight of the grief I was experiencing.

Fast forward to a couple of months after Tony’s death. Emily was spending the night trying to keep her Grammy company. The next morning, she was busy with paper and markers at my kitchen table, making a present for me. She then gave me her note that I will treasure until my last breath. I wish I could share a picture of her note, but here is what it said (child’s creative spelling, lack of punctuation, and all):

You love Papa so do I
I miss Papa and you do
He levs supthing for you here
[points to a heart] 
He is happy and you be happy
He says I love you!
and thank you!

“He is happy” – those exact words that I had expressed in my journal. But Emily didn’t know what I had written or thought about. How is this possible?

I asked Emily what Papa was thanking me for? She said he is thanking me for staying with him in the hospital, so he didn’t have to be alone. She also had no idea that I stayed with him at the hospital 24/7 for the last two months of his life. I asked her what made her write this letter. She replied that she didn’t really know, that the words just kept coming into her head and she had to write them down.

I read and reread that letter many times. Was Tony using Emily to let me know he is, okay? The more I thought about it, I came to a slightly different conclusion.

God always knows what’s in our hearts and knows our needs before we do. I truly believe that God used Emily to provide the comfort I needed at that moment. I think God often uses us to help perform miracles in the lives of others, many times without us even realizing it. I admit that there have been times

since then that I have wanted to give up. But I have felt the presence of God telling me that I still have work to do. He's walking with me, so get moving forward.

I think that there is evidence of miracles from God all around us if we only open our eyes and hearts to see them. I invite you to look and see the miracles in your own life.

God's Peace, Susan Austin



Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

One of the songs I am frequently asked to play is "Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God," page 711 in our hymnal. I believe I first heard and learned it in 1973.

My brother had just finished his 4 years in the Navy, and on his way home to Virginia from the Philippines he spent some time in California visiting with our brother. This was when Calvary Chapel was in its heyday in Costa Mesa, CA, and Steve came back singing all kinds of scripture songs which he learned there. For those of you who have seen the movie "Jesus Revolution," this was the music that they were singing. He brought back several books and records, and I listened to and learned many of the songs. "Seek Ye First" was an early favorite.

It was written in 1971 by a young woman named Karen Lafferty, who was a part of the music ministry at Calvary Chapel from 1971 to 1981. In 1971, she had attended a Bible study that focused on Matthew 6:33, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." She was struggling financially and wanted to be able to support herself through her music. This scripture verse encouraged her, and she went home that evening to write this song. Its beauty and simplicity were appealing to everyone, and eventually it began to provide the support she needed to be an international music missionary. She has been based in Amsterdam since 1981, heading up a group called Musicians for Missions, which is a part of the Youth With a Mission ministry.

Such a simple song, with such a powerful message

and impact. The next time we sing this during communion, I hope you will listen and remember!
Deanie Moore, Music Director

Daily Guide

Don't murmur or complain.
Watch what you say.
Speak God's Word.
Believe, don't doubt.
Count your blessings.

Stana Chapman

The Theme From MASH

By Karyl Chastain Beal

If you were born before 1972, you may remember watching the popular television series, MASH. The sound of the catchy theme song would let us know it was beginning, and we'd sometimes find ourselves humming along.

But did you know that the actual name of the song was "Suicide is Painless?"

I didn't know that, but my teenage daughter, Arlyn did. She placed the sheet music to the Theme from Mash (complete with the original words) in front of her on the piano and practiced playing it over and over --- every day for the last week of her life.

For Arlyn, suicide may not have been painless. Her death was instantaneous. In one split-second, her heart stopped beating.

But for those of us who loved Arlyn, her suicide was not painless. As Dr. Paul Quinnett wrote, "Suicide is not a single, quiet thing you do only to yourself. It is like pulling a pin on a hand grenade while you are surrounded by friends and family."

In Tennessee, there are more than 1,000 suicide deaths reported each year. The majority of suicides are by males, and the main method used is a firearm. Individuals living in rural areas die by suicide at a rate 1.5 times higher than those in metro areas.

In Maury County, between 2019 and 2020, there were 50 suicides reported. In Williamson County

during the same three years, there were 95 suicides reported.

Suicide seems to be on a continuum, with generalized suicidal ideation at one end and fatal non-reversible action at the other end. Suicide is complex, with a variety of factors usually interacting simultaneously – two of which may be mental illness and/or addiction -- therefore effective suicide prevention may take a multifaceted approach, complicating solutions.

Some people believe that those who take their lives won't be welcomed to heaven. That's a heavy burden for people to carry when the person they loved is condemned by religious leaders and community.

My personal view aligns with that of Father Ron Rolheiser, a Roman Catholic priest, who wrote: I submit that we shouldn't worry too much about how. God meets our loved ones who have fallen victim to suicide. God, as Jesus assures us, has a special affection for those of us who are too bruised and wounded to be touched.

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, so be kind. If you go out of your way to treat all people kindly, you may have already prevented a person who's at the low-end of the suicide continuum from moving farther along to a point of no return. Remembering to be kind can make a major difference in the life of someone who's hurting.

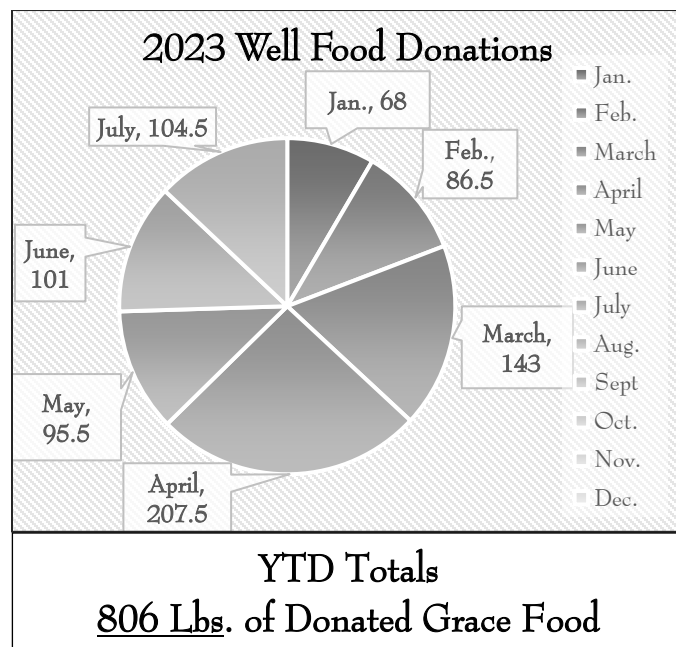
Also, be aware that suicide prevention should begin before a crisis develops. If you know people who seem to feel lost, hopeless, or in despair, ask them if they're having suicidal thoughts. Don't be afraid of the words, "Are you having suicidal thoughts or thinking of hurting yourself?"

Then, if they reply that they are, listen with your heart as well as with your mind. Finally, if you sense that listening isn't enough, help them call 988, the new suicide hotline number in the US. Trained crisis counselors will help them and will send out emergency help if it's needed.

(And if you are having suicidal thoughts yourself, please reach out – to friends, a family member, clergy, other professionals, or call 988. Don't wait until it's too late for help.)

If you turn your television channel to an oldies station, you may find MASH reruns. In that case, you'll hear – the Theme from Mash. Hear it, and remember, that it's wrong about suicide. The pain left

behind will impact many people forever and, collectively, will affect the whole world.



Treasury Report for June 2023

June was not a good month for our finances, with expenses exceeding revenues by \$4,511.61. Year to date, we still have a positive balance of \$1,925.83. Hopefully, we will not experience such high expenses for some time.

AT&T has oddly escalated the cost of their service - again. We will have to contact them to find out what is going on. The following is the general breakdown of funds, and detailed information on accounts is attached.

Finances for June 2023 are as follows:

Pledged Offerings:	\$4,003.00
Plate Offerings:	\$677.00
Priest Discretionary Fund:	\$0.00
Memorial Fund:	\$0.00
Facilities Rental:	\$125.00

Total Revenues:	\$4,855.00
Total Expenses:	\$9,366.61
June Net Total:	-\$4,511.61

Banking Balances:

First Horizon Checking Account:	\$7,567.27
First Horizon Savings Account:	\$48,350.56

Savings Account Fund Breakdown

Organ Fund:	\$23,500.00
Building Fund:	\$20,650.00
Undesignated Fund:	\$4,180.70
Interest earned:	\$19.86
Total Available Funds, plus savings:	\$55,917.83

David Thomas, Treasurer

June Mission Council Minutes

June 21, 2023

Fr. Joe gave an opening prayer at 6:10 PM.

Scribe's Report – The minutes for May 2023 meeting of the Mission Council were submitted by Will Pomeroy. They were reviewed and accepted.

Treasurer's Report – David Thomas sent the May financial report to the Mission Council members. Please see the specific reports for line-item analysis. One correction was made to the Report entitled Grace Finances for May 2023. The Pledge offerings should have been \$14,645.00. After discussion, the Treasurer's reports were accepted as corrected.

The Finance Committee will be tasked with constructing a comparison of alternative banking options. The Committee will report back with its findings and recommendations. No deadline was set. Dave will send a request to the Diocese for reimbursement for the recent organ repair. He will find the receipt and send the request.

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

Fr. Joe attended the ordination of five deacons on June 2 at the cathedral. Justin Taliaferro was ordained as a transitional deacon, in preparation for the priesthood.

Fr. Joe will be taking vacation time the week of July 16, 2023.

The bishop has suggested that clergy be given an extra week of paid leave this year in consideration of the stress put on clergy during and after the COVID 19 pandemic. Also, the diocese is making grants of \$2,000 available for priests to use next year in connection with some kind of sabbatical plan. This is suggested to take place by the end of 2025.

Fr. Joe's Letter of Agreement. Canon Jody sent a draft of a letter of agreement from a church having a half-time priest. This was shared with Carol

Martinez and Bill Rieger for study. Fr. Joe shared confidential written comments with the Mission Council for their review and future discussion.

Fr. Joe discussed problems expressed with the sound on the weekly video recording.

Sr. Warden's Report: Carol Martinez shared progress on a safety training plan for the congregation. After contacting three Williamson County Schools, she was directed to contact Maury County officials to seek assistance with a program, as Grace is in Maury County.

The Mission Council discussed the installation of a peephole in the exterior door of Faith Hall.

Carol shared that folks need to be instructed to place the ceramic coffee cups up-side-down in the dishwasher.

Jr. Warden's Report: Bill Rieger
Bill is out of town this week. No report.

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

The 2023 Ministry chairs are indicated below with their reports.

Children's Church – Will Pomeroy

Communications – Peggy Roberts

Fr. Joe has a draft of a letter proposed to be sent to potential new members.

Grace coffee cups are given to new members in person, either by personal delivery or to their home or after church. The mailing of a cup would be about \$10.00.

It was suggested that members focus on welcoming visitors and potential new members before visiting with existing members, both after the morning service and at coffee hour.

Peggy is still accepting articles for Grace Notes.

Community Outreach – Charles Cochran, no report.

Congregational Life – Robe

Robert is thinking about ideas for special events.

The Mission Council discussed alternate locations for Sunday worship, to be followed by a picnic. Concern was expressed about visitors showing up at the church for that Sunday and finding no one there.

Next Mission Council Meetings: September 20,
October 18, November 15, and December 13.

Fr. Joe closed the meeting with a blessing at 7:20 PM.
Respectfully submitted, 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

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by using the QR code below.

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