­Pastor’s Corner

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds…”  
Romans 12:2a*

Welcome to the *new* – a new year, a new decade, a new chance to face life in a different way or to build anew upon the foundations of the past. It’s 2020, and the canvas of the year in front of us stretches before us like a blanket of untouched fresh snow. What will we write on it? What challenges are hidden in the days ahead? What opportunities? What celebrations? What griefs? We don’t know yet – and so we may enter 2020 with a mixture of hope and trepidation.

The Bible speaks a lot about newness, but it speaks even more about RE-newing. Renewal, in its biblical sense, is the process where God takes the broken or worn out processes of the world and redeems them, reshaping them into consistency with his new kingdom way. It is not a disposal of what was, but a transformation into what it should and can be.

In the same way, Paul tells us in Romans, we are to seek that transformation ourselves. All around us the world calls to us: “Follow me…choose to be like us…reject the new way of God for the ‘safety’ of the known and the understood.” We are tempted to be like everyone else and act like everyone else and think like everyone else. Yet Paul calls the church, and calls us as parts of the body of Christ, to reject that path. “Do not be conformed to this world,” he says. Instead, he asks us to choose a different path. “Be transformed by the renewing of your minds.”

What does it look like for you and for me to renew our minds in 2020? What does it look like to choose the way of Christ over all the other ways that call to us: the way of consumerism, or the way of narcissism, or the way of politics, or the way of apathy, or the way of comfort without challenge? What does it look like for us to enter deep into the story of Jesus and let his way of life wash over us, changing us to be more like him?

As we enter a new year, may we be people of renewal – choosing a new path forward as we follow the steps of our Lord.

In Christ,  
Adam

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**Wednesday Dinner**

**January 22nd –** Soup, BBQ sandwiches, cake & ice cream

The Hospitality Committee requests that reservations be made by Monday, January 20th, by calling 434-352-8847 or emailing ghbcoffice@yahoo.com. Suggested donation is $5.00/adults and $2.00/youth.

From the Deacons

Happy New Year! Deacons at Grace Hills are commissioned to focus on Family Ministry, Benevolence, and the ministry of Grace Hills. Last month, Janice Marston and Hank Davis served as Deacons of the Month. During January, Tim Peterson and Pat Torrence are Deacons of the Month.

The December Deacon Council agenda focused on the advent message of Hope and its importance in our spiritual journey as Christians. We were challenged to make an individual resolution for 2020 toward our own spiritual growth. We discussed ways to better minister to those in our church who are experiencing challenges. Our goal is to reach out through visitations, cards, phone calls, and other expressions of our concern and love. In response to benevolence needs, we supported assistance with several electric bills, and responded to the urgent needs of a family struggling with food and financial crisis. We also responded to a need for an individual experiencing medical challenges. Also, Deacons delivered poinsettias to our shut-ins. Each response was an indication of the loving, giving church Grace Hills is.

Christmas gifts for the staff were distributed. Once again, thank you for your generosity in celebrating our outstanding servant leaders.

A responsibility of the Deacon Council is to support and assist the pastor in ministry. We are proud of Adam’s ministry at Grace Hills and his service as President of the BGA. You are encouraged to join in daily prayer for our pastor.

The Deacon Council is a ministry of service and Christian love. If you are aware of those for whom we should pray, visit, or assist, please contact any deacon.

May the grace and peace of God and His great blessings be with you,  
 Janice Marston, Chair

**Children in Action**

Beginning in January, one Sunday a month will be dedicated to children’s missions during Children’s Church.  Our time will be called **Children in Action** and will be led by Lucianne Warren.  We will be learning about, praying for, giving to and doing missions.  Our first mission project will be in February and we need the church’s help and support.  We will be collecting toiletry items and assembling hygiene kits to deliver to the Good Neighbor Center to give out as needed.  ***Starting in January, there will be receptacles throughout the church in which to place needed items.  Items are: small sizes of toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, shampoo, disposable razors, shaving cream, combs, nail clippers, pocket tissues, bar soap, washcloths, hand sanitizer, and chap stick.***  We appreciate your support in this effort in helping our children learn, give, pray and do missions.

***Happenings ~ January 2020***

***Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so I send you.   
-John 20:21***

We are often reminded of the greatest of our blessings! I share several instances of two happenings at Good Neighbor in December: (Names are changed.)

* Diane came to us during the early cold days seeking help with several things, including needing a warm coat in a size not easy to find. While shopping for this coat, a clerk in Peebles said she had one at home and would donate it. Her husband passed away last year. She had pondered what to do with his clothes. Diane was ecstatic to have the coat! She responded: “I can’t believe you people are so helpful. I’m so grateful. I’ve been here a year and haven’t really met anyone except Joan.” **God is at work through you!**
* A mother came to us in concern. She was working hard everyday and keeping her bills paid, yet her financial situation was critical…only a few dollars left until a payday two weeks away. Good Neighbor and Deacons responded with donations and resources for food. She knows how much Grace Hills loves her and her children. **God is at work though you!**

We celebrate this new year in the spirit of believing this dedicated mission is a voice in the community provided through faithful servants**. God is at work through Grace Hills!**

If you want to get involved, we welcome any and all. If you have suggestions, please let us know.

*Prayer: Father, help us to always realize that we are on a mission for You.*

Blessings,  
The Good Neighbor Team

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Grace hills early learning center  
 Director: Leslie Galloway Bookkeeper: Lisa Dawson  
 Phone: (434) 352-2273 Fax: (434) 352-4422

Email: gracehillselc@aol.com

* ELC closed January 1st – Happy New Year!
* ELC council meeting: Tuesday, January 14th at 4pm
* ELC Chapel at 9:15am on January 6th and 20th

🎶 🎶 **MUSIC NOTES** 🎶 🎶

It has been an active December for choir and bells at Grace Hills.  Handbells went to Mt. Comfort on December 1st to do a Christmas ring for them.  The choir had planned and prepared to sing at 9 a.m. at Appomattox Dialysis on December 13th, but the icy morning weather forced us to cancel.  We hope to plan that again for next Advent.  The choir also sang during the children's play on December 15th.  I hope you did not miss the children's play; they had worked very hard to present their letters, and the art work done by members of Grace Hills to illustrate the letters was just amazing.  Every letter was unique and creative.

Handbells will ring again on January 5th in worship, presenting a Winter Ring to close the Christmas season musically. I hope you support the unified church budget, because in doing so you underwrite so many small things that happen in church music - the purchasing of the copies and the rights to perform the children's play, the supplying of pizza to fuel young bodies between their final rehearsal Dec. 15th and their presentation to you at 6 p.m., the ordering of equipment needed to support handbells (polishing cloths, new parts, mallets), the tuning of pianos,  and the providing of new music for choir and handbells.  These are ministries that keep our fellowship strong and growing. Whether or not

you can (or are willing to) sing or ring, you can provide these gifts that keep us moving forward.  Thank you.

Nancy Williams

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**Grace Hills Baptist Church**

gracehillsbaptist.com

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Appomattox, VA 24522-0807 **gracehillsbaptist@gmail.com (Ruth)**

Beginning January 1st, Monica Ewer’s (Financial Secretary) office hours will be Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:00am-5:00pm with flex hours on Sundays from 12-3. Ruth Perry’s (Administrative Assistant) hours will be Tuesday and Thursdays, 9:00am-5:00pm, with flex hours on Fridays.

Submissions for our February Newsletter are due 1/15/20 by 5:00pm. Please contact the office anytime to update your information or to request a digital copy of the newsletter (only if you have the programs to open .docx or .pdf files.)****