

Grace Hills Baptist Church Newsletter – September 2021

PASTOR'S CORNER

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” – John 13:34

The second part of our mission as a church is fairly straightforward: **care** for one another. This may be the one we consider the most attractive, the most innate, and the most tangible. It can also be the one that we most appreciate, both as recipients of love from one another and as givers of love to one another. Indeed, in our recent church survey, the overwhelming thing that we liked about our church was the sweet fellowship, the mutual care, the spirit of togetherness. We *like* to care for one another.

This is a good thing. As you can tell from Jesus' command above, showing the sort of love to one another he showed to his disciples is central to what he taught, lived, and established. This is reinforced throughout the Gospels (where he elaborates on it many times) and in the records of the early church. Paul spoke of it, Peter spoke of it, John spoke of it, James spoke of it. Loving one another is one of the pillars of Christian faith.

But that doesn't always make it easy!

Love, you see, is – by definition – sacrificial. It means treating someone else the way you wish to be treated, caring for their needs even if it costs you something, seeking the good of others as a priority, and learning to care for people and love people who may not be terribly loveable at the moment. And that can be hard! The command to love transcends all sorts of differences in life, as Jesus exhibited in his tale of the Good Samaritan (the neighbor was the one society would have said to hate and revile), and as he demonstrated in his chosen family (his disciples included Simon the Zealot, a group known to hate those who cooperated with the Roman Empire, and Matthew the tax collector, who cooperated with the Roman Empire in very visible ways). We find Jesus showing incredible compassion to Jews and Gentiles, Pharisees and prostitutes, men and women, friends and enemies. He cared for anyone who was put in his path and went out of his way to show that love in powerful ways.

At Grace Hills, we seek to embody that same sort of love, as commanded by our Lord and Savior. To quote Paul, we strive to foster a love here that is patient and kind; that doesn't envy and doesn't boast and is not proud; that does not dishonor others, is not self-seeking, and is not easily angered; that keeps no record of wrongs and does not rejoice in evil but rejoices in the truth. The love we strive for always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (1 Cor. 13:4-7)

We don't always achieve that sort of love, mind you – but we aspire to it and take conscious steps to hold that love and show that love for one another. And as we **care** for one another, we reveal an important piece of our faithfulness to the call of Christ and our mission as a church.

In Christ,



PS: I have had great opportunity to see this care lived out these past few weeks. Thank you to everyone who has brought food; sent notes; contacted me through phone calls, texts, e-mails, and social media; and has prayed for my family in our medical struggles. We are on the mend and are very grateful for your care towards us.

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FROM THE DEACONS

September is the month we crossover from old to new church year. Our Deacon Council has experienced a year of tremendous love, caring, training, and working together. THANK YOU to Josh Harrison, Tim Peterson, and Nancy Williams as they complete their three-year deacon cycle. We also say goodbye to Joyce Bennett who recently moved to Florida to be with family. Joyce, you will be greatly missed! Prayers and God Speed as you experience these new endeavors.

Since September 1st is the dawning of a new church year, we have joining the Deacon Council Bethany Hunter and Lara Peterson. We welcome these two talented ladies and the expertise they bring to the table.

One of our first challenges is to creatively solve the old problem of doing more with less. Please join us in prayer as we begin with seven (7) active deacons: Jamie Davis, Bethany Hunter, Linda Lipscomb, Lara Peterson, Dennis Torrence, Pat Torrence and Renee Wingfield. Updated Deacon-Family assignments for 2021-2022 will soon be communicated.

How can we be spiritual leaders in our post-COVID church? We are increasingly dependent on prayer, relying on our love and support for each other, and faith, seeking innovations for problem solving. Our primary focus is the Great Commission! Matthew 28: 16-20 says *“The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him, even though some of them doubted. Jesus drew near and said to them: I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age.”*

Love in Christ,
Pat, Deacon Chair

ALMA HUNT OFFERING *for Virginia Missions*

September is our month when we celebrate the life of Alma Hunt with the Alma Hunt Offering for Virginia Missions. Our state goal this year is \$800,000 and Grace Hills' goal will be announced soon. You will be hearing about the several projects which are highlighted this year to receive funding. Please be prayerful how you can be a part of assisting the WMUV and BGAV in their efforts to reach “the least of these” as we have been called to do by Jesus.

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🎵 MUSIC NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER 🎵

Wonderful news from Derrick Thompson: He has been promoted to tenured professor of music by Delaware State University, after spending some time as visiting professor. This promotion brings a more rewarding salary and fabulous new responsibilities in their music program. Congratulations, Derrick!

We will welcome Susan Manion, our flute player, back to Grace Hills in September. She will play flute for the anthem "God of Grace", which we will use in worship September 26th. Most likely, given the way things are at present, this will be recorded on the previous Thursday and used in recorded fashion during worship.

Bells will come to the tables to rehearse again September 9th, getting ready for Advent music; we have three new anthems to learn for Advent that you will really enjoy.

Keep a song in your heart, friends!
Nancy Williams

GRACE HILLS EARLY LEARNING CENTER NEWS

Director: Leslie Galloway Bookkeeper: Lisa Dawson
Phone: (434) 352-2273 Email: gracehillselc@aol.com
Attendance: Full Time Students: 86 School Age Students: 50

Praying all is well with everyone during these unpredictable times.

In August, we have been busy transitioning to our new classrooms and welcoming our new families. Each class has been getting to know each other and their daily routine.



Each month all of our preschool classes have colors, numbers, shapes, and letters they work on to prepare them for the next class. Each class also has monthly Bible Verses!

Please keep the ELC in your prayers for a healthy, safe, fun, and educational school year.

GHELC dates:

Closed: September 6th-Labor Day

ELC council: September 14th at 4 pm

ELC Chapel: September 20th at 10:00 am

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...Let us love one another.

1 John 4:7

September 2021

Mark Your Calendar: October 19th, 2021

SENIOR FAIR “Living Your Best Life”

Guest Speaker: Dr. Mike Valentine

Good Neighbor is excited about the upcoming Senior Fair on October 19th, 2021 at the Appomattox Inn and Suites. Dr. Mike Valentine will be back this year with information on heart health and ways to live our best lives. During September, we will provide registration information for you.

Another upcoming event is the Centra Mammography Unit on November 29, 2021. To schedule an appointment, please contact Shirley Walton.

August work of Good Neighbor includes:

- Continued monthly support of lunches for ELC workers.
- Continued staffing of center and responding to requests.
- Continuing to check on several with health concerns in our community
- Contacts with “Friday Friends.”
- Responses through love offerings to several individuals or families with medical and clothing for school needs.
- Donation to Community Ministry Council’s Camp Little Crossroads door project.
- Preparation for September recognition event for local Sheriff’s Department.
- Preparation for the upcoming Senior Fair.

We are so blessed to serve as a mission of Grace Hills Baptist Church.

Blessings,
The Good Neighbor Team

Grace Hills Baptist Church

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