­**PASTOR’S CORNER** *For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgement of God rather than burnt offerings.* Hosea 6:6

When you were a kid, did your parents ever expect something from you just because “that’s who we are”? Like, your family has a certain expectation of behavior and identity, and if you aren’t exhibiting that, you aren’t living up to the family name? In my family, the sentiment was expressed in the phrase, “Were you raised in a barn?” There were certain expectations of what I should do and how I should act, and if I wasn’t living up to those expectations, it didn’t matter that my name hadn’t changed – I wasn’t living up to my full potential or even my family name.

In the prophetic books of the Bible, the people of God are continually asked the ancient equivalent of, “Were you raised in a barn?” There was a certain expectation that God had of them – how they would act, who they would be – and if they didn’t live up to it (as spelled out in covenants agreed-upon by both God and God’s people), then the prophets would remind them.

Hosea was one of those prophets. Speaking to an Israel that was trampling the poor and thumbing their noses at the way of living God had decreed, Hosea lifted his voice in lament and accusation. The message he had from God is summed up in this verse: God expects his people to show mercy, and if not, then he doesn’t really value their sacrifice; and God expects his people to know him, to *get* him, and if they don’t, all the burnt offerings in the world are worthless to him.

Of course, over and over (including in Hosea) we are reminded that God’s steadfast love endures even when we betray him or reject his path. Yet that does not change the frustration God feels when we turn our backs and refuse to know his heart and live out what we know he wants us to do. And, Hosea says, sometimes that refusal on our part leads to some pretty bad consequences, which isn’t all that surprising since the way of God (and Jesus) is the way to live the best life.

As people who love God, and who profess to follow his Son, we need to constantly ask ourselves, “Are we showing mercy, or just offering religious sacrifices? Are we truly knowing God, or just going through the motions? Does our heart reflect God’s, and do we live it out? Or are we just putting the ‘Christian’ stamp on whatever it is we want to do – even when it is not what God desires?” It can be a daily struggle – but it is how we remain true to the call of God on our lives and the relationship we have with him through his Son, Jesus.

May God never have to ask of us, “Were you raised in a barn?” May we practice mercy and know God so deeply that we can’t help but become more like him.

 Be well!

 Adam

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**Grace Hills Baptist Church**

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From the Deacons

What changes will the fall weather bring us as we worship at Grace Hills? Being together in worship is so important. Being together as a church family is so important. Thank you for your flexibility during this time when decisions due to weather and health concerns change our plans. Deacons continue to seek to ways to minister to the needs of church families and regular attendees with Christian love and service. Please call your deacon if you have or are aware of a need or concern.

The Deacon Council met in person in the church social hall in September. The focus of our meeting was on serving those in need in our congregation and community. Several individuals and families continue to struggle with short and long-term health and personal needs. Deacons are reaching out with benevolent assistance and caring.

Deacon Nominations and elections:

According to a recently approved one time change in the church’s Operations Manual, deacon nominations will take place in October instead of the typical June election. Voting will also take place later in October. In accordance with the church’s procedures for church operations, the following statements set forth deacon qualifications:

* A person must have been a member of Grace Hills Baptist church for one year before being nominated to serve as a deacon
* Deacons shall be elected from among those members who have proven themselves to have spiritual and ethical qualifications

We ask you to be in prayer for these individuals. As you consider this process, please contact the person(s) you plan to nominate regarding their willingness to serve.

The three deacons rotating off are Hank Davis, Linda Mays, and Janice Marston. These individuals are not eligible for re-election for a period of one year.

Thank you for your ministry as you have joined in the outreach and caring of the Grace Hills family. So many of our members could use a phone call, note, or act of caring. Any of us can share acts of kindness. More than ever, we need and value each other in these ongoing unusual times.

The Deacon Council is a ministry of service and love. The Church Council is the Administrative Council at Grace Hills. All of us together are leading the way for good in our church. Please let us know if you are aware of those for whom we should pray, visit, or assist.

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

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🎶 🎶 **MUSIC NOTES**  🎶 🎶

**Rooster**

    We will not be able to worship outside at 9:30 forever, but hasn't it been fun!  The freshness of the air, and my

favorite of all, the neighborhood rooster, have been inspiring, as well as the presence of those of you who routinely come to 9:30 worship.  I never considered myself an early worship person, but I love it.  And that rooster-  his

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timetable is so off.  In the country I grew up in, roosters crowed to welcome early morning.  He is obviously a suburban rooster, probably raised somewhere close to New Jersey, but I love his sound and his persistence.  He does not know if it is proper time for crowing or if we are listening, he just lets loose.  He does an evening crow also, for those of you who would like to come to bells or choir on Thursday evenings!

**Christ Be in My Waking**

     We featured this beautiful new anthem last October, and are reviving it for sometime in October this year.  Stuart Townend and Simon Brading have composed the lovely melody and the haunting words for a modern hymn of devotion, not unlike the devotion hymns of the gospel era.

        "

Christ be in my waking, as the sun is rising, in my day of working, with me every hour.

          Christ be in my resting as the day is ending, calming and refreshing, watching through the night.

          Christ be in my thinking and my understanding, guarding me from evil, walking in the light.

          Christ be in my speaking, every word a blessing, pure and not deceiving, grace to all who hear.

            Jesus, this is my devotion, all my life to know You, everyday to walk with You."

One of the most fabulous hymn anthems I have ever seen, this song is another evidence of the resurgence of the hymn in church music.  We plan to share this with you during October.  Thank you, choir.

**God at Work in Pandemic Speakers**

      Thank you to all those who have shared "pandemic" testimonies with the congregation during these weeks.  There will be more, and there is plenty of room for you.  If you are interested in speaking 1-3 minutes during either worship setting about how you have seen God at work in pandemic, please speak to me or Susie or Adam.  These voices have brought so much meaning to our worship and have inspired me.

Keep singing and ringing!

Nancy Williams

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*…Let us love one another.
1 John 4:7*

Fall has arrived! Our hopes of times being different from Spring have not yet materialized as the Coronavirus remains a threat to our health and well-being. We extend well wishes to our Grace Hills family during these days of little normalcy.

Good Neighbor has focused on reaching out to our community and those in need during the past month. We particularly think of our schools and the challenges of our teachers and children. Our prayers are with all of them. We continue to keep in contact with our young families with great needs. Good Neighbor/ Grace Hills outreach efforts this month include:

* + - Donation to S. May for dental work prior to pending kidney transplant
		- Donation to S. Harlow toward kidney transplant medical expenses
		- Donation to all 4 schools to help with school items for students in need (Thanks to Barbara Jackson for coordinating.)
		- Distribution of hygiene kits to AES from children’s mission group. (Thanks to leadership by Lucianne Warren and Children on Mission).

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* + - Donation to Lara Peterson for snack needs at APS
		- Donation to Habitat in building of house in community
		- Provision of lunch for Habitat volunteers working on a local new home (Thanks to Ellen, Phillip, Terrie, Lloyd, Shirley, Kenneth and Janice for assisting.)

The Good Neighbor Council will be reaching out to ELC workers soon to share love gifts in appreciation for their faithfulness during these months. The ELC stayed open and cared for children so parents could continue working.

The Centra Mammography Unit is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24 at Grace Hills. For more information, please contact Shirley Walton.

If you are seeking help or know someone in need, call us. If you want to help in efforts to reach others, you may use a direct cell phone number (434-660-4873) as an immediate contact. The Good Neighbor Council and volunteers will continue to communicate on a regular basis.

We pray God’s protection and blessings for wellness and safety for all.

 *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 News
Director: Leslie Galloway Bookkeeper: Lisa Dawson
Phone: (434) 352-2273 Email: gracehillselc@aol.com
Temporary Attendance: Full Time Students: 80    School Age Students: 30

***Some of what we have been learning?***

Infant classes have been enjoying the nice weather and playing outdoors.

Tot’s and 2’s classes have been busy learning lots of different songs.

3’s classes have been learning the letter A and number 1. Both classes had lots of fun creating an A for apple craft.

Pre-K classes have been busy learning all about God’s Creations.

***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!***

September Dates: GHELC will be closed Sept. 7th in honor of Labor Day