

# Grace Hills Baptist Church Newsletter – February 2021

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## PASTOR'S CORNER

### Uncharted Territory

*The Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.*

Exodus 13:21-22

2021 has, at last, arrived. All of us, or at least the vast majority of us, have been longing for the new year to come. The promise of vaccines and the eventual return to something approaching normal was a hope that we've been looking towards, and I for one found it a huge help in maintaining my spirits in the last few months of 2020.

Now, though, we are in 2021 – and we haven't reached the Promised Land yet. In fact, at times we may seem further from it than we've been before. As infections continue to be widespread in our area and delays in vaccine availability frustrate us, we can be forgiven if we respond with a degree of despondency. When will we be able to travel without fear? When will we be able to hug our grandkids freely? When will we be able to take our masks off and sing on Sunday morning? The honest answer is, we don't know.

We are in uncharted territory, my friends – and uncharted territory can be scary with its unknowns and unfamiliarity. Yet we are not the first to enter uncharted territory. The Israelites who fled slavery in Egypt to seek their own Promised Land had never been there. Moses hadn't either. They knew there were obstacles on the way, and at times they cowered in fear. But they pushed forward. Why? Because God was with them. God was guiding them. God saw their struggles and walked with them through the wilderness. And though it took longer than they imagined, the people of Israel eventually got to the Promised Land. It wasn't like life had been – it wasn't like it was back in Egypt – but it was the life God desired for them, a life together in the presence of God.

We don't know yet what 2021 will bring, or how long it will take us to reach the "Promised Land" on the other side of COVID – or even what that Promised Land will look like. It won't look like the world we left behind, but we do know one thing: God will be there with us. May we, as individuals and as a church, keep our eyes locked on our Lord to guide us in this year ahead, and may his presence give us hope.

In Christ,  
Adam



## February 14<sup>th</sup> - Happy Valentine's Day!

*"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."*

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

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## FROM THE DEACONS

February greetings from your Deacon Council. February brings fun thoughts of love. Did you know February is named after a Roman celebration which was a month-long festival of purification and atonement? Purification and atonement are important experiences for each of us.

Your deacons are full pace being the hands and feet of our Church. We have recently updated the “Family Ministry” lists and plan to contact each of you within this month. We look forward to being there for you. Please share your particular concerns and joys with your Deacon.

Galatians 5:22 comes to mind in preparation for Deacon Family Ministry. “But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Nancy and I ask for your prayers as we co-chair the Deacon Council. And, rest be assured, your praying for our family deacons greatly inspires all of us. Grace Hills Baptist Church will reap the blessings.

Some of these blessings have been shared with others through the Benevolence Fund. We received only four (4) requests this month. We actually assisted two (2) families and offered to work with the third family. Currently, the budget balance in Benevolence is \$8,300.00. (The Federal CARES Act has become more active in assistance with fuel and rent.)

Covid 19 has been challenging for ongoing ministries. This is especially true when we are limited in visiting and sharing love during times of grief. Our Church has lost five (5) members during this pandemic: Ann Ferguson, Cliff Rhodenizer, Gene Williamson, Joe Foxwell and John Giuliano. Times like these are heartbreaking for both family and Church members. For this reason, we will begin memorializing one deceased member in each monthly newsletter, starting in March. We are anxious for you to participate in the memorial by sharing fond-fun memories of each of these Church family members.

Also, we know Covid 19 has been rampant and many find themselves quarantined or actually enduring the virus. Please remember your Church Family is here for you and is anxious to assist in any manner.



Love in Christ,  
Pat and Nancy  
Deacon Co-Chairs

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

*February 2021*

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

The Good Neighbor Council did not meet for in January due to a rise in COVID in the Appomattox community. We have been working with the Grace Hills Mission Council to provide devotional books to our teachers. We also mail donated mother care items to Maria Sanchez, a state missionary on the Eastern Shore. Contacts were made to us regarding the donation of furniture items. The individual has available several items of used bedroom furniture if you are aware of someone in need. Also, we were contacted for assistance in locating a place for an individual to stay who needed to be out of her home due to a COVID situation. Contacts were made to assist this person. Also, contacts and information were provided to a family seeking information about Hospice care for a senior adult.

Each Good Neighbor Council member participates in the “Friday Friends” effort, making contacts to shut-ins, senior citizens and others who might benefit from loving, caring communication. If you’d like to participate as a Friday Friends volunteer or be added to our contact list, just call the Good Neighbor Center at 434-664-2121 or 434-660-4873 to leave a message.

Members of the Good Neighbor Council are Lloyd Walton, Shirley Walton, Bill Slagle, Sarah Slagle, Janice Marston, Ellen Jamerson, Phillip Jamerson, Thea Gillam, Barbara Jackson, and Reggie Warren.

Stay well. Stay safe. Happy Valentine’s Day to 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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## 🎵 🎵 MUSIC NOTES 🎵 🎵

Thanks to the Grace Hills Ringers, who with a lot of help from substitutes, rang three times during the advent and epiphany seasons in worship. Those times of live music were so encouraging for us at a time when we really want to sing but cannot. It is hard for ringers to ring while masked, but we were adamant about providing music while still protecting ourselves and protecting you, the congregation.

Choir members have been so faithful and loyal; we continue to space out as we rehearse and record music for you, making it harder to hear each other and to blend the sound, but we also are committed to

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presenting music for worship while not endangering each other. At present we mask while rehearsing, and only take down the masks when we record. We have chosen hymns lately, because you, the congregation miss singing hymns. Perhaps hearing hymns from us will help you to keep those familiar words and tunes in your hearts during the week.

Thank you, musicians, for your willingness to work at the task of providing music for worship during these Covid times. Susie's piano magic has been exceptional during this time. Thank you, Susie, for your work at the piano. You inspire us always.

Keep a song in your heart!  
Nancy Williams

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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: 83 School Age Students: 35

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

- Infant classes have been busy learning and listening to different animal sounds.
- Tot's class explored about penguins and made penguin crafts.
- Two's have been learning the letters M for Mickey Monkey and N for Nicky Narwhall.
- Three's classes have been busy with letter M crafts and activities. Red threes had a special M for Mexico snack (chips and salsa). Blue three's created an M for marshmallow craft and had pinata fun while learning about the Mexican culture.
- Pre-K classes discussed God will always be with you no matter the situation, after they learned their monthly bible verse "Lo I am with you always" Mathew 28:20.



*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!*

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## Grace Hills Baptist Church

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