

Grace Hills Baptist Church Newsletter – March 2021

PASTOR’S CORNER

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Philippians 4:4

I don't know about you, but sometimes I'm reading along in the Bible and I come across a verse that makes me sit up and say, "huh?" This verse is one of those verses. Especially this year, but really at just about any season of life, it can be hard to hear the teaching of Paul here. Sure, we like to be joyful, we like celebrating life's highs, we like laughing and camaraderie...but we know there are many times in life, even in each day, when it isn't all that easy to rejoice. Then we read a verse like this and can grow either angry – why would God expect us to rejoice in the midst of trouble – or confused – is something wrong with me that I'm not more joyful?

What Paul may be doing here, both for the Philippians and for us, is inviting us to change our perspective. Much of the time, our joy is dictated to us by our circumstances. We feel happy or sad because of what happens to us. We feel up or down because of the current reality of our lives. We feel joy or sorrow because of external factors. We are blown here and there, from the peaks to the valleys of emotion, by things over which we have little to no control. We are, in short, victims of what goes on around us.

Instead of being victims, though, Paul urges followers of Jesus to orient themselves by one thing, one Person: God. In the next verse, he reminds his readers that "the Lord is near." God is with us! That fundamental reality, unchanging, can influence every experience of our lives, every mood of our psyche, if we so choose. We can be joyful – note, he doesn't say happy; Paul knows there are often experiences of deep sorrow in our lives at any given moment – we can be joyful in any circumstance. What is that joy? A deep and abiding sense that things are standing on a firm foundation, a fervent trust in and appreciation for the Lord, an awareness of the love of Christ enfolding us at all times. That sort of orientation in life, centered on Christ and not on circumstance, is something we can work towards. That is something that we can do at all times. We just have to decide to do it, and then diligently embrace it each day. "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

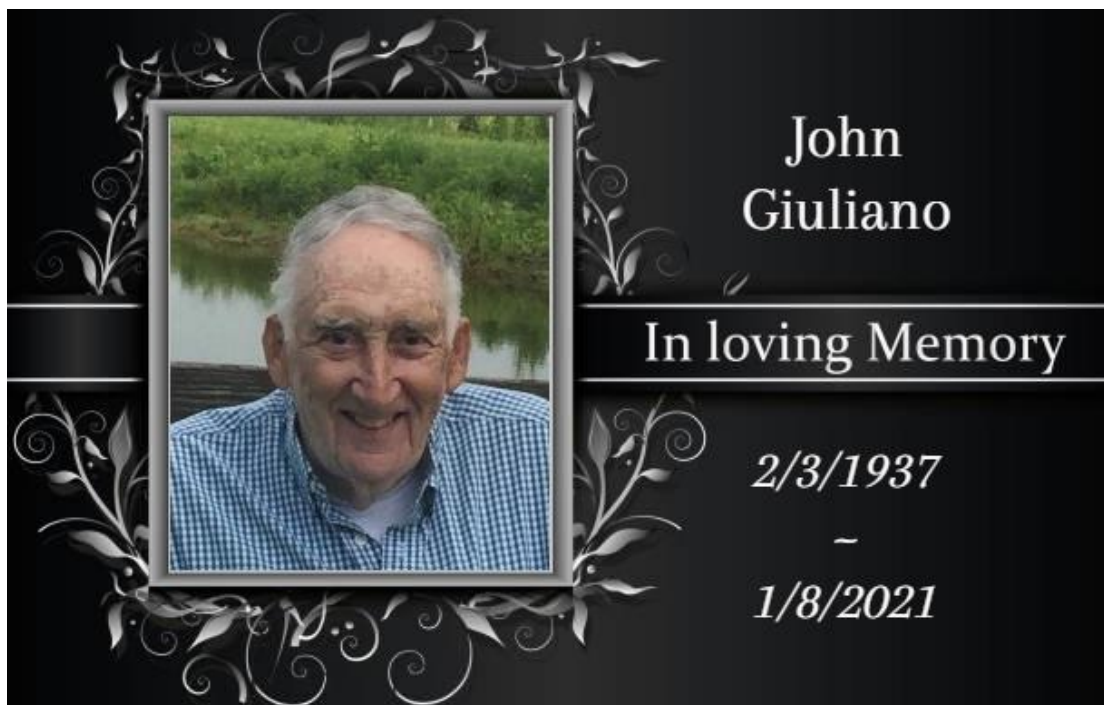
Be well, friends!

Pastor Adam

FROM THE DEACONS

Your Deacon Council members are busy at work handling benevolence requests, praying for you, and being servant ministers. Each deacon was present for our February meeting. Jamie Davis led in devotions, using a passage from 1 Thessalonians about encouraging each other. Adam provides deacon training at each meeting, using the book *Crisis Ministry! a Handbook*, by Daniel Bagby. February's training focus was on understanding the stresses with which we all struggle, and using scripture and prayer in ministry contacts. Visitation may be curtailed by the COVID nightmare, but we are still calling, writing to you, and praying for you. Pat's closing thought was from Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart." Your Grace Hills deacons are gifted, energetic, trained servant leaders. Call on them when you need encouragement and strength.

Love in Christ,
Pat and Nancy
Deacon Co-Chairs



We lost a dear Church friend on January 8th, 2021. John Giuliano, the father of our Facilities Supervisor Steve Giuliano, passed after a courageous battle with cancer and later, COVID. He, and his wife Judy, were regular Church attendees after moving here in 2007 from Norwalk, Connecticut. John, born February 3rd, 1937, and Judy were the proud parents of three sons, two of whom were adopted in 1965. He was a carpenter and built houses for a living.

Steve remembers his Dad being generous to people in need. He bought lunch daily for his crew at the house construction site. He employed people who had problem work records because of drugs or alcohol. John gave them good wages and believed in them. Judy has received cards since John's death from persons whom he helped, saying they would never forget what John had done for them and their families.

While talking with Church members about their remembrances of John, each one, immediately, highlighted his devotion to family and his willingness to help. Many remember his conscientiousness of greeting everyone each Sunday morning. In order to connect, John and Judy sat on the back row, the perfect location for his mission.

Steve said his Dad was passionate about missions. Steve remembered in particular the times that "Dr. P." from India and Daniel from Uganda visited our congregation and our community. His father supported their ministries and quietly contributed to their ministries every month thereafter.

What Nancy remembers about John Giuliano were his prayers. In particular, she recalls the circle of prayer that we formed around Carolyn and Jimmy Mayberry's house one summer evening, joining in a concert of prayer for Jimmy's recovery from cancer. We were encouraged to join hands and pray out loud if we wished; John's prayer was amazing from such a quiet man. It was the prayer of a man who knew quite well the Heavenly Father to whom he spoke. What a testimony!

Grace Hills Baptist Church Newsletter – March 2021



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

March 2021

It's almost Spring! One year ago, all of our lives changed due to Covid-19. Can you believe we are still in this pattern? What a call to mission this is for us!

We are so happy to report Good Neighbor is busy serving our church and community! Here's our plan of work in the past month and some upcoming activities:

- The Good Neighbor brochure has been revised and reprinted. Copies are available in the church foyer. If you can help us in getting these out to others, please help us share this brochure.
- The email for Good Neighbor is changed to ghgnc@aol.com.
- We're continuing to check on many in our church and community. Our *Friday Friends* list has been expanded to make contact with more of those who are home alone. If you are aware of needs or want to be on the list, email to ghgnc@aol.com
- We are making daily calls to check on a member who has special health needs.
- A monthly lunch is being provided to ELC workers in appreciation of their dedicated efforts during COVID times.
- We are assisting in a referral for an individual who may benefit from food services.
- We are sharing food pantry items with those in need and with Mac's Kitchen. We'll be asking you to help us replenish the pantry with fresh items soon.
- We are responding to an individual with significant financial challenges who needs help with an automobile. Our recommendations include referral to the Central Virginia Ways to Work Program and possible financial assistance.
- We are beginning the Books for Brook Program which will include mailing 3 books monthly to a child who does not have access to reading materials in the home.
- We are assisting with contacts regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Plans are in place for a March 17 *Sandwiches for Seniors at Home* Program. We will be using the list from our Thanksgiving pie deliveries. If we missed you, please let us know. We are excited about this new project and are glad to add any senior who wants to be included.
- We are continuing our contact with the mother who considering moving to Appomattox.
- We plan to begin staffing the center again soon.

Your prayers and support matter. If we can help you or someone you know, contact us.

Blessings,
The Good Neighbor Team

Grace Hills Baptist Church Newsletter – March 2021

🎵 🎵 THIRSTY FOR HYMNS! MUSIC NOTES FOR MARCH 🎵 🎵

In a recent Sunday school lesson taping (Friday mornings), class members shared names of hymns which reminded them of how God strengthens us. It felt good even to call out names of favorite hymns. We are all thirsty for the experience of singing beloved hymns together in worship or fellowship. Just because we cannot sing collectively yet does not mean that you cannot sing at home, in the car, in the shower, or in your hearts. So sing! Keep your voices active and your hearts happy with the wonderful words and tunes of favorite hymns.

For Adam's focus on Psalms of refuge, the choir will feature many hymns and anthems that celebrate how God offers the blessing of refuge and rescue to us. One of those will be "O God Our Help in Ages Past", whose words were written by Isaac Watts. Isaac was born in Southampton, England in 1674. He began to write words to hymns early in his life, and he has written some of the best worship hymns we have. Fourteen hymns in our hymnal had their words written by him, including "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross", "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need", and "Joy to the World". He is often called the Father of English Hymnody. I owe gratitude to him for some of my favorite hymn texts (words). Perhaps you do also.

Keep Singing!
Nancy Williams

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: 84 School Age Students: 36

Some of what we have been learning?

- Infant classes have been busy learning to use crayons while creating beautiful art.
- Tot's class created lots of Valentines crafts and read lots of Valentine's Day stories.
- Two's have been learning about Valentine's Day and showing others you love and care about them.
- Three's classes have been busy with letter N crafts and Valentine activities. They also learned about keeping their teeth healthy and visiting the dentist.
- Pre-K classes discussed God can do all things while learning about Peter walking on water. They also talked about Groundhog Day, Valentine's Day, and Presidents' Day.

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!

Grace Hills Baptist Church

gracehillsbaptist.com

PO Box 807 (for mail)
4320 Pumping Station Road
Appomattox, VA 24522-0807

(434) 352-8847
ghbcoffice@yahoo.com (Monica)
gracehillsbaptist@gmail.com (Ruth)