

Grace Hills Baptist Church Newsletter – May 2021

PASTOR'S CORNER

"Come, follow me," Jesus said. (Mark 1:17a)

Did you ever play the game "follow the leader" when you were a child? What did that involve? Literally following the leader. If they went up the stairs, you went up the stairs. If they laid down and rolled down a hill, you lay down and rolled down the hill. As long as the game went on, you did what they did and went where they went.

It's always good to be reminded that Christian faith is really based on the same principles as the game "follow the leader." Over and over again in the Gospels, we find Jesus issuing an invitation. It isn't to join a new religion, or to learn a new philosophy. It isn't even to be part of a new organization. It's simply this: follow me.

Simple, right?

Yes – but just because it is simple doesn't mean it is easy. First, Jesus calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow him, and they literally leave their fishing boats – their careers, their livelihood – behind and follow him. Jesus comes across Levi at the tax booth, his job, and invites him to follow him, and Levi gets up and leaves to follow him without even giving his two-week notice. All of the disciples stopped following something to follow Jesus instead. Others who couldn't follow Jesus were those who refused to put Jesus ahead of family or who refused to give away their possessions to follow him.

Following Jesus is hard – because it means that we stop following something else. Jesus becomes number one, and we don't always want to give him that spot.

But if we want to follow Jesus, if we want to be a Christian, then that's what we have to do. Jesus has to be first – ahead of wealth, ahead of family, ahead of job, ahead even of ourselves. It doesn't mean we can't do those other things, of course; Peter still cared for his mother-in-law, and the disciples still went fishing. It just meant those things weren't the first concern in their lives.

What do we need to stop following to really follow Jesus? What do I need to give up? What do you need to turn away from? What do we have to leave behind to answer the invitation, "Come, follow me"?

In Christ,
Pastor Adam

FROM THE DEACONS

Our four weeks of deacon-sponsored prayer for our church, our pastor, and our membership has come to an end. Thank you so much for cooperating with this initiative; our habits of praying can be improved by times of emphasis like this, and surely our Father needs to hear from us. Attendance in worship has been amazing, and the desire to be together in worship is so special.

Our deacons met together Wednesday April 14th with nearly everyone present. We studied Romans 12 for devotions, especially verses 4 and 5: "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." Joys and concerns from deacon family ministries were shared. Training was provided on ministry to aging members. *Continued...*

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Look for deacons of the month of May- Joyce Bennett and Nancy Williams- in the foyer as you enter the sanctuary to worship. Thank you, deacons, for all the work you do to lead our congregation.

You will recall the Richard B. Carter Benevolence Fund is managed by the Deacons. We average five requests each month; plus, three people of our Church community accept monthly assistance. This Church ministry affects five to eight families each month. Recently two mistakes were made while reading and reporting the budget balance: 1.) a 3 was read as an 8 and, 2.) during a phone call beginning and ending monthly balances were reversed. (Contact Pat for any additional information.) Our current balance is \$811.99. You are kindly asked to help with needed funding. Your donations will be greatly appreciated.

Love in Christ,
Pat and Nancy
Deacon Co-Chairs



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

May 2021

Food, home repairs, auto repairs, and health-related needs summarize the Good Neighbor efforts for the past month. Many in our community are facing issues for which they are grateful to know that someone cares for them. Thank you, Grace Hills for letting our community know we are a church of compassion and love.

The GN Council met in April with an agenda of ongoing and new ministry efforts. Originally GN was a resource center. Now we are much more- we are a service mission. The Sandwiches for Seniors effort provided 25 box dinners to church and community people. This effort was greatly appreciated as shown by numerous notes and responses. The Council is planning another box dinner effort in several months. Thanks to Sarah Slagle and Shirley Walton for coordinating this work.

Good Neighbor and GH volunteers are checking in on several with health-related needs through phone calls and visits. "Friday Friends" is a weekly Friday morning call to many of those at-home members of Grace Hills who receive phone calls and encouragement from Good Neighbor.

In support of the youth of our community, GN provided dinner for the ACHS football team on April 9th. Thanks to Ellen Jamerson and Lara Peterson for coordinating this effort.

We are now staffing the center from 3-4 PM on Thursdays. For a while we were checking voicemails and responding. We've responded recently to calls for hygiene kits, housing, and food requests. GN also checks in with individuals and families served through the years. Although some of the needs are not as great, these individuals are in need of knowing they are remembered and have a resource if needed. For example, one of those served called seeking a ride home from the hospital-because they had no one else to call. We are reminded of how blessed we are.

Your prayers and support matter. Let us know if you need help or know someone who does!

Blessings,
The Good Neighbor Team



Cliff Rhodenizer was a charter member of Grace Hills Baptist Church. Faithful in many ways, he was an avid supporter and regular attendee. Cliff had his special seat in the sanctuary. He enjoyed fellowship gatherings and Sunday services. He would often praise the talents of the musicians and choir.

Appomattox became Cliff's home for fifty years during his work and retirement years. He was a leader in the community, serving on the Appomattox County School Board as representative of the Wreck Island District for two terms. Also, he was a member of the County Library Board. Another of his pleasures was membership in the Masonic Fraternity, where he advanced to the highest level of officers, Deputy Grand Master of the 26th Masonic District. He was also a 32nd degree Mason, where he also served as a Worshipful Master of Monroe Masonic Lodge in Appomattox.

His beloved daughter, Donna, said Cliff knew from an early age knew he wanted a career with the Virginia State Police. She states, "He had a calling on his heart to be in law enforcement against the backdrop of a family of farmers in Lexington, Virginia." And so it happened, Cliff had a life-long career in law enforcement. He graduated from Central Virginia Community College with an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Police Science. In 1958, Cliff was employed by the Virginia State Police after basic training received assignments to Alexandria and Roanoke. On July 1, 1970, as Trooper Rhodenizer, Cliff was promoted to Investigator and assigned to the Third Division, Appomattox. Later promoted to 1st Sergeant, he served until retirement in 1994.

Cliff had a recognized artistic talent. In June 1968, Cliff, with the help of his wife Betty, designed the seal for the County of Roanoke based on the scenic view and the activities of native Americans who hunted and fished in the Roanoke Valley. The seal was officially adopted by the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors in June 1968 and was used on all government, school, buildings, and stationary.

He is deeply missed by his Grace Hills' family and his two children, Donna Jean, his beloved daughter, of Lynchburg and Clifford Jr., his son of Roswell, Georgia.

Cliff, a twin, was born November 7, 1933, and passed away on March 20, 2020. He was a fine man and greatly missed by all who knew and loved him.

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🔊 🔊 MAY IS A TIME FOR MUSIC! 🔊 🔊

Finally, we are singing a little with masks on in the sanctuary; the benediction that we sing is a beginning! Your response to the 10 a.m. worship has been wonderful. Hand bells will present two new anthems, "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" and "In Remembrance of Me" sometime in May or early June. We will celebrate Communion, Mother's Day, and Pentecost, and we will honor graduates. What a busy month!

Choir continues to prepare and record anthems for worship. "Speak, O Lord" is one of our favorite anthems because the text is so amazing. We have used it numerous times, and you will probably hear it in May because it fits our needs really well. Getty was born in Northern Ireland; Townend is English. They have collaborated together to produce some fine modern hymns which we love; two of our favorites are "How Deep the Father's Love for Us" (Townend) and "In Christ Alone" (both composers). Their work to write new hymns which are singable and which have relevant meaning for our faith is so important. We look forward to presenting "Speak, O Lord" soon.

Before long you will be receiving a survey which will give you an opportunity to express what you would like to hear more of—more bells, more of Susie's wonderful music, more solos, more small group pieces, more choir anthems. Please complete this survey and be sure to turn it in.

Keep singing and ringing!
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: 86 School Age Students: 36

April Happenings: This month we have been busy celebrating Easter. Our Toddlers, 2s, and Preschool classes had lots of fun hunting Easter Eggs. We had a special visit from the Easter Bunny. After having lots of Easter Fun, the children learned the true reason we celebrate Easter. Easter is not about the Easter Bunny and hunting Easter Eggs; we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Pre-K monthly memory verse "Even a child is known by his doings" Proverbs 20:11.



Grace Hills ELC had volunteers from Liberty University come organize and clean up different areas of the center.

May Calendar:

ELC Council meeting, May 4th @ 4:00pm

ELC Graduation, May 21st @ 6:30pm

ELC will be closed for Memorial Day, May 31st

Grace Hills Baptist Church
gracehillsbaptist.com

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

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