

# Grace Notes

January 2022  
"Come Home to Grace"

From the Pastor:

As we stumble our way into 2022, we see it was another difficult year here and around the world. We are, startlingly, entering year number three of this crazy COVID-19 pandemic. Sometime in January 2020 we started hearing about a strange and deadly disease coming out of China. It spread rapidly across the world and then America. By mid-March 2020 our church facility was closed to group meetings. Zoom became the way we met for Consistory (Thanks Alex Heintzelman!) and we used Zoom for several worship services. We did more through email and text and phone calls. Everything changed. We couldn't have imagined this pandemic lasting three weeks, much less three months. But into three years now? No way. Unbelievable.

We tried to adapt as much as human imagination and effort would allow by having services at first printed on email, then adding efiles of music or readers. By late spring 2020 we started having parking lot services and radio broadcasting, at first on AM, then because the quality was better, on FM (Thanks, Mark Frost!). We still do that. Yes, the summer was hot and we finally started meeting back in the air conditioned sanctuary, while radio broadcasting at the same time. Christmas 2020 came and because we seemed like we would have more worshippers outside than in the sanctuary, I led worship from the "back porch" of the church. *I should have checked the forecast.* It started snowing. The wind picked up. The thermometer tanked. My hands began not to flex, the fingertips became hard and slippery. I could barely turn the wind-blown pages and brush off the rapidly falling snow in the rapidly falling temperature. My glasses repeatedly frosted up. I remember someone (I don't think associated with our church) pulled into the parking lot and stopped right in front of where I was on the back porch and idled for five minutes. I wonder if he even noticed what I was doing! Finally he pulled away and left. Must be a Drive-Through Christmas Eve service! "Want fries with that communion juice?"

Finally we were back inside the sanctuary, while still radio broadcasting. Soon enough we added Facebook Live (Thanks Jolane Day!). The sermon and bulletin are still available printed online most Sundays through the new medium of the "Newsflash" and the church website. We continue with all these avenues to get worship out to "whosoever will may come," in the words of our Lord. Keeping attendance became a guessing game as to who was here and who wasn't.

This Christmas seemed much, much more "normal." Attendance was better than I anticipated, with 80 and 20 folks I have never seen. And my hands were warm and worked.

Still our journey through this pandemic has been very costly. We all have lost friends, some family members, and church members. This Christmas has been impossibly difficult for a number of us, loaded down with grief. Some folks are still battling long COVID. Many of us have had it and, thankfully, recovered. All of us are waiting for this scourge to burn itself out, being starved out with no victims left to infect who are not immune through one avenue or another. The holiday season will soon fade in the rear view mirror. Epiphany is January 6<sup>th</sup> and the Christmas season will be over. Are we gearing up for a new year? Or are we "battening down the hatches" against another COVID storm? Someday, my friends, we will be able to say "The pandemic is over. This is under control now. THANK THE LORD!"

*(continued on next page)*

Jesus said, “In this world you will always have trouble.” He said that on the most troubling night of his life. But then he added, “But take heart: I have overcome the world.” Jesus assures his disciples, and us, that no matter what storm was (is) raging all about them, out in society or in the world, at any given moment, within the shelter of Christ’s love and his resurrection power, there would be an opportunity for spiritual calm and hope, and dare we say it, even for joy. This is *not* the power of positive thinking. (As we said in seminary, “Paul is appealing, but Peale is appalling!”) This reality is created and preserved by God for all of us and is ours for the asking.

Grace and Peace on the journey that will be 2022! -*Pastor Rob*

---

**A Poem by Helen Steiner Rice  
Re: The 1918 Epidemic**

**The End of the Road is But a Bend in the Road**

When we feel we have nothing left to give  
And we are sure that the “song has ended”—  
When our day seems over and the shadows fall  
And the darkness of night has descended,  
Where we can go to find the strength  
To valiantly keep on trying,  
Where can we find the hand that will dry  
The tears that the heart is crying —  
There’s but one place to go and that is to God  
And, dropping all pretense and pride,  
We can pour out our problems without restraint  
And gain strength with Him at our side —  
And together we stand at life’s crossroads  
And view what we think is the end,  
But God has a much bigger vision  
And He tells us it’s ONLY A BEND—  
For the road goes on and is smoother,  
And the “pause in the song” is a “rest”,  
And the part that’s unsung and unfinished  
Is the sweetest and richest and best—  
So rest and relax and grow stronger,  
LET GO and LET GOD share your load,  
Your work is not finished or ended,  
You’ve just come to “A BEND IN THE ROAD.”

## GRO Activities:

December was an active month, as usual, for GRO. We supported the following:

Robert Bycroft “Adopt a Class”

4 C’s Food Pantry (Reverse Advent Calendar)

AKESO Health Care (17 towel sets) This organization donated over 300 gifts to five skilled nursing and assisted living facilities as well as hospice patients.

Christmas Eve Luminaries

GRO would like to thank everyone for your support over the past year. We’re looking forward to an awesome year of missions in 2022!

The following Thank You Notes, were also given to GRO:

Robert Bycroft, Adopt a Class:

Thank you from the students of Classroom 4.

—Joey, Levi, Jayden, Ezra, Gabriel, Zachary, Nigel

AKESO Health Care:

In all, over 300 gifts (including our towel sets) were given to five assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities and also to hospice patients.

—Thank you, Jeana Perkins

---

## Confirmation Class Meeting

Sunday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, after worship will be our next Confirmation Class meeting. We will talk about the church calendar and year and “liturgical colors.” How was the church year set up? And by whom? Why? Why does Easter always change (and Pentecost), but Christmas never does? Be here, find out, then “school” and impress your parents!

Looking ahead: Congregational Annual Meeting, Sunday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, after worship.

## Those Ministering This Month:

**Usher:**

**Elevator Attendant:**

**Candle:** Alison Hoskinson



- 1/1 Matt Jones
- 1/2 David McMaster
- 1/3 Jonathon Billings
- 1/4 Janis Sutherin  
Emma Gala
- 1/5 Don Reash
- 1/7 Geoff Barnes  
Quentin Barnes
- 1/8 Bonnie Sears  
Mike Perorazio
- 1/11 Beth Palette
- 1/12 Nicole McMaster
- 1/16 Gary Weber
- 1/17 Tim Reash  
Michael McMaster  
Seth Kollar  
Lexi Smith  
Alivia Bell
- 1/18 Geri Whitfield
- 1/20 Becky Stearns
- 1/23 Chelsea Kimble  
Sam Flynn
- 1/24 Alison Hoskinson
- 1/27 Katy Gala
- 1/31 Larry Snyder  
Joyce McKee

★ Thank You! ★  
★ THANK YOU! ★

Thank You!

Thanks to all who have been so generous to me and my family at this time of year. We are blessed!

—Pastor Rob

Dear Grace Church of Columbiana, Ohio,

On behalf of Salem Regional Medical Center's Foundation, please accept our sincere appreciation for your generous donation in support of the Oncology Program. Your check, in the amount of \$500.00 was received on December 20, 2021.

—Thank you, Amy Reed, SRMC Foundation, Dir. Of Development

Thank you so much for all you have done for our mom, Bev Price, over the years. We know many of you have checked in on her over the years, taken her to appointments, brought her lots of good food, and continued to pray for her during her many trials over the years. She felt very blessed to be surrounded by such good friends and such caring people.

—With sincere love and appreciation,

Dawn Crawford & Shelley Sloan

During a time like this, we realize how much our friends and church family mean to us. Your calls, cards, memorial donations and expressions of sympathy will always be appreciated and remembered.

Pastor Rob's memorial service was so comforting and his words of encouragement to the girls and I helped get us through a very tough time having just lost Karl and Alan in the year before. The dinner served by the ladies was special and my family appreciated your efforts.

The last thing I ever expected was a call telling me that Karen was gone too. It is still difficult to wrap my head around that my children and husband all are gone. Thanks to the support of you, the girls and I will carry on and rely on the love of our heavenly Father to make it possible.

—The family of Karen Bott Nussbaumer

Judy Bott and Stefany, Samantha and Jordy Nussbaumer



Donna & Gary Schoonover

January 14, 2006

Grace Notes

Grace Church of Columbiana  
140 S. Main Street  
Columbiana, OH 44408  
330-482-4532

---

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Robert Joy  
Secretary: Marcy LaVogue  
Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Monday—Thursday  
E-mail: [gracechurchofcolumbiana@comcast.net](mailto:gracechurchofcolumbiana@comcast.net)  
Web: [www.gracechurchcolumbiana.com](http://www.gracechurchcolumbiana.com)

Office: 330-482-4532  
Pastor's Home Phone: 330-892-0512  
Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

