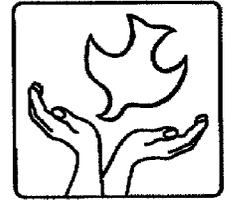


# Grace HAPPENINGS

the newsletter of  
Grace Mission Episcopal Church  
Lent 2010



## Words of Grace

The Rev. Jeanie Beyer

*There is a time for everything, and a season  
for every activity under heaven.  
Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)*

Grace Mission has been in a season of “letting go and letting God.” On Christmas Eve, after celebrating and honoring our long time pastors: The Revs. Michael and Sterling Henderson, we lovingly said “Go with God” to them as they started the next phase of their journey in retirement.

Since that time, many people have asked me “what is really going on at Grace Mission now?” What is going on at Grace Mission now is the same wonderful ministry that has always happened at Grace. Six days a week, we continue to open our doors to our congregation and anyone else who wishes to join us to praise God in worship, study and prayer.

Our mission is still to change lives through celebration, education and recovery in Christian Community. Our attendance remains steady at an average of 139 on Sundays and we continue to serve from 1700 to 2000 meals a month. Our three worship services a week are lively and the opportunities for showers and laundry continue three days a week AS USUAL. But most importantly, I see our lives changing as we grow more into the people that God intends us to be and as Sterling and Michael so lovingly prepared us to be.

In January, we saw how deeply our church understands the true meaning of stewardship. Our congregation pledged the \$1,000 that they raised last summer in a car wash to our brothers and sisters in Haiti. The people of Grace Mission understand what it means to give of their own to the “least of these” as they demonstrated with their gift to the Haitian people. In February, we were blessed with the contemporary choir from Holy Comforter who joined with the Grace Mission choir to praise God. It was a glorious day. We thank both choirs for adding to our lively and spirit-filled worship. God continues to bless Grace Mission with vibrant and faithful volunteers who have shared their servants’ hearts and their gifts of hospitality and generosity. God has also blessed the staff and Board with renewed energy, vision and commitment.

So, to answer the question of what is really happening at Grace Mission “now”? We are enjoying a season of joy, spiritual growth and anticipation. God is busily preparing each of our hearts to welcome the new pastor that He will be sending!

## The State of Grace

Geoff Schwartz

*“Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which  
cannot be moved, but stands fast forever.  
Psalm 125:1*

The state of Grace is good. It remains a spirit-filled worshipping community, trusting in the Lord to provide. Faith in God and the Holy Spirit working through faithful people are the two most important reasons for the state of Grace Mission today.

This can be seen in the dedicated effort of the staff, Deacon Jeannie’s faithful performance of her expanded role, the additional commitment of several Board members to help staff regular Grace Mission events, and the willingness of other priests in the area to give of their time on Tuesdays and Sundays to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. Grace Mission is first and foremost an Episcopal worshipping community with the Holy Eucharist central to its worship. Deacons in this diocese cannot consecrate the elements and lead the congregation in the Eucharistic prayers—only priests can do that. Without the commitment of those priests, the Grace Mission family would have been deprived, on occasion, of partaking in the Sacrament of Christ’s Body and Blood. But that has not yet happened once (yet). With that said, until a new vicar arrives, Grace Mission’s folks need and deserve the priestly stability that only an interim vicar or a vicar-in-charge can bring. Grace Mission is hopeful that the diocese will provide that stability soon.

Another reason that the state of Grace today is sound is due to the financial generosity of many individuals during the last six weeks of 2009. The budget for 2009 approved by the Board reflected a planned deficit of \$23,427. Unless there was something akin to a financial miracle, 2009 was still going to be awash in red. That “miracle” took place. With numerous memorial contributions, several of which were significant, and the contributions to honor the Hendersons’ ministry, Grace Mission ended the year \$2,397 in the black. But with the loss of St. Peter’s \$24,500 for 2010 and no increase in funding from the diocese, Grace Mission faces another financially challenging year. Rather than cut programs or eliminate services and staff, the Board approved a budget that maintains Grace Mission’s current ministries. This results in a planned deficit of \$28,685. There are already three significant initiatives in the works to reduce or eliminate the deficit, so that Grace Mission can remain true to its vision. Steadfast faith in God’s benevolence is what Grace is about. Amen.



## ...And I Saw!

The Rev. Dr. Allison DeFoor, II



Grace Mission has this catchy saying “Grace Happens, Come and See.” I have been meaning, like many of us to “see what Grace Mission is up to” for several years. I knew, vaguely, of what they were doing, and specifically of the commands of Matt. 25:31-46. But I resisted, and in my defense, kept busy in Prison Ministry. By Providence, I ended up staying a block away from Grace Mission for several months last year, and God directed my attentions to Grace Mission. At about the same time, a need for a priest for Tuesday services arose with the departure of the Hendersons. Match made; thanks God. Happy to help.

Let me tell you what I found walking through the door at Grace Mission. First of all, it is full-up in number. When I say full, I mean 100 or so - on a Tuesday evening! Next of all it is full-up in the Spirit. Though many are not from an Episcopal background, the Congregation is very demonstrative in their love of the Liturgy and of the Lord. A meal is served after the Eucharist, thus a double Blessing.

Anyway, come join Grace Mission some Tuesday evening at 5:30 and see for yourself. No charge. You will be amazed. And be sure to read Matt. 25:31-46 first....Maybe right now. It is not a request - and it is not from me. Peace+

**Grace Happens - Come and See!**

Corner of Brevard and Bronough + 850/224-3817

## Bishop Howard Visits Grace Mission

Bishop Howard's visit made the First Sunday of Lent an extra special day at Grace Mission!

With his customary exuberance the bishop preached and celebrated the Holy Eucharist at the 10:30 a.m. service to a congregation eager to hear the "Good News" of God's love, grace and mercy. The Holy Comforter Folk Band, directed by Betsy Gray, joined with the Grace Mission Praise Band to add an extra dose of the Spirit to the service. Because of the abundant joy in the air, the Bishop suspended the traditional omission of "alleluias," much to the delight of the congregation. But in keeping with the penitential nature of Lent, Bishop Howard invited anyone so inclined in heart and spirit to an "altar call." (Yes, that's even done in the Episcopal Church.) Almost the entire congregation responded.

At the conclusion of his visit, Bishop Howard praised Grace Mission for its steadfast adherence to its vision and mission to the "least of these" and held up Grace Mission as the model outreach mission he wants to establish in other part of the diocese. The Grace Mission family thanks Bishop Howard for his unwavering commitment to Grace Mission.

### Search Committee Report

Over the past two months, the Search Committee has been working on one of the fruits of the Spirit identified by St. Paul—patience. The Committee truly believed that one of the two well-qualified final candidates would have accepted the call to be Grace Mission's new vicar. It was not to be. After much prayer and reflection, the Committee came to believe that neither of the candidates was sufficiently clear on where the Holy Spirit was directing his ministry. One candidate candidly acknowledged that and said that his unexpectedly enriching experience during his weekend at Grace made him aware of his need to be more intentional in his personal discernment. The Committee is now re-engaged in the search process, with a commitment from Bishop Howard (now back from his sabbatical) to play a more active role in the process.

### How You Can Participate at Grace Mission

1. Form or join a serving team for the first Sunday of the month (openings during May through December) or for Tuesday evening (openings on June 29, August 31, and November 30).
2. Be a backup bus rider for the after-school program (2 to 4 openings) Tuesday 2:45 to 4:00 p.m. and Wednesday and Thursdays 5:30 to 7:15 p.m. Call (224-3817) or e-mail ([gracemission@nettally.com](mailto:gracemission@nettally.com)) Delois Brown to sign up.
3. Attend a service or Bible Study and share a meal with your brothers and sisters at Grace Mission
  - Sunday: Holy Eucharist at 8:15 AM (breakfast follows) and 10:30 AM (lunch follows)
  - Tuesday: Holy Eucharist at 5:30 PM (dinner follows)
  - Saturday: Bible Study at 10:00 AM (breakfast before and lunch after)

## Spotlight on Staff

*This is the first in a series about staff members at Grace Mission whose dedicated service makes Grace function smoothly.*

**Reggie Martin.** Reggie is the part-time sexton at Grace Mission, a position he has held for the past five years. Reggie, a native Tallahasseean, walked through Grace Mission's doors ten years ago. Those who have known Reggie over those years have seen a profound change in him as he has experienced God's love and grace in his life. Reggie brings that experience to all he does at Grace Mission, from his sexton duties, to his lay reading, to his almost daily encounters with those in some form of crisis, and to his leadership by example within the Grace Mission family. Reggie is an avid reader, especially in the areas of history and current affairs. So if you get in a discussion with him on the topics of today or yesteryear, it's wise to have some facts handy.

In a nutshell, this is what Grace Mission means to Reggie: *For me, Grace Mission has been a place through which many blessings flow. It has served as an anchor when I was most in need of stability in my life. It has been a source of spiritual food which helped me reconnect with God and strengthen that relationship. It has been a place of fellowship where I have the opportunity to commune with Christians from all across the socio-economic spectrum—contacts which allowed me to be inspired by the success of some and to increase my empathy and understanding for others who are struggling. Finally, Grace Mission has been a place to serve—I now know that that is the greatest blessing of all.*

**Julia Anne King.** Julie Anne (affectionately known as "Jules") is the bookkeeper and administrative assistant at Grace. Jules has been on staff for a year and a half. Her many duties include making sure there is enough food on hand to serve the over 1,700 monthly meals at Grace; creating the power point presentations for the services on Sundays and Tuesdays; accounting for the money that comes into and goes out of Grace; and preparing the monthly financial statements—all of this and more in less than 25 hours per week! Jules is a single mom with two wonderful daughters, Meghan, 16 and Emily Ann, 13, both of whom regularly volunteer at Grace. Jules is a master at juggling her role as a mom with four other part-time jobs and being one of the go-to persons at Grace. In her spare time (the little there is) she loves to go camping with her daughters.

This is what Grace Mission means to her: *Being a part of the Grace Mission family is such a wonderful and rewarding experience. Helping God's people and seeing the difference Grace makes has definitely made Grace Mission my most favorite place to work. Grace has also become an important part of my family's life as well. Having the girls volunteer regularly gives us more quality family time together, which is so important to me as they grow older. With all the friendly faces, good healthy food, and praise music, we always have a wonderful experience at Grace Mission.*



### Grace Children - Our Children!

One of the special gifts of Grace Mission is the Children's Program for *our* children. As part of a Lenten discipline of taking something on, Grace Mission offers you the opportunity to support our After-School Program. It's never too late! There are still three weeks left in Lent! See the brochures in your parish hall or complete and tear off this form and mail it to us.

Yes! I would like to help the After-School Program at Grace Mission continue. I/We will support the After-School Program as follows:

- ⇒ By regularly praying for the children of Grace.
- ⇒ By making a monthly gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or a special gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15, \$25, \$35...any amount will help). Please indicate "After-School Program" on the memo line of your check and mail to the address below.
- ⇒ By volunteering my time. Contact Delois Brown at 850/224-3817 or [gracemission@nettally.com](mailto:gracemission@nettally.com). Please be sure to include your name and the best way for Grace Mission to contact you!



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