

Grace Mission is Going Green!

Over the last several months, Grace Mission has been working with the Sustainable Tallahassee Community Carbon Fund, The City of Tallahassee Energy Services Department and several volunteers to identify ways to improve energy usage.

Three areas were identified to give Grace Mission the best impact in reducing costs and reducing our carbon footprint: A tankless gas water heater to replace the old electric water heater; a new refrigeration unit to replace the old (and damaged) refrigeration unit; and, and a lighting retrofit. We hope to see a cost savings of approximately \$2,100 per year and 9.3 metric tons in carbon footprint (CO2) savings!

Grace Mission would like to thank **Steve Urse, Debbie Gibson, Gary Brown** from **Brown's Refrigeration, Watts Mechanical, Lee Jones** from **City Energy Services**, the **Wal-Mart Foundation**, and the **Community Carbon Fund!** All contributed in various ways to help Grace Mission begin to Go Green.

There are other projects we would like to begin to continue the Grace Mission Green movement. If anyone wants to help us continue to be good stewards of God's creation, please contact Pastor Amanda or Delois at 224-3817!



Growing in Love

- * Eight children qualified and attended Camp St. Michael at Camp Weed
- * Camp children learned about budgeting as they made choices to stay in their allotted dollar amount shopping for camp clothes with their adult "shopper"
- * Children had tons of fun at our Harvest Festival run by 35 FSU volunteers
- * The hour between the end of afterschool and the Tuesday evening worship service, the children had tennis lessons at Laverne Payne Park from Coach Kelly
- * The children were wonderful and provided us lots of laughs and smiles in our second annual Christmas pageant
- * The children were hosted by the Tallahassee Junior League for a Christmas party of arts & crafts, lunch, and a visit from Santa
- * After-school children have one-on-one tutoring, mostly from FSU students
- * One child in the after-school program had straight A's. Another one had all A's and one B

From the Deacon's Desk

Deacon Jeanie Beyer

LAY MINISTRY

In the Catechism found in our Book of Common Prayer, the first question asked in the ministry category is: "**Who are the ministers of the Church?**" The answer is the laity, followed by bishops, priests and deacons.

Much of the work that has been done this year at Grace Mission has been to encourage **lay ministry**. Our congregation has begun to identify their particular gifts for ministry and to find niches in which to serve and offer their gifts to God.

We have seen a huge growth in the willingness of our laity to serve the Lord in new and wonderful ways. Last Advent, 2010, we had a team of two acolytes and this year, Advent 2011, we began with (8 people) or 2 ½ teams of trained acolytes. These **lay ministers** have grown spiritually and have become quite adept at serving at the altar.

Other areas of **lay ministry** have grown too. When I first came to Grace Mission 5 years ago, we had 3 people that were able or willing to be readers. Some were simply uncomfortable being in front of the congregation and some were truly unable to read. At this point in time, we are blessed with an abundance of lay readers and new ones popping up weekly. God is actively stirring up hearts for service and people are saying; "Here I am Lord".

If you have ever worshiped at Grace; you have experienced the gifts of our awesome music ministry and know that God is truly in this place. This group of lay ministers (12 members) bring a joy and spirit that makes worship stay in our hearts for the entire week.

We are grateful that our congregation is growing in relationship and spirit with one another and with the Lord. We are seeing an eagerness to serve in all areas even beyond worship. We have at least 20 people who monthly go out on the streets bringing Jesus to the people we meet and sharing love and drinks of water with them. (Mt. 25). If we need tables washed after dinner, walls painted or gardens groomed, we are seeing hands go up to volunteer and a new community of lay ministers developing.

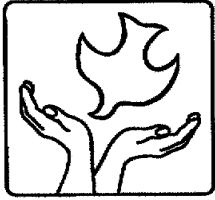
It is a blessing to serve at Grace Mission and watch God work powerfully among us. For a community of folks who are often labeled "the least of these," it is an awesome privilege to see transformed lives who want to serve the Lord and identify their lay ministries.

Blessings,
Deacon Jeanie

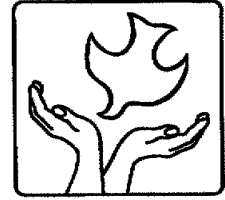


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Grace HAPPENINGS



the newsletter of
Grace Mission Episcopal Church
Lent 2012

Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda Nickles, Vicar

Dear Ministry Partners -

I love the saying, God never plants trees that do not bear fruit:

“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last”
(John 15:16)

Grace Mission – despite the trials and tribulations of last year – bore much fruit in 2011 and prayerfully, we hope to bring in a harvest this year. Just a brief recap of our 'fruit' last year:

18 baptisms – two reaffirmations – ASA 167 – 43% of those attending Sunday services are receiving communion – 21,501 meals served – 1,144 showers given – 416 loads of laundry done for parishioners – 19,000+ volunteer hours – 20% of Grace Mission budget is raised by the parishioners/volunteers through fundraisers – Outreach Water Walks and Adopt-A-Lot clean-ups are done by parishioners each month to help our community – More people are coming forward to receive prayer at our Tuesday night Healing Service – Children in our After-School program are improving in their test scores – 28 children are now enrolled in our Children's Bible study program – 200 Blessing of the Backpacks filled with food for children to eat on the weekends — Grace Mission purchased two goats, one cow and we are getting ready to purchase a traditional water well for a village in Africa...all done through the pennies, nickels and dimes given by the “least of these” for the “least of these.” Holy Wow! Good Fruit is happening at Grace Mission!

We want to take this opportunity to thank all of our ministry partners in helping us bear Good Fruit in 2011! We pray that you will continue to support Grace Mission and help us bring in a harvest in 2012! Please consider supporting us by joining the 100 Club or 500 Club. The “100 Club” is 100 people committed to giving Grace Mission \$100 four times per year. The “500 Club” is 40 people committed to giving Grace Mission \$500 twice each year. Go to www.gracemission.net to learn more. Help us to help others with fruit that will last!

In His Name,

Pastor Amanda+

Growing in Love

Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children's Ministries

When asked what was the most significant part of 2011 for the children, I didn't say it was the After-School Program, camps, festivals, arts& crafts events, meals, pool parties, or the other fun and exciting things they did. My answer? “Jesus!”

We started Sunday School last January and over the year had 37 children come learn about Jesus and how much God loves them. In February we started Awana Club for children K-6th grade, where they learned scripture verses, played super fun team games, listened to Bible stories, and learned about the Bible. And Vacation Bible School last summer was a favorite for everyone.

It's so much fun to watch them share their excitement about Jesus. How wonderful they have an urge and exuberance to “Go tell all the nations”. At the end of the service they'll often come down front to share with the congregation what they have just learned or seek out Pastor Amanda or Deacon Jeannie to tell them. All our Awana children can tell you their simplified version of John 3:16 and what that means to them, and they rarely miss a meeting. Eighteen of 26 Awana children had perfect attendance in our fall session and 5 just missed one meeting due to illness. They are off to a great start on their spiritual journey and we are watching in amazement as they grow in His love.

You know much goes on at Grace Mission. But here are some facts from 2011 that you may not know:

- * We were blessed to have 252 volunteers help run the children's program in 2011.
- * We served over 1200 “plates” of food/dinner in the after-school program
- * Starting in September, we served over 200 “plates” of dinner for Awana Club
- * Starting in September, on Thursday nights we provided Awana children over 200 bags of weekend snacks through our Backpack Blessings program
- * We served over 100 “plates” of food to children during special events

continued



Grace Happens - Come and See!

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www.gracemission.net

