



Grace HAPPENINGS



the newsletter of
Grace Mission Episcopal Church
Pentecost 2010

Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda Nickles, Vicar

Several years ago I picked up a saying, "Don't just go to church – be the church. Put your faith in action and make a difference." It has stuck with me ever since. N.T Wright the Bishop of Durham for the Church of England said it much more eloquently when he said:

"When the church is seen to move straight from worship of God to affecting much-needed change in the world; when it becomes clear that the people who feast at Jesus' table are the ones at the forefront of work to eliminate hunger and famine; when people realize that those who pray for the Spirit to work in and through them are the people who seem to have extra resources of love and patience in caring for those whose lives are damaged, bruised, and shamed – then it is natural for people to recognize that *something is going on* that they want to be a part of. No single individual can attempt more than a fraction of this mission. That's why mission is *the work of the whole church*, the whole time."

Well, *something is going on* at Grace Mission and every day I am brought to my knees not only in prayer but in praise and thanksgiving for what the Lord is doing in this place!

I want to first thank Michael and Sterling Henderson for the incredible vision that the Lord gave them for Grace Mission and for their obedience in faith to plant this church and follow His guidance. I also want to thank the many ministry partners that come and give of their time, talent and treasure. You are the church and you are putting your faith in action and making a difference in the lives of many by giving hope to the hopeless. Thank you!

Queen Susan in the Narnia stories said, "Let us go and take the adventure that Aslan sends us." Indeed, Grace Mission has been on this incredible adventure with the Lord from the very beginning and I am looking forward to seeing what further adventures the Lord has in store for us. Grace Mission is going somewhere and in God's hands that somewhere is secure. Grace Mission has not been defined in the past by suffering and tragedy, but by the word of God who raised Jesus from the dead. I will continue this legacy but this is *the work of the whole church* and I need your help. Come and experience the adventure at Grace Mission. We would love to have you as a ministry partner.

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Making Memories as We Learn

Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children's Ministries

What wonderful memories the children have been making of their summer with Grace Mission! For those who qualified to go to camp, it started with a shopping trip to Target to buy their camp clothes and shoes. You could feel the excitement as we entered the store and they began to select garments to try on. With their budget of \$100 to cover three outfits, underwear, swim suit, socks and athletic shoes, it was interesting to watch them try things on, add up the cost, and swap out items until they were within their budget. With duffle bags packed with their new clothes, we left for camp on Friday, June 25 and returned on June 28. Our prayers were answered as children had a wonderful time, stayed safe and healthy, and God sent the scattered showers at just the right times.

Learning continued as the girls went to the week-long Lady Seminoles Basketball Camp and practiced teamwork skills. As in previous years, we stayed at the end of the day for the mini Vacation Bible School (VBS) required for all students on scholarships. How neat to have their teamwork lessons summed up at the end of each day with lessons about being on God's team and what that means. The following week the children were in regular Vacation Bible School where they continued to grow in the spirit and learn more about Jesus and His love for them.

The last learning experience for the children this summer is a program about hurricanes that will be presented by FSU's Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies (COAPS) group. I imagine they'll really want to watch the weather forecasts after this program!

Their intense learning adventure begins in a few weeks – school starts Monday, August 23! As in past years, we will provide new backpacks loaded with grade appropriate school supplies for all children who worship at Grace Mission. Your prayer support, financial contributions, and donated supplies are needed and appreciated for the After-School Program.

Thank you for the part you played in helping the children make wonderful memories this summer and for your continued support of the children. God has blessed us with a prayerful, loving and supportive community.

I thank Him for each of you.



Grace Happens - Come and See!
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Giving Back

by Geoff Schwartz
Senior Warden

For over thirteen years, God's blessings have been upon Grace Mission. God has chosen many different people, churches, and other groups to be instruments of His blessings in supporting Grace Mission with time, talent, and treasure. The two most recent instances of that are the "An Evening of Amazing Grace" fundraiser that netted almost \$22,000 for Grace Mission and the \$4,000 grant to Grace Mission from the St. John's Foundation. And then there is the July 1 arrival of Pastor Amanda as Grace Mission's next vicar. God is good!

But those who call Grace Mission their church home understand one of the bedrock teachings of the Old Testament and Gospel, which is that they and Grace Mission are blessed and are, therefore, called to be a blessing to others. Bishop Howard once commented that Grace Mission is a place that begins at the altar and then spreads out to the streets and into the world. This is "giving back" is something that the Grace Mission people take seriously!

Grace Mission... pays in full the diocesan asking and contributes to the Camp Weed Capital Campaigns; spends at least 10 percent of its contributions from individuals and other groups (excluding contributions from churches and the diocese) on outreach to the "least of these;" has volunteers who have regularly participated in Habitat for Humanity builds; quarterly collects the excess food it has received, puts them in large paper bags and distributes throughout Frenchtown; has parishioners that have contributed over \$2,000 in the past two years in nickels, dimes, quarters and dollar bills to fight world hunger, and sent 70% of what they raised at last year's "Pray and Wash" for Haitian disaster relief, instead of t-shirts and socks for themselves!

Many of the people at Grace Mission may be homeless, unemployed or on the margins of society. But some way or another they find a way to give glory to God for what they have received by giving back to others!

Words of Grace.....from page one

I look forward to the weeks, months and years ahead of sharing this adventure with you. Do you know the word, "*chutzpah*?" It's a good Jewish word. Leo Rosten defined it in his *Dictionary of Yiddish* by a story of the man who murdered his parents, and when he was arrested, he threw himself of the mercy of the court because he was an orphan. There is more than a little *chutzpah* in our Christian faith and it's one of the more attractive features of our proclamation. The *chutzpah* of the Christian faith is that hopeful and defiant audacity that can look evil in the eye and say, "You will not have the last word to say in this matter." Peter reminds us, "We have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3). Let us live into our living hope – our *chutzpah* of faith – and make a difference in the world.

In His Adventure, Rev. Amanda Nickles

Spotlight on Staff

This issue of "Spotlight on Staff" highlights Delois Brown, our part-time administrative coordinator

Delois joined Grace Mission's staff in February of this year and has truly been a Godsend. Her considerable administrative experience coupled with her gentle spirit has made everything at Grace Mission go more smoothly, has made everyone else's job at Grace Mission more enjoyable, and has made those who volunteer at Grace Mission feel needed, wanted and special. (If you have received one of Delois' "thank you" e-mails, you know that is true!) With Pastor Amanda's arrival, Delois has been so instrumental in helping her get settled. Here is what Delois has to say about her experience at Grace Mission.

"Jesus has given me the awesome opportunity to coordinate people from all walks of life to come together to serve God, in different capacities, in one place, Grace Mission. Working at Grace Mission is more than a job . . . it is a place where I witness the love of God in our volunteers, parishioners, community at large, clergy, and staff. Everyone is drawn together by the grace of God for the glorification of Jesus Christ through our service for and to each other. Fulfilling God's mission does just as much for the people at Grace Mission as it does for those who come through our doors. We all are nurtured, washed, bathed, spiritually and physically, by the blood of Christ. Grace Mission is blessed to serve God by serving His people. This is our mission."

Pastor Amanda Welcomed at Grace Mission

Festive red, white and blue decorations and colorful welcoming banners graced the walls of Grace Mission to welcome Pastor Amanda Nickles on the Fourth of July! As she worked upstairs, the sneakiest decorating angels on earth transformed the dining room and the education portion of the building in preparation for a bang-up celebration! Both morning services were filled with parishioners and friends eager to give thanks to God for His long-prayed for provision of a new Pastor.

"P.A." as she likes to be called was moved to tears of joy several times during the enthusiastic welcoming service. The Holy Spirit was present and on the move as the new pastor was enfolded into her new church family.

Although only one musician was scheduled, three were moved to attend and arrived one by one until the music team was complete...It was loaves and fishes musical style!

With hearty voices and hand clapping, a mighty joyful noise was raised to the Lord. The service ran long beyond any man-made schedule as many people were led to come for anointing and prayer. With full hearts and empty stomachs everyone enjoyed a sit-down served meal of good old fashioned cook-out. Many thanks to all who helped welcomed Pastor Amanda as Grace Mission steps out in faith! Praise be to God!



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