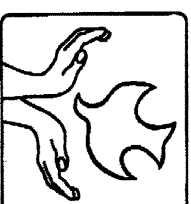


Grace HAPPENINGS

the newsletter of
Grace Mission Episcopal Church
Pentecost 2011



Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda Nickles, Vicar

“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

- From The Lorax: Dr. Seuss

We simply have to love Seuss-ism! The good Doctor gave us wise and witty prescriptions for living in his many books.

The first and primary concern of our ministry at Grace Mission is caring a “*whole awful lot*” for the people we encounter. We have compassion on and minister to any person who God loves. This is the primary cornerstone of our ministry. We become the embodiment of the love of God (incarnational Christians) in relationships with other human beings, looking at individuals through the eyes of Christ, in grateful response to God’s love.

Paul specifically spoke of the incarnational Christian in Colossians 1:27 in which he referred to

“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

When we become the incarnation of God’s love, people are not simply obligations but persons who are loved, first by God and then by us. It is unthinkable that, in the name of the One who gave humans worth by dying for them, any person could be considered unworthy of our help. An so we help anyone we can.

But it takes people like you, and me, and all of our volunteers to help make things better for those who feel that things may never get better. It takes incarnational Christians caring a “*whole awful lot*” for God’s people.

Thank you for remembering Grace Mission in your prayers and in your heart, and for your support of Grace Mission.

Let’s continue to care an awful lot for our brothers and sisters in Christ!

- Pastor Amanda +

Looking Back and Moving On

Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children’s Ministries

The children are so excited the school year is over! As their thoughts move on to a fun-filled summer, mine look back at how much they have grown this school year.

In the After-School Program on Tuesdays and Wednesdays we had children from five elementary schools and eight new children. With the help of 34 FSU tutors, they accomplished much, including one student receiving a top Accelerated Reader (AR) award for the year. All made progress as we celebrated both large and small steps along the way. They have grown spiritually through the Sunday School class started in January and the Thursday evening Awana Club where they play games, learn scripture verses and learn how much God loves them. One child was so excited about Awana that, sitting on a chair in his front yard getting his head shaved, he jumped up and yelled for our bus saying, “You’re gonna hafta finish it later, I gotta go to Awana”. There were snickers from some because he still had a wad of hair on the side of his head, but he didn’t care.

How wonderful to see the children so excited about coming here! That same excitement was in the air when they came for special events like the Fall Festival, Christmas Crafts, the Christmas Pizza Party, Valentine Crafts and our last After-School Program celebration where children were awarded for unique accomplishments. Wow, what a year it has been!

And the fun goes on in a jam-packed June: Five girls received scholarships to go to the Future Lady Noles Girl’s Basketball Camp; bats from St. Francis Wildlife will visit us at Grace Mission; children are going to VBS; and, those who qualify are going to Camp Weed Summer Camp June 27-30.

If you would like to make a financial contribution to their camp experience, please make checks to Grace Mission, note that it is for summer camp and send it to PO Box 10472, Tallahassee, FL 32302. A gift that everyone can provide is your prayer support for a safe, healthy and fun-filled summer for all the children.

This past school year and the wonderful summer ahead have been made possible by your prayers, support and commitment to Grace Mission. Thank you for being such faithful partners in our ministry.



Grace Happens - Come and See!
Corner of Brevard and Bronough + 850/224-3817



The State of Grace

by *Geoff Schwartz*
Senior Warden

Farewell and Welcome

Grace Mission is no stranger to change. Despite lengthy the tenure of Pastors Michael and Sterling Henderson, its founding co-vicars, Grace Mission's congregation changes significantly on every two years. Regular faces disappear and new ones appear. That is the nature of serving a transient population. But there remains a core group of parishioners at Grace Mission that adds stability. The same is true of Grace's Mission Board. Over the past 14 years the Board has grown from 6 to a desired number of 12 members. The members of the Board are recommended to the vicar and wardens by the rectors of the Episcopal churches in the Tallahassee area and then approved by the bishop. Unlike vestries, there is no fixed term for Board members. The turnover of the seven Board positions has been, on average about every three to four years. Board members are invited to stay as long as they believe they are fulfilling a ministry to which they called, and are given the freedom to step down when they believe they are called to pursue a different ministry. But then there is a core group of five board members, three of which have 12 plus years of service and two with 8 to 10 years on the Board. When one of the new Board members (2 years or less) asked if there was a specific term of service, one of the core group members wryly commented that it was "a life sentence."

That person with the dry wit was Judy shipman, an eight year veteran on the Board from Holy Comforter. It is to Judy that the Board now says farewell. In her 8 years of service, Judy has done much more than be an active, contributing member of the Board. She has become a part of the fabric of the Grace Mission community of faith in so many different ways. One can quickly tell from her actions, that Judy is passionate about Grace Mission and especially the people it serves. During the time of her service at Grace Mission, Judy has been on the vestry at Holy comforter, two of which she served as senior warden ; served as outreach chair; and now serves as clerk of the vestry. Judy also has a fairly demanding full time job. Judy is committed to staying involved with Grace Mission, especially in one-on-one ministries with the people of Grace. We praise God for the gift He had given Grace Mission in the person of Judy Shipman, and we pray that He watch over her and keep her safe.

But God always has a plan. When one of His chosen steps aside, he has already chosen the right person to step in. That was the case when Michael and Sterling retired. He already has chosen Pastor Amanda to step in. It merely took Pastor Amanda and the search committee some time to get on the same page with God. The same is true with Judy's departure. God has chosen Corrine Rubin, an active member at Holy Comforter, to step in as Grace Mission's newest Board member. So how did Corrine come to want to serve at Grace Mission?

(continued)

Blast Off was Out of This World!

Challenger Fundraiser a Successful Liftoff for Grace

At 9:20 a.m. on Saturday, June 4th a few "early birds" walked through the doors of The Challenger Learning Center for the Blast Off for Grace benefit. The doors didn't officially open until 9:30, but the Challenger Center staff and the Grace Mission volunteers were ready!

Before long more and more Grandparents, parents and kids streamed through those doors to the check in table and then scurried off to the Digital Dome or the Apollo mission briefing center. As Chuck Berry's song goes, by 10 AM "the joint was rockin', goin' round and round." From then on it was non-stop FUN until the second Apollo Mission successfully returned to Earth at 3:15 p.m.

There are many ways to measure success. All in all, Blast Off was an over the top success. Billed as a Family Fun day, it surely was that as multi generations enjoyed everything offered, including the delicious food provided by Morrelia's. Blast Off also gave many participants an opportunity to experience for the first time the amazing things the Challenger Center has to offer. It also gave not only the participants but also the general public a better idea of what Grace Mission is all about. Finally, it raised much needed money to support the ministries of Grace. The final tally is not in yet, but from the preliminary number, it appears that Blast Off has exceeded its goal.

The financial success of Blast Off owes much to the 21 sponsors who contributed \$2,600 to underwrite the cost of the event, and to many people who bought tickets to be donated for use by several of Grace Mission's adults and a much larger number of the children of Grace.

Grace Mission gives its special thanks to the management and staff of the Challenger Center who played such an important role in helping to plan and put on the event. Vanessa Zein-Eldin for her eye-catching graphic designs, Lou Armesio for media relations and materials design and preparation, and the Tallahassee Democrat for its articles in advance of the event.

Farewell and Welcome

At Holy Comforter's Ministry Fair, Corrine seemed as if she had been touched by the Holy Spirit as she read the information presented about Grace Mission. That "tap, tap, tap" didn't go away. So when Judy spoke with Father Ted Monica, the rector of Holy Comforter, of her decision to resign from the Board, Father Ted had just the person in mind to take her spot! We believe that Corrine will bring to the Board youth, enthusiasm, and a Spirit-driven commitment to serve Grace Mission. So now it is time to praise God again, this time for Corrine Rubini!



Grace Mission Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 10472, Tallahassee, FL 32302 + gracemission@netally.com

