



Grace HAPPENINGS

the newsletter of

Grace Mission Episcopal Church

...a transformative ministry of the forgotten

Advent 2013



Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda Nickles, Vicar

Dear Ministry Partners:

An ordinary night with ordinary sheep and ordinary shepherds. And were it not for a God who loves to hook an “extra” on the front of the ordinary, the night would have gone unnoticed. The sheep would have been forgotten, and the shepherds would have slept the night away.

But God dances amidst the common. And that night He did a waltz. The black sky exploded with brightness. One minute the shepherd was dead asleep, the next he was rubbing his eyes and staring into the face of an angel. The night was ordinary no more. Jesus was born – God himself made visible to all. “Hark! The herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!” (Hymn 87).

God is still dancing amidst the common. At Grace Mission we see how God is taking the ordinary and doing “extraordinary” things in their lives. Grace is God walking into their world with a sparkle in his eye changing, shaping, and leading them to a life that is eternally altered.

As we approach Advent and Christmas, we are reminded that we are not alone. God has come down from Heaven to tell us He loves us and hope was borne that first Christmas night! Alleluia!

From all of us at Grace Mission we want to thank you for your continued support for a ministry that provides love and hope to others.

May the love and hope of Christmas fill your heart.

In His Name,
Pastor Amanda +

“Songs of Grace”

Grace Mission’s Band has released their first CD: *Songs of Grace!* What a great Christmas gift for someone special, while supporting Grace Mission! CD’s can be purchased for \$10 at Grace Mission or any of the Tallahassee Episcopal Churches after December 1st.

A Season of Angels

Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children’s Ministries

As I look forward to celebrating Thanksgiving I’m aware of the many blessings I have to be thankful for and the many ways God is at work in the children’s ministry of Grace Mission. We are ending the year with 50 children in the After-School Program at Springfield Apartments Public Housing Project, aka Joe Louis, and thirty-five on the waiting list clamoring to be a part of the program.

Many of these children and their families are unchurched, so I’m especially excited about the upcoming Advent/Christmas season’s opportunity to introduce them to church. Our Grace Mission tradition is to have our Family Christmas Celebration the Tuesday before Christmas Eve, so this year we will be gathering on Tuesday, December 17, at 5:30pm for Eucharist, a Christmas feast, and gift giving. Since we do not have space at Grace Mission for all these families, St. John’s Church is graciously allowing us to use their sanctuary for Eucharist and Alfriend Hall for the feast and gift giving. What a beautiful setting for the families to be introduced to the Eucharist and church. Can’t wait to see the expressions on the children’s faces as they enter that beautiful sanctuary!

We plan to have three gifts for each child in the program provided though angel trees at your churches. Please consider taking an angel and making a child’s wish come true. There will be one gift listed per angel and you may take one or more angels based on the number of gifts you’d like to provide. To help you budget and shop, many angels have specifics listed such as price, if the child selected the listed item from the Family Dollar Store Christmas Catalogue. You may substitute similar items from other stores. Please bring the gifts to your parish hall or to Grace Mission unwrapped in a gift bag and clearly marked with the child’s name by Wednesday, December 11, so we can organize everything in time for the family Christmas Celebration on the 17th. Entire families will be attending and we also will give one gift to each non-program sibling who comes with the family to the celebration. Those will be generic gifts matched by age and gender, not from wish lists or angels on the trees. Extra gifts we receive may be used for these siblings.

We need volunteers from December 11th to 14th to help get gifts ready for this celebration and others to serve on Tuesday,
(continued)



Grace Happens - Come and See!

Corner of Brevard and Bronough + P.O. Box 10472, Tallahassee, FL 32302

www.gracemission.net



From the Deacon's Desk

Deacon Jeanie Beyer

In this season of Advent, we Christians are preparing for the coming of Jesus: the Christ child, the Incarnation, the Word made flesh who came and dwelt among us. Advent is the time of year to focus on the spirit of giving as we prepare to receive God's greatest gift to us in His gift of His son Jesus, the Savior of the world.

At Grace Mission, we learn from God's example of gift giving and try to emulate His generosity. Our congregation delights in the opportunity to make gifts to Grace Mission's many ministries. During Advent, we have a small tree in the Sanctuary which is decorated with small paper ornaments. Each ornament has a small price tag ranging from 25 cents to a dollar. Our congregation chooses one or more ornaments and makes gifts to Grace Mission which go towards items which are needed. It is awesome to see the joy of giving reflected in members faces as they contribute towards coffee, creamer and other items which we all enjoy throughout the year. Their gifts come from the heart and are sacrifices like the widow's mite.

Another gift giving activity that Grace Mission's congregation enjoys doing at this time of year is making Christmas Cards. Over 1000 cards are made each year to send to our volunteers and donors. Our members practice living in gratitude for the many gifts which have been received and enjoy being able to say thank you.

It is a blessing to observe Grace Mission members grow and give. You too can join us in making gifts to Grace Mission by selecting ornaments from the Christmas trees in your parish halls. Selected ornaments can contribute towards Eucharistic supplies of bread and wine to paper products, cleaning supplies, laundry detergent and other gifts that keep our ministries going. **For the month of October, we served over 5,200 meals—a record high!** All gifts are appreciated!

We appreciate the gift of you and the many ways you support Grace Mission.

Christmas Blessings,
Deacon Jeanie

Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway? *Think Alternative Markets*

Alternative shopping is a special way to honor the birth of Christ. Shoppers may choose one or more of their favorite charities to support, and their donation is transformed into a gift to honor someone special at Christmas. Cards are customized to detail the goods or services made possible by their donation, such as: "Two meals for the homeless through Grace Mission are given in Uncle Bob's honor." Shop "alternatively" this year!

John Wesley Methodist Church - 1689 Old St. Augustine Road

- ◆ Saturday, December 6th: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- ◆ Sunday, December 8th: 1 to 4 p.m.

Christ Presbyterian Church - 2317 Bannerman Road

- ◆ Friday, December 13th: 6 to 9 p.m.



An Evening of Grace

September 28th Event a Great Success!

We wish to thank all of those who donated their time and support in making this year's fundraiser one of the best ever!

North Star Sponsors

Altha Manning; Andrew & Angela Bellavance; Beverly Spencer; Capital City Bank; Franklin & Lynette Hamilton; Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; Reve Thomas & Sharon Thomas; Ronald G. Willis, DMD; Shaun E. Laurie, MD; Holy Comforter Episcopal; St. John's Episcopal; St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church; and, The Links.

Moonlight Sponsors

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Starlight Sponsors

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In-Kind Sponsors

Capital City Bank; Carrie Ann & Co. Catering; Darron Toston, Graphic Artist; DQP; FL Beer Wholesalers Assn; Leon Steel Drum Band; Lisa's Bartenders; Longneu Parsons; Latin Attitude; Marcos Pizza; Pepsi Food Co's; Posh Stems; Sonny's BBQ; Tallahassee Salsa Dancers; Target Copy; Tony Levell, Photographer; Tri-Eagle Sales; and, Wine & Spirits Distributors of Florida.

Children's Ministries (continued)

December 17th at St. John's. Consider volunteering on the 17th to be an usher, dining room server, gift elf, set up or clean up crew, or to sit with families and help them navigate through an unfamiliar prayer book and Eucharist. You may also volunteer to be part of gift organizing anytime during Dec. 11-14. 'Tis the season of angels so put on your wings and fly in to help us! Please email or call me with any questions or to volunteer. I can be reached at elizcrowe@comcast.net, 850-320-2233 (cell) or 850-224-3817 (Grace Mission).

Thank you for your continued support of our Children's programs and ministry. We appreciate all you do for us and for the children. May you and your family have a meaningful Advent and a joyful Christmas season.

Elizabeth



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