

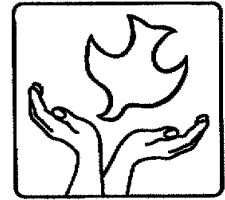
Grace HAPPENINGS

the newsletter of

Grace Mission Episcopal Church

...a transformative ministry of the forgotten

Lent 2015



Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda Nickles, Vicar

Dear Ministry Partners,

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Grace Mission throughout 2014. We have so much to be thankful for through all of our volunteers, sponsors and donors. We had over 20,000 volunteer hours this past year! Alleluia!

Your contributions this winter season helped us to giveaway 143 coats from October to December with an additional 46 coats given out in January. We gave out 76 blankets and many sweaters and sweatshirts along with numerous sweatpants, pants, winter caps and scarves, hygiene products and much more. We gave away a total of \$3,555 (\$10 dollars each) Goodwill vouchers to those in need from the clothing donations you gave us.

The Christmas Angel Trees at each church provided Christmas gifts to 79 children most of whom attend our After-School Program. St. John's Episcopal Church partnered with us to provide a beautiful venue and atmosphere for our Family Christmas Service, now an annual event. We also served dinner to over 200 children, siblings and parents with the 'In-A-Chord' Barbershop Quartet singing in the background. It was a lovely evening. St. John's helped us last summer when we needed a space to hold our two-week Reading Academy. The Reading Academy helped 21 children prepare for the new school year by improving their reading abilities. We had 14 children go to Camp Weed and 10 children attended St. John's VBS program. We also gave new backpacks in the beginning of the school year (filled with school supplies) to 32 children.

Each month, through our One Campaign/Mobile Grocery, we were able to deliver wholesome and nutritious food in the Joe Louis HUD Housing Project to over 2,275 people, with over half of that number being children. Many churches participated in the One Campaign and we are very grateful for your support!

Grace Mission supports the Brehon House (for pregnant women who need shelter and help during pregnancy). We delivered 10 beautiful baby gift baskets to the women who reside at the Brehon House along with many diapers and baby wipes.

We raised \$2,000 (through our Sunday outreach basket – think of the widow's mite story in the Bible) for the Habitat for Humanity house build this year. We continue to support many local agencies that help with the poor and homeless in Leon

County, as well as ministries within the Diocese of Florida. We have walked the neighborhood each month through our Water-Walk and Adopt-A-Lot ministry – picking up trash, handing out cold water to those in need and praying for others. Once a month, we have free clothing give-away to all those in need. We had four free Health Clinics and a free foot care clinic.

As a worshipping community within the Episcopal Church, we added Morning Prayer on Thursday morning beginning in February. Morning Prayer is now twice a week (Wednesday and Thursday). We baptized five Adults! Bible study remains strong and vibrant. We studied the Book of Joshua and Paul's letter to the Ephesians. We began a new Recovery/Healing class on Thursday, which is well-attended.

We had three Men's Spiritual Retreats and our first Women's Spiritual Retreat this past year at Camp Weed. Both were well attended. In June, we began a new 12 step (AA) Evening Prayer service on Tuesday.

We served almost 48,000 hot meals in 2014. We are now serving at least one hot meal each day and four days out of the week we serve two meals. We also serve a hot meal to our After-School children three times a week. Thank you to all the churches that partner with us to provide a hot meal for our Christian Education night for the children.

Grace Mission is committed to raising money to support our budget and ministry needs. We raised 38% of our income this year through our Fundraisers, Mail-Outs, 100 & 500 Club, and Alternative Markets. This of course is a reflection of the dedication and commitment of all the volunteers, sponsors and donors who support Grace Mission. Thank you!

Why do we do all that we do at Grace Mission? Let me share with you a message from our new Board Chairperson, Yolanda Bogan:

"When I have a good meal, I believe the world is a much better place. When I am not hungry my mind is more open to thinking and learning and my heart is more open to giving. I assume others are the same. A full stomach and a clean body help to provide dignity and make way for health, healing and hope. Grace Mission believes that everyone, even the poor, should be healthy and whole. In such a state of being, there's an increase in law and order, family stability, and well-being. Grace Mission nurtures spiritual development by providing two church services on Sunday, weekly Evening Prayer and twice weekly Morning Prayer along with a Spiritual Recovery meeting and Bible study each week. Grace Mission improves school performance through meeting with children regularly (3x per week) for homework assistance during the school year and providing summer camp



Grace Happens - Come and See!

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Thanks for the Blessings

Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children's Ministries

We wrapped up last year with our Family Christmas Celebration at St. John's where we celebrated Eucharist, feasted on turkey and dressing, and distributed gifts to the children in our after-school program and their siblings. What a wonderful way to end the year with all of you present in spirit through the generous Christmas gifts you provided for them. I thank you for being partners in this ministry through your prayers, donations, financial support, and lending a helping hand.

As we begin this Lenten season, please keep our programs in your prayers and consider ways you may want to partner with us this year. This summer, qualified children will go to Camp Weed and we will have our annual two week Reading Academy and our back -to-school backpacks kickoff.

In the meantime, please pray for the children to continue to improve in school and to be eager to learn more about God in our Thursday Christian Education program.

Words of Grace (continued)

scholarships, as well as Reading Academy to help children prepare for the new school year by improving their reading abilities. Grace Mission promotes community pride by helping local residents keep the neighborhood clean. Grace Mission prevents illness and restores health by providing coats, blankets, and prescription medication, and collaborates with other like-minded organizations through donating to local, national and international programs. At Grace Mission, we feed the hungry twice a day on most days. While Grace Mission is a ministry of the Christian Church under the Episcopal Diocese, we welcome those who want to do something to promote dignity, health, healing and hope."

*Dr. Yolanda K. H. Bogan
Professor and Director
Department of Psychology
Principal Investigator, FAMU MSI-CBO Program*

Thank you for giving of your time, talent and treasure in helping those often forgotten in society but not by God!

Pastor Amanda+

Upcoming 2015 Events:

February 28, Volunteer Appreciation Lunch, Church of the Advent, 12:00 noon. Volunteers who haven't received an invitation please contact Delois.

April 19, Visitation of Bishop Dorsey Henderson, Jr., Grace Mission 10:30 a.m. service.

May 30, Blues & BBQ, 6:00 p.m., American Legion Hall at Lake Ella, music at 7:00 p.m. featuring Brett Wellman and the Stone Cold Blues Band. \$10 admission, \$7 meal donation.

September 19, Sixth Annual Evening of Grace, FSU Alumni Center, cocktails, silent auction, dinner. Time to be announced.

Recovery and Remembrance

Seminarian David Tremaine

Last Spring we started a Thursday morning class centered around the program "Celebrate Recovery." This program was created as a way to continue the recovery process begun in 12 step meetings and to have a support group for those struggling with addiction. This spring we continue to have a Recovery Meeting on Thursday mornings, but with a bit of a different approach.

As we learn more and more about the nature of addiction, we continue to expand our understanding and definition of addiction itself. As a culture we are constantly finding new and interesting things to be addicted to, not just controlled substances. As our understanding of addiction expands, so must our understanding of recovery. It is our belief as we open this class that all people, whether they identify as addicts or not, are in need of recovery. We are all recovering from some kind of unhealthy and destructive mechanisms for coping with the trials and hardships of our lives. Some would call it recovery from our "ego delusions," others might call it our "false selves," Richard Rohr so eloquently refers to it as the "first half of life." No matter how you approach it, the reality is that the true work of spiritual growth is to "recover" our essential, true, soul-full selves from all the ways we have covered them up in hopes of "surviving" life.

To do this hard work of soul recovery, we are using the Enneagram, an ancient system of understanding the true characteristics of the soul, as a tool for spiritual growth. Many people know the Enneagram as a personality typing system, but many spiritual teachers, including Richard Rohr, believe it to be much more than that. Russ Hudson, a leading Enneagram scholar and co-founder of the Enneagram Institute, at an Enneagram seminar at the Center for Action and Contemplation in 2009, said that "the Enneagram rightly understood is an invitation to the remembrance of grace." The idea here is that, through the practice of contemplation and other spiritual disciplines, we are coming into direct contact with the passions, or sins, that have separated us from ourselves and from the real presence of God within us and around us. It is in coming face to face with these passions that we are able to do the work that Jesus is calling us to do, the work that Jesus models for us in this season of Lent, in turning back to God's grace in repentance and letting our sins teach us about the truth of our souls, rather than continue to separate us.

In this season of Lent, we find ourselves in the midst of recovery, facing our true selves, the shadow and the light, head on. And, when we face these darkest parts of ourselves with truth, honesty and vulnerability, we will truly know what it means to take up our cross and follow Jesus on the path to certain death, and even more certain life.

Donations Needed: T-shirts (L to XXL), white socks, razors, men's underwear (M to XL).



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