

**Words of Grace**  
*The Rev. Amanda L. Nickles, Vicar*

Dear Ministry Partners:

**Thank you to everyone who contributed to Grace Mission throughout 2016.** We could not continue all the wonderful work and ministry we do at Grace Mission without our volunteers, sponsors and donors.

Last year Grace Mission celebrated 20 years of ministry. The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Evening of Grace at St. John's was a beautiful and successful evening due to the hard work of many volunteers. Thank you to everyone that volunteered, attended, donated and celebrated this milestone anniversary with us.

Your contributions this winter season helped us giveaway many coats, blankets, sweaters, and sweatshirts along with numerous sweatpants, pants, winter caps and scarves, hygiene products and much more. Throughout the year we had four free Health Clinics (we are partners with the FSU Medical School), and we were able to give out 40 free flu shots this year. We continue to do free showers three times per week. We also provide free laundry services (one load of laundry) to those that attend our worship services. We gave away an approximate total value of \$22,505 worth of clothing items and a total of \$3,960 (\$10 each) Goodwill vouchers to those in need through our once a month free clothing giveaway. These vouchers provide the opportunity for a person to go to Goodwill and get the clothing item(s) they need if we do not have it available at the free clothing giveaway. Thank you for your donations and please continue to clean out your closets and donate to Grace Mission.

Each month, through our One Campaign/Mobile Pantry we were able to deliver wholesome and nutritious food in the Springfield Apts./Joe Louis HUD Housing Project to over 2009 people with over half of that number being children and seniors. Many churches participated in the One Campaign and we are very grateful for your support! In 2017, through our partnership with Second Harvest we are offering more Mobile Pantries at Grace Mission.

Grace Mission continued to support the Brehon House (for pregnant women who need shelter and help during pregnancy). We delivered baby clothing and other baby items that they needed. We also support the local humane society by providing towels for the many homeless animals at the shelter. We have provided clothing, hygiene items and food to other agencies in the Big Bend area.

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. We continue to raise money, through our outreach basket each Sunday, for many partner agencies that help the poor and homeless populations in Leon County.in 2016.

And we served close to 40,000 hot nutritious meals at Grace Mission.

As a worshipping community within the Episcopal Church, we continued to provide Morning Prayer, we baptized four adults, and bible study remains strong and vibrant. We studied and finished the Book of Acts and began the Book of Judges. Our bible studies bring a crowd and many wonderful discussions arise from each session. People are learning Scripture and it's very exciting to see that!

The Christmas Angel Trees at each church provided Christmas gifts to 51 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. We served dinner to the families, provided entertainment and handed out the gifts for the children. It was a lovely evening. We had 13 children earn the right to go to Camp Weed (did you know we outfit each child with new clothes and shoes for the entire four days of camp) and enjoy a wonderful Christian Education program along with all the fun camp activities. The Reading Academy helped 21 children prepare for the new school year by improving their reading ability. This past year's theme was 'The Pollinators' and how important they are to our eco system. Did you know that butterflies smell with their feet? (I didn't.) It was amazing! We ended the Academy with a trip to the ocean and a BBQ dinner for all the children. This year the theme will be 'Splish-Splash! Water, Water Everywhere!' I can't wait to see what Ms. Elizabeth has planned for us this year. The beginning of each school year we give out new backpacks to the After-School children filled with all the school supplies that they may need to help succeed in school. We began our new Youth program in the fall with five youth who attended our After-School program and it has been an interesting learning experience. They are doing well with much supervision. This summer we plan on taking them on many field trips to broaden their world.

Grace Mission is committed to raising money to support our budget and ministry needs. We raised 36% 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! We also want to thank the many churches that support us each month in their outreach budgets.

I hope I will see you at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Grace Mission Gala, 'Cheeseburgers in Paradise' at the Woman's Club of Tallahassee on April 8. See details on the back page.

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

Many Blessings to you in 2017.

Rev. Amanda L. Nickles+

*From the Other Priest's Desk*  
The Rev. Dr. Jenni Liem

Welcome to 2017! I am so pleased to be able to report to our wonderful Grace Mission family about the successes and learnings from our inaugural youth group season. Our youth group members (all sixth graders with a long history in the After School program) have decided to call themselves The 5 Musketeers – because there are five of them and they are definitely a team.

The move to the Episcopal University Center at Ruge Hall was a bit of a strain on our youth so we have decided to meet at Grace Mission on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This gives our youth group more concentrated time with their tutors and (this is the part they are so excited about) a chance to serve the congregation of Grace Mission at our meals on both days. This group of young people has been very vocal about their desire to volunteer and be more connected with this congregation. We even had a couple of the youth rise early on a Saturday morning to help with the One Campaign mobile food pantry.

In January, the youth group headed over to FSU for our first outing! Thanks to a wonderful donation, we rooted for the home team at the FSU vs. Louisville men's basketball game. It was a great opportunity to gather and for a fun afternoon. The 5 Musketeers will continue to have outings throughout the spring and into the summer. We have tickets to see the FSU production of "Beauty and the Beast," and in March we will try our hand at bowling! We are just now planning for weekly outings during the summer break. If you have ideas or resources to share, please let us know. The youth are especially interested in sporting and music events!

And while the After School program ends on April 13<sup>th</sup>, the youth will continue to have tutoring through the end of the school year. This will give our youth a leg up on rising to the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. We do need tutors who will commit to an hour or two a week (on Tuesdays and Wednesdays) to spend time with our great kids. Think and pray if this might be a volunteer job you are being called to! We are waiting for your call.

As we look toward the future of this group, we are trying to be intentional in our working with the cultural and developmental needs of our youth. This inaugural year hasn't been without its ups and downs, however the community and fellowship of these unique young people is so heartening. Please keep us in your prayers as we continue to work and grow and play together!!

*Upcoming Events*

- April 8, 2017—8th Annual Evening of Grace
- Additional 2017 mobile food pantries at Grace Mission-
  - March 11
  - August 12
  - May 13
  - October 14
- August 19, 2017—Annual Blues & BBQ at the Lake Ella American Legion Hall

*Splish! Splash!*  
Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children's Ministries

Springtime flowers are already blooming and as quick as a wink we will be in the midst of our children's summer programs.

Our 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders will have fun as they read, explore, and learn about water in our "Splish-Splash! Water, Water Everywhere!" Reading Academy June 19 – 24 from 10am-5pm. We need volunteers to help in the four activity centers (reading, lab, arts & crafts, games) as well as on field trips to a weather station, a wastewater treatment facility, and to Wakulla Springs. You can volunteer for an hour(s), a day(s), or any combination of times, days, or functions! Come be part of the excitement as children learn that no new water is being made and the water they drank this morning might have had a shark swimming through it hundreds of years ago or come from a river in China!

There is more water in store for them July 5 – 8 when those who've earned the privilege based on behavior go to Camp Weed. They'll kayak, swim, and enjoy all the typical summer camp adventures. As Pastor Amanda mentioned, we outfit the children from head to toe (sunscreen for faces to shoes and socks) and welcome Wal-Mart gift cards to help us purchase underwear, shorts, T-shirts, swimsuits, bug spray, etc. If you're cleaning out your linen closet we also need pillowcases to use as their "luggage" duffel bags.

Please contact Elizabeth Crowe at [elizcrowe@comcast.net](mailto:elizcrowe@comcast.net) or at 850 320-2233 for additional information or to volunteer to help with the Reading Academy.

*8th Annual An Evening of Grace*

Mark your calendars for **April 8, 2017 when An Evening of Grace presents Cheeseburgers in Paradise.** In a casual and laid-back nod to Jimmy Buffett, the Woman's Club of Tallahassee will be transformed into a beachy Key West setting featuring a cash bar, cheeseburgers and the fixin's, music, dancing, and a raffle to be given away at the event for an exciting 4-night, 3-day Key West trip (raffle ticket \$50, 1-in-200 chance to win).

If you can't attend, please support us by buying a scholarship ticket for someone from Grace Mission. Admission tickets (\$50) and sponsorship opportunities can be purchased through participating churches, on our web-



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