

GRACE HAPPENINGS
THE NEWSLETTER OF
GRACE MISSION EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HELP • HEALING • HOPE

LENT 2018

Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda L. Nickles, Vicar

Dear Ministry Partners:

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Grace Mission throughout 2017. We could not continue all the wonderful work and ministry we do at Grace Mission without our volunteers, sponsors and donors.

Last year, The 8th Annual Evening of Grace/Cheeseburgers in Paradise fundraising event at the Woman's Club of Tallahassee was a huge success due to the hard work of many volunteers. Thank you to everyone that volunteered, attended, donated and danced the night away with us. It was our most successful 'Gala' to date and I believe the most fun. Who doesn't like Jimmy Buffett music? Join us this year on **April 14th** for our second 'Cheeseburgers in Paradise' fundraising event.

Your contributions this winter season helped us giveaway many coats, blankets, sweaters, sweatshirts along with numerous sweat-pants, pants, winter caps and scarves, hygiene products and much more. Throughout the year we had four free **Health Clinics** (we are partners with FSU Medical School) and we were able to give out 25 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 \$24,420 worth of clothing items and a total of \$4,850 (\$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.

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 1,349 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 began offering **Parking Lot Grocery** at Grace Mission once a quarter. We served over 1,262 people through this program.

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 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.

We served over 43,000 **hot nutritious meals** in 2017.

As a worshipping community within the Episcopal Church, we continued to provide Morning Prayer, we baptized six adults, and bible study remains strong and vibrant. We studied and finished the Book of Philippians and the Book of Ruth. 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! We are seeing larger numbers in our 12 step healing service on Tuesday nights and we have a strong recovery group meeting every Thursday afternoon.

The **Christmas Angel Trees** at each church provided Christmas gifts to 50+ 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 14 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 our After-School children prepare for the new school year by improving their reading ability. This past year's theme was 'Splish, Splash, All about Water' and it ended with a field trip to Wakulla Springs. The program reminded all the children of the importance of protecting the Florida Springs. This year the theme will be about 'Forests.' 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. The second year of the Youth program began this fall with five youth who attended our After-School program, and it has been an interesting learning experience. They are doing well with 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.

We are adding two new fundraisers this year. **"Tips for Trips"** raising money for the children and youth programs was held at Madison Social on Feb. 7th from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm. No tickets, no cost - simply show up. Tips from the bar went to Grace Mission. We hope to do a second Madison Social event in May - TBA. Join us for a fun night out.

Thank you for giving of your time, talent and treasure in helping to bring help, healing and hope to the City of Tallahassee..

Many Blessings to you in 2018.

Rev. Amanda L. Nickles+

CORNER BREVARD AND BRONOUGH



P.O. Box 10472, TALLAHASSEE, FL 32302

Notes from the Other Priest
Pastor Jenni

Dear Grace Mission Friends:

I am happy to report that 2018 has gotten off to a wonderful start with the LAUNCH Youth program. We were so excited to see one another after our long holiday break. So, now we are back and making plans for an exciting spring semester.

The students in the LAUNCH group have worked diligently maintaining and improving their grades. When we started in September, we noticed that they were on average "B" students. After conversations and intensive concentration on problem subjects, most of our students were able to bring their grades up to A's and B's. One of our students, Tonineshia, worked so hard on her grade in science and on her project, she was invited to be part of the school district science fair!

Now we are in the spring semester and we have plans for continuing our studies and extra-curricular adventures! Some of the activities we have planned include rooting for the home team at FSU baseball games, SchoolHouse Rock Live!, a trip to the Florida Caverns, and other exciting trips. We continue to thank all of our friends for their support and care for our LAUNCH program. If you have ideas or resources you would like to share with this wonderful group of young people, please let us know!

News

2018 An Evening of Grace: Mark your calendars for **April 14, 2018 when An Evening of Grace will again present "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 one major exciting raffle to be given away at the event.

Please consider being a sponsor for the event.

Needs

Please donate clothing and small household items to Grace Mission. All clothing and items are given out free to those in need the first Wednesday of each month. For larger donations please call first. 850-224-3817

New Advisory Board Members

Please join us in welcoming our new Advisory Board members, Mary Ellen Bateman and Thomas (Tom) H. Bateman.

Mary Ellen is a lawyer with 36 years of experience. She retired from The Florida Bar after 32 years as an attorney, manager and administrator working in the areas of lawyer ethics and advertising, unlicensed practice of law, and lawyer regulation, among others.

Tom retired from his elected position as Circuit Judge of the Second Judicial Circuit of Florida in 2009 after 35 years of public service. He is now a fulltime Florida Supreme Court and Appellate Court Mediator, Qualified Arbitrator, and practicing attorney at the Tallahassee law firm of Messer, Caparello, P.A.

Mary Ellen and Tom are members of St. John's Episcopal Church.

Secrets of the Summer
Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children's Ministries

Spring flowers are almost blooming and as fast as we can say "summer" we will be in the midst of our children's summer programs.

Our 1st-5th graders will have fun as they read, explore, and learn in our "Secrets of the Forest" Reading Academy scheduled from June 11-15 from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. We need many volunteers to help in the four activity centers (reading, lab, arts and crafts, games) as well as on a field trip, especially with our university volunteers gone for the summer. 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 about the botanical and wildlife splendor in our Apalachicola Forest and the Native American people who lived here before us.

There are more woodlands in store for 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, outfitted with everything they need for camp. We welcome Wal-Mart gift cards to help us purchase clothes and supplies like bug spray/sunscreen for camp. We also need volunteers to help them pack their clothes and decorate nightshirts on our "Camp Get Ready Day", (date not yet scheduled).

Please email Elizabeth Crowe at elizcrowe@comcast.net or call/text her at 850 320-2233 for additional info or to volunteer.

And one last thing. It is both with excitement and sadness that I will be retiring this year on May 1st. When I moved here in October 1999 to help at Grace Mission and made a commitment to stay for two years, I would have never imagined I would be here 18 years later! I love the work that I do and the children and families I have the privilege of working with. But, as one of my favorite verses from Ecclesiastes says, "To everything there is the season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." The season is now here for me to make way for a new person to bring a fresh perspective and new energy to the children's program and for me to slow down and smell the roses. You'll see me around this summer as I help the new Director transition into our summer programs. I have no plans to leave Tallahassee and look forward to staying in relationship with Grace Mission, the families, and all you wonderful supporters.

The children have added much joy to my life and I thank God that their parents entrusted them to my care for so long. I'm humbled to have had the opportunity to influence the children's future by investing in their present. I will cherish many memories like the wonder in a girl's eyes the first time she saw the ocean, the excitement when our girls made it 30 feet to the top of the rock wall at camp, the joy the first time a child jumped off the camp diving board (he later wrote that it was the best day in his whole life!), or their sense of accomplishment every time they'd bring me a good grade on a test or read a book. Two boys who started in our after-school program in first grade are now freshman in college - one at TCC and the other at Augusta University, both a first for their family. That brings more joy to my heart than anything I could imagine!

Thank you for going on this journey with me through the gift of your time, treasure, and prayers over these many years. I have appreciated your support for me, Grace Mission, and our children's programs.

GRACE MISSION EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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