



Grace HAPPENINGS

the newsletter of

Grace Mission Episcopal Church

...a transformative ministry of the forgotten

Lent 2014



Words of Grace

The Rev. Amanda Nickles, Vicar

Dear Ministry Partners:

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Grace Mission throughout 2013. We have so much to be thankful for! We served almost 39,000 hot meals in 2013, and we are serving at least one hot meal each day with the exception of Monday, our day off. Your contributions this winter season helped us give-away 131 coats, 163 blankets, 188 sweatshirts and sweaters, numerous sweatpants, winter caps and scarves.

Many churches now participate in the One Campaign – we have made new partnerships and rejoice in our church partnerships already established. The One Campaign allows us to deliver wholesome and nutritious food to over 71 households each month, and it allowed us to give out 30 - \$10 gift cards to Winn Dixie to help with a Thanksgiving meal.

The Christmas Angel Trees at each church provided Christmas gifts to 89 children, most of who are in our After School program at Springfield Apartments/Joe Louis Housing Unit. St. John's Church partnered with us to provide a beautiful venue and atmosphere for our Family Christmas Service. At Christmas we were able to give 77 whole turkeys to families in need.

Grace Mission delivered seven beautiful baby baskets to the women residing at the Brehon House. We raised money for College Scholarships, Habitat for Humanity and Global Outreach (orphanage in Uganda). We continue to support many local agencies that help 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 ministries - picking up trash, handing out cold water and praying for others.

As a worshipping community within the Episcopal Church, we added Morning Prayer on Wednesdays; baptized 20 adults; and had three Men's Spiritual Retreats at Camp Weed! Bible Study remains strong and vibrant with 30 to 40 attending each Wednesday.

Grace Mission is committed to raising money to support our budget and ministry needs. We raised 27% (up by 5% over last year) of our income through our Fundraisers, mail-outs, 100 & 500 Club, Dinners, 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!

Continued...

Results Are In!

Elizabeth Crowe, Grace Children's Ministries

With your support we were able to successfully launch and run our children's programs in the Joe Louis housing project last year. We ended the year with our Family Christmas Celebration held at St. John's with worship, a feast, and gifts for 89 children — thanks to your generosity through the Christmas Angel Trees. Everyone was wowed by the setting, worship, music, food, and friendliness of all those who made this a special night. A mom told me she was so excited to light a candle and sing Silent Night, as she had seen that in movies but never thought she'd get to do that!

When asked if I've seen any changes since being at Joe Louis, the answer is a resounding "Yes!" January report cards had two straight A students, 14 A/B Honor Roll students, and language arts and math improvements of three F's that came up to C's; five D's to B's; and eight C's to B's. Even five B's to A's! Most children improved over their previous report card and their parents were really delighted.

Next up: Planning for our summer program including a three-week Summer Reading Academy and Camp Weed! We expect to have more children to outfit for camp and would appreciate your prayerful consideration of Wal-Mart gift cards or donations to help us provide camp clothes and necessities for them.

Thanks for all you've done for the children and for our programs. Please keep us in your prayers as we move into the summer and more opportunities to serve the children.

Upcoming Events

April 26th - Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

We will be saying "Thank YOU!" to our many volunteers on April 26th beginning at 11:30 AM at Advent Church. Looks for invitations in early April.

May 17th - 3rd Annual Blues and BBQ!

Join us Saturday, May 17th at the American Legion Hall for great BBQ and even better Blues music by the locally-renowned Brett Wellman and the Stone Cold Blues Band. Come out, enjoy the evening and support the ministries of Grace Mission. Tickets are \$10. Doors open at 6:00 PM.



Grace Happens - Come and See!

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

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From the Deacon's Desk

Deacon Jeanie Beyer

Pastor Amanda has lovingly summed up the many ministries that Grace Mission was able to offer to our Community last year. As you have read, a lot was accomplished for the Kingdom of God and much of it with your help.

I want to share with you a new ministry that has begun at Grace Mission this year. Grace Mission is now offering a Celebrate Recovery Program which offers New Life to those participating.

Celebrate Recovery brings God's healing power into our lives through eight recovery principles found in the Beatitudes. By working and applying these principles, we grow spiritually and learn to accept God's grace in solving our problems. We gain a freedom from our addictive, compulsive and dysfunctional behaviors. That freedom creates peace, serenity and authentic joy in our lives.

Please join us Thursday mornings from 10:00 to 12:00 and receive the peace, serenity and joy that God has for each one of us.

Fasting for Mission

Two resolutions were passed at the 2014 Convention having to do with "fasting" and contributing the money not spent on food to support inner city mission work of the Diocese. The first of the two designated days is March 7, the first Friday of Lent. Interested parishioners should send the donation, payable to their parish, with notation "Fast Donation" in the Memo section of their check. The parish will then send a single check of collected donations to the Diocese for distribution between Church Without Walls, St. Mary's and Grace Mission.

Words of Grace (continued)

Max Lucado in his book *Grace Happens Here* said,

"Grace hugged the stink out of the prodigal and scared the hate out of Paul and pledges to do the same in us. Grace is God walking into your world with a sparkle in his eye and an offer that's hard to resist. Sit still for a bit. I can do wonders with this mess of yours."

And at Grace Mission we believe this promise. We trust this promise. We cling like a barnacle to every hope and covenant. We see the grace of God working in lives, giving hope and a promise of a new life in Jesus Christ. The cross of Christ creates a new people, a people unhindered by skin color or family origin. A new citizenry based not on common ancestry or geography, but on a common Savior. Grace grants us first the power to receive love and then the power to give it.

Thank you for receiving God's Grace into your lives and giving of your time, talent and treasure in helping those often forgotten in society...but not by God!

Pastor Amanda+

Meet Pastor Mike!

Rev. Mike Snider New Assisting Pastor

I bid you greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As the new Assisting Pastor at Grace Mission, please allow me a few words to introduce myself. My name is Michael E. Snider II, but I prefer my family and friends to call me Mike. I was born into a large Irish Catholic family in Canton, Ohio that took every opportunity it could to spend time together. The greatest bulk of my family still lives within the proverbial rock throw of the family farm.

While attending East Canton High School I became a competitive runner, average chess player, and general thrill seeker. After graduating from High School I enrolled in the U.S. Navy Reserves and after returning from Boot Camp I studied Psychology and Philosophy at Mount Union College.

I spent three in the work force doing everything from selling cars, to finish carpentry, to Youth Ministry. Yet God was as they say "not done with me" and I enrolled in a Baptist Seminary outside of Charlotte, North Carolina. During my time in North Carolina I discovered and joined the Episcopal Church. Within a year of joining the Episcopal Church I was in the ordination process and eventually transferred to Sewanee. During my two first two years at Sewanee I finished my M.Div. and earned a Masters in Sacred Theology in Anglican Studies. My M.Div. contained the usual courses required for ordination in the Episcopal Church. My MST was an intense focus on Anglican theologians from the end of the nineteenth century to the start of World War II, with my personal study focused on the question of *Why does God allow suffering?*

I spent my third year at Sewanee serving as a non-stipendiary Deacon at Otey Memorial Parish. Then I accepted a call to Bluefield, West Virginia where I served full time for large family size church and on a limited basis to a very small coal camp mission for five years. After my adventure in wild and wonderful West Virginia, God decided to bless me with the gift of warmer weather and he call me to the diocese of Florida. I served as the second Rector of St. Patrick's in the town of St. Johns in the county of St. Johns near the River of St. Johns for sixteen months. My ministry brought me to Grace Mission when the Bishop asked me to serve here.

I am incredibly blessed to have married my college sweat-heart Penny. We have four happy, healthy and energetic boys—Robby who is 12 years old, Eli who is 10, Christopher who is eight, and Matthew who is seven.

I invite you to come by Grace Mission any time so that we can get to know each other more fully.

In Christ's Name,
Pastor Mike +



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