



ADVENT 2019

Dear Ministry Partners,

Do you see what Christmas is? Christmas is really the celebration of an invasion. It's a close encounter of the God kind. God invaded earth over 2,000 years ago as a human being. Why? So we could know He's not some big force in the sky. He wants us to know what He's really like. Now I can look at Jesus and say, "Oh, that's what God is like." By getting to know Jesus, I find out that He's not some impersonal force in the sky.

How did He come into the world? The same way all of us did: as a baby. Why? Because nobody is afraid of a baby. God didn't come to scare us, but to save us. The bible says Jesus came to seek and to save. And He's been seeking you. He says, "I offer you forgiveness for your past, peace of mind in the present, and a solid future in eternity." Those are the gifts. How do you find these gifts? They're all wrapped up in Christ!

What a better time than at Christmas to make contact? Can you imagine being given a gift at Christmas and never unwrapping it? It would be silly.



We are in need of coats, blankets and sweaters. If you are cleaning out your closets remember Grace Mission! We take all donations. Thank you!!

And yet, many of us continue to move a little closer to God Christmas after Christmas after Christmas. We've celebrated every Christmas for as many years as we are old; we know the songs and the stories, and we know what it's all about, but have we unwrapped the gift?

For many that come to Grace Mission, they have never "unwrapped" the gift. They have moved closer to God at Christmas but they still hold the wrapped gift in their hands getting to it "one of these days". At Grace Mission, we encourage everyone to "tear open the gift" – open their hearts to a relationship with Jesus Christ in a personal way. When they "tear open the gift" they discover that Jesus clears up their past, takes care of their present, and secures their future. That's one gift they will never get anywhere else. They can't find it under the Christmas tree. It's all wrapped up in Christ.

The miracle of Christmas and the best gift of all are found in Bethlehem!

Please remember Grace Mission in your prayers and in your generous Christmas giving this hopeful season. Make this Christmas one of "a close encounter of the God-kind" for someone who might be lost and is in desperate need to hear about the incredible gift they have in Jesus Christ.

Have a glorious celebration of His birth,

Pastor Amanda+

**11th Annual An Evening of Grace presents
SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER
FEBRUARY 1ST - 4-8 PM**

Save the date – and grab your leisure suit and patent leather platform shoes and join us for a night of **Fun and Fever!** The special theme for this year's event will be **Saturday Night Fever**. We have secured a new venue, [the Four Points by Sheraton](#), located on Tennessee Street. Join us for a groovy night of dining and dancing to the sounds of Tallahassee's own 70's rock band, [Naugahyde Park](#). The best 70's costume wins a prize and our Destination raffle might take you on a **Love Boat cruise on Royal Caribbean cruise lines to the Bahamas!** Watch for more information. Hope to see you at the event!

This event is our biggest fundraiser of the year which secures financial resources to help us serve people most in need.
Please consider being a sponsor.

Thank you to everyone that supported Grace Mission by attending the **Blues and BBQ** fundraiser in August. Everyone had a wonderful evening and all of us at Grace Mission are very grateful for your kind and generous support. A special thank you to all the team members who organized and helped with the event. In addition, we thank **Brett Wellman and the Stone Cold Blues Band** for always being generous with their time and talent to make this a special evening for us.

We set up two **GoFundMe** accounts - one for a new on-demand hot water heater and one for a new ADA compliant shower room. Both campaigns succeeded! We replaced our old water heater with a bigger commercial unit which is wonderful! We plan to begin construction on our shower room over the holidays. Thank you to everyone who generously gave to help those less fortunate. We are humbled by your support!

Dear sisters and brothers,

My time of ministry at Grace Mission has come to an end. It is with a heavy heart that I reflect back on the three-years of transformative and challenging ministry that God called me to live into here. In my privilege, I had always said, "Why, yes, I have a heart for ministry to the poor and the marginalized." There is a profound difference, my sisters and brothers, about having a heart for ministry at the edge and walking into that work. When Jesus talks with the disciples about putting their hands to the plow and not looking back with longing to their former lives, is just this living in the difference between pity and empathy.



Now, don't hear me wrong, I am no saint for having come to Grace Mission. In fact, I came here broken and in great pain. I came here not reconciled to the problems in my ministry and relationships. Here is the beauty of Grace Mission (and I'm not the only one who has experienced this) – Grace Mission is a place of grace and healing. It is a congregation that doesn't hide its brokenness; here are people in all their humanity without any façade. And at Grace Mission, everyone is welcome – not just to worship, not just for food, not just to fellowship. Here at Grace Mission, everyone is welcome to encounter God at work in the world and the God who is calling God's children back into the reconciled relationship that we knew once before in our own creation. This is what church can be, that sacred space where we are reconciled to ourselves, to our community, to our relationships, and also to God. So, when God called about Grace Mission, with trepidation and hubris, I said yes. And have been changed in such beautiful and wonderful ways and my ministry has been transformed. I too experienced Help, Healing, and Hope.

The first day I was on my own, way back there in 2016, it was my job to conduct the 12Steps@4:30 service and get people through the dinner line, I was pretty nervous; a congregation member who had lived and drank on the streets for years, said, "Pastor Jenni, God has this." Thanks, Don. Thanks, God. Again and again, in most wonderful and challenging and profound ways I have seen the power of God's creative Spirit, the peace and justice of Jesus Christ, and the reconciling call that God issues. I could fill pages with experiences however there are only a few column inches. I leave Grace Mission re-tuned, reconciled, and renewed for ministry in God's church. So thank you for the opportunity and the space. God will continue to bless the work that is going on and that is about to be born in this place where God encounters the world.

I leave you with my love and support,

Pastor Jenni+

Thank you Eleanor Blaylock (St John's) for your kindness and generosity! Your blessing to us will help bless so many in need. From all of us at Grace Mission - We hope you had a Wonderful and Happy Birthday!!

The Holidays Are Coming!



It's hard to imagine but Thanksgiving and Christmas are around the corner! Please consider volunteering for the Grace Mission Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners. Opportunities to serve for these dinners fills up fast – please call as soon as possible to sign up! You must call and speak to Brenda to reserve your spot – 850-224-3817.

Thanksgiving Dinner

Nov. 26 @ Grace Mission

Christmas Dinner

Dec. 10 - Children & Families @ St. John's

Dec. 19 - Adults @ Grace Mission

Recycle and Reuse – Don't fill the landfill!

Grace Mission will accept all your used or unused gift wrapping paper, ribbons and gift bags. We use these items the following year to wrap gifts for our After School children and siblings. Thank you!

Grace Mission's S.O.A.R After School program would like to express a Merry Christmas to all! We are grateful and humbled by the support and encouragement we have received from our many ministry partners. This academically driven program is designed to work closely with each elementary student. Your partnership helps provide individualized tutoring and programs to encourage individual growth and self-esteem along with confidence building and team work for each child. Did you know we recruit our students from the largest public housing complex in Tallahassee? It does take 'a village' to help a child who is experiencing poverty and possible homelessness to achieve new and lasting goals for success. So we take this moment to thank you for your support. We cannot do this ministry without you!



Please consider sponsoring a child this Christmas Season. Take an angel from your church display to make the gift-giving holiday special for a child in need. These gifts will be given at our Family Christmas Celebration at St. John's on Tuesday December 10. Please return unwrapped gift(s) to your church or Grace Mission (if bringing to Grace Mission: Dec. 1st @ 12:15p to 2:00pm) by Dec. 1st. In lieu of or in addition to a gift, you may enclose a gift card to Walmart. Please attach the angel to your gift(s) or clearly mark the name of the child on the gift bag. "Not Named" angels are for siblings of children in Grace's program to provide a gift for every child present that evening. If there is no display and you need a name of a child and a gift suggestion please call us at 850-224-3817. Thank you for your generous support.

GRACE MISSION

TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH HELP. HEALING. HOPE



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