

GraceWorks Final Article

The GraceWorks summer ministry this year is now complete, and there are multiple projects that have been accomplished, especially these past couple of weeks. The completed outdoor projects include a greenhouse, a toolshed to contain the GraceWorks tools, machinery, and other supplies, a brick path from the sidewalk to the labyrinth (containing just over 2,000 bricks!), and the labyrinth itself.

There were several steps in completing the labyrinth: outlining the path, clearing the bushes and weeds, making molds with cement and pea gravel, laying and cementing the molds down, sweeping the labyrinth, putting cement mosaics around it, and adding a cross in the center of the labyrinth made out of cement and rocks. These rocks were donated by individuals and Episcopal churches across the Diocese of Alabama, and we were grateful to be able to use them. We also visited other labyrinths, the most recent being the one at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Madison, AL, to learn more about the designs and the significance of these spiritual paths.

The completed labyrinth is back behind the church, and it is welcome to the community.

The final celebration for GraceWorks occurred last Friday evening in the parish hall of Grace Church, where family members, friends, and supporters of the program gathered to be shown the efforts and accomplishments that were completed throughout the summer. On top of a meal and awards, there was also a time for everyone to walk the labyrinth and take part in a blessing conducted by Mother Robyn Arnold.

This ministry could not have been completed without the collective effort of the facilitator, Ms. Kay Williams, volunteers, local churches, companies, and corporations, the participants, and other supporters. The visions of the ministry are to offer 12-15 year olds the opportunities to learn carpentry and landscaping skills, activities that encourage self-esteem, character development, community involvement, work ethics, conflict resolution, and spiritual inquisitiveness. Ultimately, the hope was and still is for all to act upon our calling emphasized in 2 Peter 3:18, "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."