

THE STEEPLE

The Church of the Nativity

July 7, 2010

The mission of the Episcopal Church of the Nativity, as part of the family of God, is to proclaim and spread the word and work of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, by Eucharistic worship and by ministry to the world.

Offering Our Lives to God

The Eucharist on Sundays sets the pace for the rest of the week. We offer our lives each week to God as the bread, wine and money go down the aisle and up onto the altar. This is significant, because when we see these gifts go forward, we see our lives going forward as a deep symbol of our intentions and prayers. Everything we have is a gift from God. Our money and the bread and wine represent everything that is important to us, everything we need to sustain our lives and everything that gives us security. And so weekly, we offer everything, *everything*... to be blessed for God's holy purposes in the world.

During the Eucharistic prayer we call upon the Holy Spirit, not only to bless the bread and wine to become Christ's real and undeniable presence and strength for us, but also to bless us. *Sanctify [these gifts] by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy and peace...* These prayers calling upon the Holy Spirit's sanctification are called the *epiclesis*. Realizing the significance of this moment, many make the Sign of the Cross, intentionally consenting to God's blessing. We are sanctified, too.

The Rite One Eucharistic Prayer is even more explicit: *And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction (blessing), and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.*

For Episcopalians, these actions inherited from Orthodox Christianity through the Scottish bishops who consecrated Samuel Seabury (our first bishop) are central to worship. The Incarnation continues in us as we seek divine union within the life of the Trinity. Emphasizing the action of the Holy Spirit during the Eucharist recalls our Baptisms and links the continuing life of the Spirit begun in Baptism to our daily lives. For what we do on Sundays together, is meant to be done individually each day, each moment.

A few weeks ago, I realized how important this prayer in the Eucharist is for me. Participating in a 10 Day Centering Prayer Retreat at St. Benedict's Roman Catholic Trappist Monastery in Colorado, I worshipped with the deeply prayerful monks there twice a day. We began each morning with Eucharist, a great way to start any day! There are many things about the Roman Catholic liturgy that are appealing, but I realized after a few days something was missing, the epiclesis over the people.

Of course, like our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters emphasize, the Eucharist is all about grace and God's once for all offering of love in Christ. But I missed the deliberate offering of our own lives in response to Christ's love. I need that intentional offering to keep me motivated. It keeps me spiritually honest (blessed are the poor in spirit). I am reminded that God is still the primary actor, but chooses to act through me. What a grace-filled commission we are given each week.

God wants your life to be a holy, living and reasonable sacrifice. All we have to do is offer.

Andy +



CHURCH
OF THE
NATIVITY,
EPISCOPAL

Est. 1843



Sunday on Thursday

Can't get to Church this Sunday, going out of town, other commitments preventing you from getting to church on Sunday?

Nativity continues to offer a worship opportunity on Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. in Bibb Chapel.

This service utilizes the same readings as the upcoming Sunday, allowing you to say your prayers and worship prior to the weekend if you will be away. It is come as you are, from work or the gym, as casual as you need to be to get here! REMEMBER to make God a part of your weekend pilgrimage, offer your life and purposes to God's holy purposes as we gather for Eucharist on Thursdays.

PARISH NEWS and upcoming EVENTS



Summer Nights @ Nativity with Chip Gulbro and Friends Instrumental swing and Jazz

July 18, 6:00 p.m.

*Come and enjoy an great evening of on the lawn with friends and family .
Bring a picnic for you and your family/friends or just sit back and enjoy the music.
Remember to bring your lawn chairs or blankets.*

NATIVITY has seven parishioners traveling to Greensboro AL this summer to participate in the Sawyerville Day Camp. Please pray for these volunteers as they serve others this summer:

Session 1: Emily Collette, Olivia Collette, Sarah Watts

Session 2: Ian Briggs, Maggie Clanton, Emily Collette, Bartlee Linton, and Sabol Rogers

Sawyerville Day Camp is a summer day camp in Hale County, Alabama sponsored by the [Episcopal Diocese of Alabama Youth Department](#) and the [Sawyerville Commission](#). It is an annual camp for economically disadvantaged children and youth in the Black Belt of our state. Campers come to camp at no cost and there is no staff fee! The staff is made up of high school aged young people, college students and adults from all over the Diocese and Hale County.



A NEW TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY for Church Services & Activities?

The New Transportation ministry is not functional at this time. It is still forming therefore, we need your input. So far it is transportation to church services and other church activities (we hope to expand it at a later time.) Please let us know by answering the following questions as they apply:

1. Do you need transportation to attend services and other church related activities?
2. Are you willing to transport parishioners to services and other activities?

Call the church office 533-2455 and let us know or talk with Deacon Mary Groff for more information!

Nativity on the Hallelujah Trail—a driving tour of 32 historical churches in North

Alabama. The Hallelujah Trail is a project begun five years ago by Dana Lee Jennings, President/CEO of the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association with the help of an Appalachian Regional Commission tourism grant, a grant from the State of Alabama and the remaining funds coming from Alabama Mountain Lakes.

A recent article *Take a Spiritual and historical ride on the Hallelujah Trail* written by Heather Jeffcoat, an Examiner from Birmingham, features Nativity with picture included. She writes "...One of the churches you can discover on the trail is the Church of the Nativity, Episcopal, which is located in the Twickenham Historic District in downtown Huntsville. The Episcopal church is one of the churches on the Hallelujah Trail that has a strong architectural design and a wonderful history. The Church of the Nativity features an edifice with a nave that accommodates 500 people and aisles lighted by windows of tracery; a sacristy; organ chamber, and unique stain-glass windows. The spire, reaching 151 feet tall, marks the Church's location near the Huntsville Square..." The story can be found in its entirety in the *Birmingham Family Travel Examiner*, Nativity's website, or go directly to <http://www.Examiner.com/x-40654-Birmingham-Family-Travel-Examiner>.

Thank you...for being so thoughtful. A card signed by The Aquarius Club Members was mailed to Nativity and can be found on the bulletin board. A letter was enclosed: To the Church of Nativity, We just wanted to take the time to say THANKS for allowing us to use your facility and continuing to show us your kindness through your actions every Monday. Although, we will only be out for the summer, we all just wanted to say

Thank you for EVERYTHING and Thank you to EVERYONE.

Monretta L. Vega
Mental Health Center of Madison County
RIOP/MHT-Activity Specialist

A Thank You for Nativity Parishioners

after the waters receded...

there was quiet and mud and deep wonder -
the space had taken on the nature
of landscape struck by chaos...
soon it would be more than chairs and treasures and memories
tossed about and left for contemplation.
It became sacred space
for learning about the deepest care of humanity.
Hands and hearts came with crowbars and sandwiches,
Ice water and wheel barrows,
Working, working, working in the kingdom of God
bringing the Savior's touch and mighty, tiny acts of miraculous love.
Strangers, old friends, folks not seen in twenty years, church members,
and neighbors - whose sorrows match our own -
all continuing the path of pilgrims' way.
In these unfolding weeks of confusion and trust
with no clear road for anyone
we have been given new eyes for seeing
new ears for hearing
new hearts for believing
The simplest of gestures accumulate as treasure...
the call, the note, the cake, the promise of prayers,
the surprise of monies added to a purse
producing walls that we shall call home;
The sounds of morning as gift
a hymn remembered while surveying the remnant
the train whistle ever sharp
and the breathing of one next to you in early dawn hours
captured for savor with keen attention to life around;
A broken heart that has cried
with an entire city, with a neighborhood,
for one's own family and those across the yard -
the seeking heart looks for a sign
as a replaced window opens to a world that will never be the same.
The call is to faithfulness, to hope, to song
and clarity rings with sacramental tones
emerging as gratitude for so many, so much -
the wonder of creation unfolds
and spreads her quilt at our feet:
cast your eyes upon the river bank
rest in the love of God
be carried by the Spirit
as you face the morrow.
The mighty waters have tumbled down
and brought you a vision of saints.

Mary Anne Akin July 2010



to each of you who have cared for us in these challenging days;
to all who have contributed to the rebuilding of our home-
We say Thank you for being instruments of God's grace, peace and joy!
Mary Anne and Joe Akin

“What is the Difference Between a ‘Vocational’ and ‘Transitional’ Deacon?”

Transitions come in all shapes and sizes. Whether we are starting a new job, sending kids off to college, or beginning retirement, it can often seem like the only constant in life is change. Some of you have asked what to call me during this time that I am serving among you as a “transitional” deacon, before being ordained to the priesthood in December. The simple answer is that you can call me by whatever is most comfortable for you! Father Brad, or just Brad, is fine by me. I personally tend to have my own children call other priests “Father or Mother so-and-so” because it establishes a certain kind of relationship.

But I suppose that raises a larger theological question: What is the difference between a vocational and transitional deacon? Below you’ll see a few words from Deacon Mary about what being a vocational deacon means to her. Theologically speaking, there really is no such thing as a “transitional” or “vocational” deacon. Deacons take vows of obedience to our bishop and seek to interpret the needs of the world to the church. The terms “vocational” and “transitional” have more to do with where you are heading with your vocation. When I am ordained a priest in December, I will not cease to be a deacon, but rather, it is like a layering of vocations. Being a transitional deacon means that I will always carry those particular set of vows with me, but in a short matter of time I will also take my priestly vows. Transitional deacons are ordained to the diaconate with the understanding that they will later be ordained to the priesthood. Vocational deacons are not typically ordained to the priesthood, but continue their ministry in the world as deacons.

The catechism states that the ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons. Though each of these orders comes with its own unique gifts and responsibilities, no one order is “higher” or “better” than the other. They are simply different ways of being a Christian. As St. Paul writes in his letter to the Ephesians: “The gifts God gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” In short, it takes us *all* to be the Body of Christ.

Grace & peace,
Brad +

From the Deacon’s Bench

In the Episcopal Church, deacons are one of three ordained orders, which also include priests and bishops. It is a widespread misconception that deacons are not ordained. In many other denominations they are not ordained, but elected for time limited service as lay persons.

Deacons are typically in the world. When you think about deacons in the church think of them in one place: standing at the door. Standing at the door of the church, the deacon has one foot in the church and one foot in the world. At the door the deacon is welcoming people into the church.

Deacons have a prophetic voice because they are in the world, interpreting the needs of the people to the church. Standing at the door, the deacon sends the congregation out into the world to do ministry. The dismissal at the end of the service is one of the most important parts of the Eucharist.

Lately you have been hearing the terms "Transitional" Deacon and "Vocational" Deacon. A deacon is a deacon, is a deacon but, with different career paths. Vocational deacons are so called because they have another career outside the church; they are not employed by the church. In this Diocese Vocational Deacons are non-stipendiary. Their call is to remain a deacon.

The Rev. Deacon Mary Groff

The Honor of Your Presence Has Been Requested
AT A CELEBRATORY CONCERT
“A New World Awaits!”

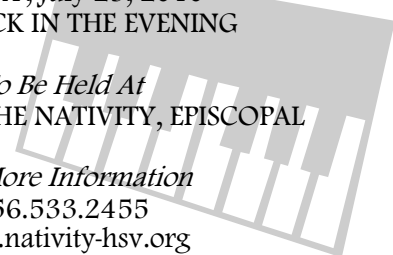
A FAREWELL TO HUNTSVILLE, AL
FEATURING

Shonda Carrise Devine
SOPRANO
Anthony Paul Ballard
TENOR

To Be Presented
SUNDAY, July 25, 2010
5 O’CLOCK IN THE EVENING

To Be Held At
CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, EPISCOPAL

For More Information
256.533.2455
www.nativity-hsv.org



SUNDAY, July 11, Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM (Groff out)	Lector	Intercessor
8:00 AM	Anderson	Anderson	Lee Hicklen	Jeannie Robison	Lee Hicklen
10:00	Akin	Anderson	Don Askins, Rich Goodwin	Ted Briggs, Pamela Briggs	Martha Bosworth

WEDNESDAY, July 14, HE

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM
12:00 pm	Anderson	Anderson	Cheryl Watts

THURSDAY, July 15, HE

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM
6:00 PM	Anderson	Lippe	

SUNDAY, July 18, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM (Akin out)	Lector	Intercessor
8:00 AM	Anderson	Landry	Lewie Bates, Warren Vann	Lee Hicklen	Clay Sherrill
10:00	Anderson	Landry	Marilyn Lands, Walter Thames	Lee Coggins, Mickey Ellis	Virginia Kobler

WEDNESDAY, July 21, HE

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM
12:00	Anderson	Anderson	Marilyn Lands

THURSDAY, July 22, HE

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM
6:00 PM	Landry	Landry	

SUNDAY, July 25, Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM	Lector	Intercessor
8:00 AM	Akin	Anderson	Bob Serio	Kachi Ezeibe	John Hendricks
10:00	Akin	Anderson	Mike Knight	Mary Johnson, Ed Greene	Ronnie Rogers

WEDNESDAY, July 28, HE

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM
12:00	Anderson	Landry	Mary Hendricks

THURSDAY, July 29, HE

Service	Celebrant	Preacher	LEM
6:00 PM	Anderson	Anderson	

Just Do It!- First Stop Our Tuesday 4th Day Pilgrims (Cursillo Reunion Group) “just did it” and served breakfast on Monday, June 7th to about 30 homeless people at First Stop. As it turned out, we were all blessed by it. Nativity has taken on this project- serving breakfast there on the first Monday of each month. Various groups or individuals within the church can sign up for the month for which they want to be responsible. Two in our group baked the breakfast casseroles at home. Two others met at church to bake and butter biscuits. One bought orange juice, jam, bananas, and napkins. Lane Tutt provided detailed instructions and the recipe; the staff at First Stop helped us when we arrived. We all met there at 8:10 to serve First Stop clients from 8:30-9:30. It cost us \$97 and we divided it among our group so the cost each was under \$20. Both the staff and the homeless were so very appreciative. Our faith teaches us to care for the most vulnerable in our community, and this small investment of a few hours and a few dollars paid off in joy all around. If your group would like to try this out on a first Monday, contact Lane Tutt at 533-2455 or ltutt@nativity-hsv.org.

Pat Goodson (for Tuesday 4th Day Pilgrims)

The 15th annual Healing Grief Retreat will be held Friday, August 6, 2010, 6:30 p.m., through Sunday, August 8, 1:00 p.m., at the Benedictine Sisters Retreat Center at Sacred Heart Monastery in Cullman, AL. The retreat will be led by the Rev. Carl Malm, grief minister and healthcare chaplain, and Margaret Anne Whitsett and Maggie Little of the grief ministry of First United Methodist Church in Huntsville. The cost is \$175/ person for a shared room; \$195 for a private room. To register, phone (256) 734-8302. For more information, phone (256) 883-6539.

PRAYER LIST

We pray for those who are ill or recovering

David Krouse, Diane Harvey, Emile Joffrion, Sarah James, John Thompson, Chuck Thomson, Toon Ferrell, Virginia Parnell, Bob Crump, Dick Hay, Betty McCaleb, Bill Dilworth, Gerald McQueen, Charlotte Laxson, Elsie Olsen, Perry McClain, James Horton, Suzanne Thomason, Tippy Anderson, Judy Christian, Gene Sullivan, Eileen Sullivan, Bill Marsh, Angel Colin, John, Nancy Kelly, Leigh Wahl, Julie Kirk, Joan Bennett

We pray for our Military:

Johnny Johnston, Jr (Afghanistan)

We pray for the departed:

John Klos, father of Read Klos

Frank Frodsham, cousin of Ronnie Rogers

Dianne Riddle, niece of Rex and Susan Riddle

Joanne Whitley, mother of Michael Whitley

Martha Cook, mother of Brenda Chynoweth

We give thanks for the birthdays of our children:

7/12 McKenna Watson

7/14 Allison Taylor

7/15 Mary Ragland

7/16 Zachary Preston, Devon Parsons, Lisa Smith

7/17 Caroline Ayres

7/20 Reagan Huskey

7/23 Dylan Chenoweth

ALTAR FLOWER 2010 DEDICATIONS

If you are interested in dedicating flowers on the altar, please complete and mail this form with your check made out to "Flower Guild" to: Andrea Vandervoort, 434 Locust Ave. Huntsville, AL 35801. If you have questions, you may call Andrea at 539-2673. Altar Flowers are \$40.

The following dates are available: December 12 and 26

Date desired _____

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION, THANK YOU.

Your Name _____

Phone _____

Would you share a dedication? _____

Do you wish to have your name listed in the bulletin? _____

Please be specific by **underlining** or **circling** your desired dedication. All dedications read "The flowers are offered to the glory of God and *in loving memory of...* or *in thanksgiving for...* or *in celebration of...*"

Print name for this dedication: _____

STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION TIP submitted by Jennifer Retzke

Practice Natural Lawn Care

Mow higher, mow regularly and leave the clippings.

Mow more frequently when grass is actively growing so that you are only cutting no more than one-third of the height of the grass. This practice minimizes the amount of grass clippings. The desired height of grass varies depending on climate. "Grasscycling," or leaving the clippings on the lawn, doesn't cause thatch build up—but it does make lawns healthier. Soil organisms recycle the clippings into free fertilizer, and you save all the work of bagging. Modern mulching lawn mowers make "grasscycling" even easier and homeowners can reduce their mowing time by 30 to 40 percent by not having to bag clippings.

Use "natural organic" or "slow-release" fertilizers.

Choose "natural organic" or "slow-release" fertilizers to reduce nutrient run-off and leaching. Keep fertilizers on the soil and out of the street! Fertilizers that run off are a waste of money and contribute to pollution of streams and lakes. Use fertilizers sparingly. The more you fertilize, the faster the grass grows and the more frequently you have to mow!

Water deeply, but infrequently, to moisten the whole root zone.

Let the soil dry between waterings to prevent lawn disease and save water. Lawns need only about one inch of water a week in summer, including rain, to stay green. Or you can let areas of lawn that don't get heavy wear go brown and dormant—just water once a month and they'll bounce back in the fall.

Overseeding can improve the quality of your lawn.

- Core aerate in the fall to improve root development and water penetration.
- Follow by overseeding thin areas of lawn with grass seed blends recommended for your area.

- Then "top-dress" by raking in quarter- to half-inch of compost to cover the seed and improve the soil.
- Repeat these steps annually as needed to improve poor lawns.

Bonus Tips:

How Long to Run the Sprinkler?

- Scatter clean, empty tuna cans or other straight-sided containers on your lawn.
- Turn on the sprinklers and check the time.
- When most cans have one inch of water in them, turn off the sprinkler and check how long it ran.
- Now you know how long to run your sprinkler each week in summer if you want to keep your lawn green.

Honey, I Shrunk the Lawn!

- Grass grows best on level, well-drained soil in full sun or part shade.
- Consider alternatives to grass on steep slopes, shady areas or near streams and lakes.
- In these areas, it takes a lot of extra work (and sometimes chemicals) to maintain grass.
- Look for other plants, such as ground covers, better suited to soggy soil, slopes or heavy shade.
- Leave or plant a "buffer" of dense native vegetation along streams and lakes to filter and slow run-off, shade and cool the water, provide
- homes for wildlife and prevent bank erosion.

STEEPLE SCHEDULE

The Steeple is published the first and third Wednesdays of the month.

To submit events or articles, you may bring them to Linda Wheeler at the church office or by email:

linda.wheeler@nativity-hsv.org

The deadline for the next issue is noon, Monday, July 19, 2010.

Church of the Nativity, Episcopal

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AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY NEED

A member of the clergy is on call each week. If you need assistance from a priest outside office hours, the priest on call will respond to your page. The number to call in Case of an Emergency Only is 256-533-7007.

All other calls should be directed to 256-533-2455 and follow the prompts to leave a message for a priest to respond.

Top of the Hill Gang Sewanee Trip Sunday, July 18

11:00 a.m. All Saints' Chapel

Lunch

Private lecture by the conductor prior to concert

2:30 p.m.—Philharmonia Orchestra

Bruce Dinkins, conductor

3:30 p.m.—Sewanee Symphony

David Loebel, conductor

Cost: \$25 for lunch and preferred seating for concert

Checks payable to SSMC

\$10 for transportation

Checks payable to Church of the Nativity

Gather in Ridley Hall 8:30 a.m. July 18, for departure

TO REGISTER CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE

256-533-2455

Indicate if you will travel on church vans or personal vehicle.

DEADLINE FOR RESERVATIONS

Thursday, July 15, 4:00 p.m.

Tickets will be ordered at closing of the day.

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE July 2010

Please check over this schedule carefully, as you may be scheduled for a different position. I have not scheduled some of you who frequently fill in—and I hope you will continue to stop by and volunteer! This is the last month for most of our seniors—we wish them well in their college endeavors, and thank them for many years of faithful service!

July 4

8:00

C Katherine Walker
T Robert Walker
T Spencer Anglin
S Anna Glenn
AS Ian Braudaway

10:00

C Rachel Carter, Olivia Collette
T Elise Nelson
T Tindall Morring
S Noelle Carter
AS Hanly Ward

July 11

8:00

C Wills Brocato
T Chase Rogers
T HB Bryant
S Sabol Rogers
AS Karsten Correale

10:00

C Anna Quirk, Lydia Sandy
T SL Miller
T Patrick Quillen
S Rachel Quillen
AS MM Ragland

July 18

8:00

C Anna Glenn, A Dunn
T Neil Luther, W Purvis
T T Markwalter
S Harry Hudson
AS Susan Purvis

10:00

C Patrick Wingo, Hutson Chilton
T John Chilton, Shep O'Neal
T Foster Shrout
S David Sampson
AS Rosie Chilton

July 25

8:00

C Kachi Eziebe
T Travis King
T Carter McDonald
S Madeline Sharp
AS Laurel Sharp

10:00

C Reece Baugher, NK Baugher
T Rachel Joffrion, Foard Naumann
T Harrison Hunter, Elizabeth Moody
S Paul Naumann
AS Julie DiFranco