

# THE STEEPLE

## The Church of the Nativity

May 2, 2012

*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.*



CHURCH  
OF THE  
NATIVITY,  
EPISCOPAL

Est. 1843

### WORSHIP TIMES SUNDAY

(\* Nursery available)

7:45 a.m. Rite I  
Holy Eucharist  
(Bibb Chapel)

8:45 a.m.\* Rite II  
Holy Eucharist and  
Children's Chapel

11:00 a.m.\* Rite II  
Holy Eucharist

Church School  
10:00 a.m.\*

### WEDNESDAY

12:00 noon  
Holy Eucharist &  
Healing  
(Bibb Chapel)

### THURSDAY

6:00 p.m.  
Holy Eucharist Rite II  
(Bibb Chapel)

## We Are Family

This past weekend at our 8<sup>th</sup> annual Parish Weekend at Camp McDowell, we celebrated that “we are family” at Nativity. Family is a place of belonging: We belong to God; God in Christ has chosen to belong to us; and so we belong to each other. The joy and community we shared over the weekend witness to the strong ties that bind us together in God’s family at Nativity. And we were reminded by our featured speaker, the Rev’d Nikki Mathis, Dean for Community Life at the School of Theology in Sewanee, nobody else does family quite like we do family.

At McDowell, we celebrated the strong ways we are family. Along with Nikki, we took a look at the core values that underlie everything we do and define who we are:

- We are committed to serving Huntsville and the world.
- We strive for excellence in worship and music in the Anglican tradition.
- We are guided by, but not bound by, a reverence for the past, our history.
- We provide opportunities for spiritual growth for all ages.
- We are a caring, accepting, open, and diverse community in which Grace rules.

The 2004 Vestry named these values and each successive vestry has endorsed them as definitive of our identity. The Vestry succinctly boiled this down to a vision of our providing a nurturing community in which we know God’s love ourselves and share God’s love with each other and the world.

Specifically, we have done this by focusing on these priorities:

- Providing a warm, loving, acceptable, and safe environment for worship and ministry to persons of all ages and abilities
- Improving hospitality and programs in a family friendly environment with inclusion of non-traditional families
- Providing programs and physical facilities to allow for growth in membership
- Enhancing communication to the parish membership about ministry opportunities
- Maintaining and preserving our historical buildings

Getting away from the busy-ness of our lives to Camp McDowell for the weekend, where no cell phones and television could distract, provided an opportunity for us to deepen our relationships and to get to know others in ways that don’t always happen in Huntsville. We ate together, played together, sang together, learned together, prayed together. We all agreed that it is an exciting time to be a part of Nativity. The energy and vibrancy of our parish life is powerful.

**Our Nativity family is a gift.** Our Camp McDowell weekend accentuates the strength and love we share in our parish family, not just one weekend a year, but every week through our worship and ministries. Together we are agents of God’s grace and life.

We have much to share, to celebrate, and to claim together. We saw it at McDowell this past weekend. We see it every Sunday and every time we gather. If you’ve been away for a while, come on back to the family.

**We are family at Nativity. And, Grace Rules!**

*Andy +*

### 2012 Stewardship Update –Close to reaching Goal!

For 2012, in addition to funding all our ministries for the first time in several years, the Vestry hopes to bring our Outreach giving back to pre-recession levels and adequately to fund our building reserves for the first time. We are \$42,000 shy of reaching this goal! With 441 households already pledging \$1,302,000, we are close. All of us can be grateful to the 441 households who make our ministries possible for all, with these faithful pledging parishioners offering the highest dollar amount of pledges in Nativity's history. A letter just went *to all parishioners* to let them know where we stand, to thank those who have pledged, but especially to encourage parishioners who don't pledge to make a pledge. It is not too late to join in on this most important ministry of sharing God's blessings. Help us balance our budget for mission and ministry for 2012! *[If you are not sure if you have made a pledge, quarterly statements were sent the middle of April and if you pledge, your pledged amount will be noted on that statement along with the record of your giving year to date.]*

### Please join The Vine for a silent art auction

The Vine "Branches of Art" silent art auction ---- May 10, 2012 at the Huntsville Botanical Garden from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Tickets \$40 a person; business casual. We have over 150 beautiful items: jewelry, scarves, note cards, paintings, photography, sculptures, crosses, pottery, and much more. The Vine makes pastoral counseling available for all. Check us out at [www.vinepcc.com](http://www.vinepcc.com) and on Facebook. For tickets please call (256) 461-8580.

### October Pilgrimage to the Holy Land is open to the public

If you and/or your friends have ever thought about taking an unforgettable trip then we invite you to join other Nativity parishioners on a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We are fortunate to have flights departing from and returning to Huntsville International. The pilgrimage will be lead by Rector Andy Anderson and Academy Travel. Please pass this information to those who may be interested.

**Dates: October 12 – October 27, 2012**

The cost is \$4521.00 per person including airfare departure Friday morning from Huntsville and returning to Huntsville Saturday afternoon. (Does not include airline fuel surcharge and taxes.)

**Deposit at time of application is \$500.00 (fully refundable until airline reduction date.) Final payment is due 45 days prior to departure.**

**Call Linda Wheeler 256-533-2455 or click for [registration form](#), [pricing](#), and [itinerary](#).**

*Note: All registrations and deposits should go directly to Academy Travel, not to Nativity.*

Accommodation per person in twin room with private bathroom includes:

*(Single Room Supplement will be approximately \$1000)*

- \* Amman – 1 night Land Mark Hotel Petra - 2 nights (five star hotel)
- \* Dead Sea - 1 night Ein Gedi Kibbutz Tiberias - 5 nights Scotts Hotel
  - \* Jerusalem – 5 nights Notre Dame
  - \* Three meals daily in Jordan; Two meals daily in Israel
- \* All entrances to the museums/sites as indicated in the itinerary.
  - \* Porterage fees and guiding fees
  - \* Basic Travel Insurance

- \* Not Included Cancellation Insurance (available through Academy Travel) laundry, telephone calls and other items of a personal nature, gratuity for guides and drivers.



HAP

### REMEMBER HAP Sunday is May 6!

As we enter into the summer months, please remember school children will not be eating breakfast nor lunch at school. As you shop think of foods easily prepared such as Breakfast bars, Crackers, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Beanie Wienies, Canned Pastas (spaghetti, ravioli, etc.)

## English choral music Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 p.m.

The Nativity Choir, accompanied by organist Dr. Jon Johnson of Christ Church Cathedral, Nashville looks forward to sharing English choral music with you. Music by British composers Herbert Howells and Ralph Vaughan Williams will lift your spirits and fill your senses! Howells, (1892-1983) a champion of English cathedral music, has composed works that resemble the renaissance compositional style as well as in more eclectic 20<sup>th</sup> century guises. The choir will present his Mass in the Dorian Mode, and his Te Deum and Jubilate Collegium Regale. Rounding out the program will be the Festival Te Deum of Ralph Vaughan Williams, written for the Coronation of King George VI.

## Habitat for Humanity May Work Schedule for 6330 Banks Road:

- May 3, 5 Install cabinets, paint interior doors, paint and install trim
- May 8, 10, 12 Install closet hardware, window blinds, bathroom accessories, landscape
- May 15, 17, 19 Catch up, touch up paint, clean and wax floors, Work punch list,

May 19

### **DEDICATION CEREMONY**

Regular working hours are from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM with a break for lunch around noon. *Lunches are provided on Saturdays only.* Bring carpentry tools, a utility knife, and gloves if you have them. **If you would like to volunteer contact Bill Giardini 539-0973, giardiniw@bellsouth.net**



**“MAY I Help You?”** Each spring Nativity Outreach does an ingathering responding to a community need. We do this before summer vacations so that everyone can participate.

This May we will provide beach towels for the children attending *Sawyerville Day Camps*. The towels are used by underprivileged children for trips to a swimming pool, water play, etc. during the weekly sessions. Each child will be given a towel as a gift. This year we need a minimum of 115 to make all the kids happy! Choose a towel that would make YOU smile! A bright stripe or solid color! **NO CARTOONS or THEME Towels**

Beginning May 6 you may place the towels in the large cartons in Ridley Hall every Sunday.

## LECTOR MINISTRY TRAINING ON Sunday, May 20

If you are interested in being a reader for our Sunday services please call or e-mail Connie Gadomski and let her know you are interested and that you can attend the training after the 11 a.m. service on May 20<sup>th</sup>. We would like more youth and older children lectors. All are welcome, but three things are required:

- 1) A strong reading voice
- 2) regular attendance at worship
- 3) attend the training
- 4) a commitment to practice your readings before Sundays

Buddy Moon, one of our fine readers will be our Lector Trainer. We are grateful for Buddy's leadership!



**Episcopal**

**Relief & Development**

Healing a hurting world

Dear Andy:

Please accept my sincere thanks to you and to the parishioners of Nativity Huntsville for your generous donations to Episcopal Relief & Development. The report I have received to date from Episcopal Relief & Development with parish donations indicates total gifts of \$4,150 for 2011. As you know, your donations support the

ERD ministries for emergency assistance and sustainability projects for so many in a suffering world. Your donation indicates also the continued compassion and support of the Diocese of Alabama for this outreach at home and abroad.

The Diocese of Alabama has received both emergency funds and long-term recovery grants from ERD to support our tornado recovery efforts.

Many thanks for your devotion and care for the good work of Episcopal Relief & Development.

Faithfully in Christ,

The Reverend Deacon, Judy Quick Diocesan Coordinator, ERD



## Adult Church School presents “Making North Alabama Healthier and Wealthier by Buying and Eating Local foods”

**Sunday, May 13 10:00 a.m.** Ridley Hall - Guest speaker: Kathryn Strickland, Director of Community Food Security, Food Bank of North Alabama

**Sunday, May 20 10:00 a.m.** Ridley Hall - Speakers: Board Members of The Greene Street Market at Nativity: Starting our second season. Board Members will be on hand to answer questions: Leedy Aboudonia, Louise Applegate, Hannah Boon, John Cline, Pattie Cline, Darlene Ehinger, Mickey Ellis, Marilyn Evans, Jeff Johnson, Elizabeth & Chris Jones, Wayne Laney, Suzy Naumann, Freya Neely, Laurie Noojin, Dorrie Nutt, Stephanie Sherman, Clay Sherrill, Will Taylor, Walter Thames, Jackie Walker, and Marilyn Evans.



### **Ride your bike to the Green Street Market the first Thursday of every month -**

and receive one Market Buck per rider! The Market Bucks have a value of one dollar and can be used to purchase items from vendors in the Market. Take your bike to the main tent to pick up your Market bucks.

### **Know the Farmers who Grow your Food**

The mission of the Greene Street Market at Nativity is to provide our buying public with local, fresh and high quality produce, to create opportunities for local growers to sell their products, and to stimulate community building in Huntsville. By allowing consumers to have a direct relationship with the producers of the items they purchase, this market encourages a connection between eater and grower. The consumers can ask questions, learn how their foods are produced and get to know the people who are providing the food that they are feeding their families.

## DINING WITH FRIENDS @ NATIVITY MAY 11, AUCTION 6:00 PM DINNER 7:00 PM



Please join us for food, fellowship and friends at Nativity's annual "Dining with Friends" dinner in support of the AIDS Action Coalition. The \$50 per person ticket includes not only your dinner at Nativity but also admittance to AAC's fantastic dessert reception the following weekend, Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup> at Hudson Alpha's grand Jackson Center. Ticket sales are tax deductible and 100% of proceeds from ticket sales and auction purchases go to support the amazing care offered by the AAC – more than 500 clients will benefit from your generosity.

To reserve seating at our annual dinner and receive a ticket to the dessert reception, please send \$50 per person (checks made payable to "AIDS Action Coalition" by May 5<sup>th</sup>, to this year's Dining with Friends Chairman, at: J. Chris Wesley 906 Wellman Ave NE Huntsville, AL 35801-3636.

The mission of the AIDS Action Coalition is to STOP the spread of HIV & AIDS in the 12 counties of North Alabama and CARE for people and families living with the disease. Please join us in helping them further their mission.

## EfM Graduation will be Monday, May 21, 5:30 PM in Bibb Chapel.

Graduation service and Holy Eucharist is open to all. This year's graduates are:

Peter Wilson, Bobbie Graham, and Charlie Kettle



Every baptized person is called to ministry. The Education for Ministry (EfM) program provides people with the education to carry out that ministry. During the Service of Confirmation we ask God to "Renew in these your servants the covenant you made with them at Baptism. Send them forth in the power of the Spirit to perform the service you set before them." EfM offers an opportunity to

discover how to respond to the call to Christian service.

If you want to learn more about the EfM program please contact Nativity mentors: George Thacker or Lea Ellison. Registration information will be forthcoming in the summer newsletters.



the  
Greene  
Street  
Market

at Nativity

# Farmers' Market

every Thursday 4pm – 8pm

## Stewardship of Creation Tip

Here is an assortment of good tips; choose one or all of these practices for you and/or your family and know that you are making a healthier world for all of God's children.

**1. Wait for the storm to pass!** Don't fertilize before a rainstorm. Your fertilizer - along with your money - can just wash off your lawn and down the storm drain. Fertilizer runoff can pollute rivers, lakes, and bays, and cause problems in recreational areas or fishing grounds. Check the weather forecast before you head out, and wait for the storm to pass.

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/greenscapes/owners.htm>

**2. Breathe easy!** On unhealthy air pollution "action alert" days, wait to mow your lawn until it's cooler in the evening or early the next morning. You help reduce air pollution for everyone near you if you run gas-powered equipment, like lawn mowers, when it's cooler. You also protect your health by avoiding ground-level ozone during the warmest part of the day.

More information: <http://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=airnow.actiondays>

**3. Don't top off!** *During hot weather, don't top off your gas tank.* Refuel your car or truck in the early morning or the evening when it's cooler. A small fuel spill may not seem like much, but every spill evaporates and adds to air pollution, and fuel pumps with vapor recovery systems can feed a spill back into their tanks - after you paid for it. So, in hot weather - don't top off!

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/donttopoff/>

**4. Make it a full load!** The average washing machine uses 40.9 gallons of water per load. If you buy a new washer, shop for a high-efficiency washer that needs less than 28 gallons of water per load. To achieve even greater savings, wash only full loads of laundry or be sure to choose the appropriate load size on the washing machine.

More information: [http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our\\_water/be\\_the\\_change.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our_water/be_the_change.html)

**5. Make your home an Energy Star!** When you do home maintenance, also do a home energy audit to find out how you can save money by making your home more energy efficiency. And if every American home replaced just one conventional light bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes a year.

More information: <http://www.energystar.gov/homeimprovement>

**6. Don't be a drip - fix that leak!** Leaky faucets can waste thousands of gallons of water each year, like money down the drain. Repair or replace old or damaged fixtures. If you're not sure you have a leak, check the water meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used. If the meter does not read exactly the same, you probably have a leak.

More information: [http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our\\_water/be\\_the\\_change.html](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/our_water/be_the_change.html)

**7. Be green from the ground up!** Test your home for radon. Radon is a naturally occurring, odorless gas that can seep out of the ground into your home. But as the second leading cause of lung cancer, radon is responsible for over 20,000 deaths a year. Fortunately, *a home radon test is easy to do, and homes with high radon levels can be fixed.*

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/radon/radontest.html>

For more good ideas, check out the Podcast: <http://www.epa.gov/earthday/podcasts>

→ **May 13, Children and Youth Sunday**

PREVIEW coming to  
Nativity...



Sunday  
May 6, 10:00 a.m.

What would your life look like if you had NO DEBT and were really IN CONTROL of your money? Are you ready to take the first step? To learn more join Lane and Drew Tutt as they introduce "Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University" on Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup> 10:00, Ridley Hall. The 10 week class will begin Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. For more information contact Lane Tutt: ltutt@nativity-hsv.org or call 256-533-2455 or visit [www.daveramsey.com/fpu](http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu)

## Vote for Camp McDowell



Camp has been chose to participate in the "Communities Take Root" program created by Edy's Fruit Bars and their partner, the Fruit Tree Planting Foundation. We are one of 100 communities throughout the country that was chosen to participate. **Help us become one of the 17 that will receive a free fruit tree orchard.** We would plant it to the right of the welcome sign, just opposite where you turn into Miller Commons. Each person can vote once per day until August 30th. *Please help us strengthen the Camp McDowell community with a fruit tree orchard by **voting every day** and sharing this link with your family and friends:* [www.communitiestakeroot.com](http://www.communitiestakeroot.com)

**LET'S SHOW OUR LOVE OF TEACHING, LEARNING, & THE ENVIRONMENT  
AT CAMP MCDOWELL!**

**REMEMBER TO VOTE EVERY DAY!!!**

**Questions? Please contact Jon Nee, Director of Farm Education for Camp McDowell**  
[farmed@campmcdowell.com](mailto:farmed@campmcdowell.com)

## An Evening with The Bishop & Flannery

*An intimate discussion of the timeless works of American literary icon Flannery O'Connor, as presented by The Right Reverend Henry Nutt Parsley, Retired Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama*

An Afternoon in the woods	The Barber	A Circle in the Fire	The Comforts of Home	The Crop
The Displaced Person	The Enduring Chill	The Geranium	Good Country People	Greenleaf
A Good Man is Hard to Find	Judgement Day	The Lame Shall Enter First	The River	The Train
The Turkey	A Temple of the Holy Ghost	A Stroke of Good Fortune	...& MORE	

*Wednesday, May 16 6:00 p.m. at Holy Cross-St. Christopher's Episcopal Church*  
*Open to the Public! RSVP by May 9: 256-534-7750*

## ALTAR FLOWERS 2012 DEDICATION FORM

If you are interested in dedicating **Altar flowers** for a specific Sunday in 2012, please complete and mail this form with your check made out to "Flower Guild" and mail to: Andrea Vandervoort, 434 Locust Ave. Huntsville, AL 35801. If you have questions, you may call Andrea at 539-2673. Altar Flowers are \$40 or \$20 for shared dedications.

**Dates Available: November 11 (Veterans' Day)**  
**PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION, THANK YOU.**

Date desired \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Would you share a dedication? \_\_\_\_\_

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

All dedications read "To the glory of God and...*in loving memory of* or *in thanksgiving for* or *in celebration of...*"

*Please be specific by underlining or circling your desired dedication above:*

Name for this altar flower dedication: \_\_\_\_\_

## INTERCESSION REQUESTS and THANKSGIVING

### We pray for those who are ill or recovering:

The Rev'd Betty McWhorter, Tom Robinson, Lynne Swanson, Hal Harvey, Guy Rankin, Ann Garnett, Elsie Olsen, Beth Durnya, Benjamin & Henry Baldwin, Joe Franklin, Madison Beggs, Ernie Limbo, Leigh Wahl, Bill Marsh, Joy Gass, Emile Joffrion, Eileen Sullivan, John, Nancy Kelly.

### We pray for the departed:

Margaret Cotten, parishioner  
Sue Serio, mother of Bob Serio  
Billy Neighbors, cousin of Elise Goodson  
Chesley Thorne Smith, mother of Caffey Litkenhous

### We pray for those in Military & Peace Corps:

Kuwait: Spencer Colin;  
Afghanistan: Lane Sampson-Jackson, Blake Lane, Pete Davison  
The Gambia, W Africa: Marisa Benzle

### We give thanks for the birth of a child:

Luke Ryan McClendon, son of Amy and Chad McClendon

### We give thanks for new members:

Walter Berry  
Julia Ann Bullock

### We give thanks for birthdays of our children:

Our apology to a couple birthdays inadvertently omitted in April 18th newsletter:  
4/23 Clara Williams, Kaia Lightfoot, Harrison Whitehead  
5/10 Eleanor DeFiore, Evan Ellison  
5/12 Anna-Claire Stevens  
5/13 Dylan Clardy  
5/14 Zoe Maddox  
5/15 Ragan McCallum, Lucy Baggette, Evans Alison  
5/17 Maggie Clanton  
5/18 Gertrude Aboudonia, Robert Walker  
5/19 Jackson Morrison, Anna Ayres, Evelyn Warren  
5/20 Anthony Landers, McKenzie Huckaby

## NATIVITY BAPTISM SCHEDULE

- Sunday, May 27, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.\*
- Sunday, June 10, 10:00 a.m.\*

To schedule a baptism please contact Connie Gadowski, Ministry Assistant in the church office at 256-533-2455. She will get the necessary paperwork to you.

## Youth News – The Steeple

I can almost feel summer in the air! I'm sure all of our youth are chomping at the bit to be out of school, and even as we begin to wind down our program year we still have tons going on. **Children and Youth Sunday is May 13**, and it's a great time to really show the amazing talents of our young people. If you are interested in participating, let me know! I still have jobs to be filled for both the 8:45 and the 11:00 service. Children and Youth Sunday is also the time to honor our graduating seniors and what they have done for our Nativity community. **HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS: You will be honored during the 8:45 service.** We will meet at 8:30 in the Banister Room before the service begins. If you plan on attending that Sunday, please let me know. I don't want to leave anyone out!

As many of you may know, and even if you don't, Minda Alexander mans the Salvation Army soup van every **3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month and is in need of youth volunteers!** This service begins at 5:45p.m. (meet in the church parking lot) and you'll be done no later than 7:00 p.m. This is a really great way to serve our city and it takes barely any time. If you'd like to volunteer (because I know you want to!), contact myself or Minda.

**This Sunday, May 6, at EYC** we'll brainstorm ideas that y'all would like to do next year. What kind of programs? What fun stuff? Would you like to go to a Braves game? Let me know what you think! We'll also just hang out and enjoy our fellowship time.

If you have registered for Young People Paint Birmingham or Sawyerville, let me know. I'm working on coordinating travel for each of those events.

See y'all soon! Peace,  
Liz





Christmas  
in July

### Save the date for a special Vacation Bible School JULY 10, 11, 12!

We will be celebrating Christmas. That's right CHRISTMAS! We will be doing "Christmas in July" with an emphasis on "**Giving ourselves as gifts**". Children ages 4 through 6th grade are invited to participate. We will learn about Jesus' birth, do outreach projects, have a pajama party, and much more. For more information contact Elizabeth Foster at 533-2455 or [elizabethfoster1704@yahoo.com](mailto:elizabethfoster1704@yahoo.com)

Elizabeth Foster, Children's Christian Formation Director, received this letter from a friend recently. Can you relate?

#### Let's Get the Kids to Church

I don't know about you, but getting my family ready for church on Sunday mornings can sometimes send me over the edge.

It's a paradox for sure, the cursing under my breath and snapping at everyone because they can't move fast enough. Here we are, preparing for holy ground, and all I can think is, "Enough, already. I'm done."

Once I get to church, however, something strange happens. The tightness in my chest relaxes, and suddenly I can breathe again. The peace washing over me can only be attributed to the Holy Spirit, and without a doubt I know this is where I belong. Worshipping is what I was made to do. And no other point during the week do I feel so deeply moved and connected.

Once I get to church, I'm always glad I made the effort. Always.

I wonder sometimes why church affects me like way. Why is it my comfort zone, whereas other people feel uncomfortable the moment they walk in the building? Why do I feel a little empty when I skip church on Sunday, whereas others don't think twice?

To me there's only one earthly explanation: my parents.

Because of my parents, I attended church every Sunday growing up. Even when I squirmed on the pew, clawed at their arms, or whined about the service taking too long, they made me tough it out. Like

most kids, I didn't enjoy church. Besides the fact that I found it boring, it made no sense to me.

But somewhere along the way, religion started to click. I realized I could get something out of a service if I listened. That priest I'd been watching for a million years...I realized he wasn't speaking gibberish. He had some useful life lessons, actually, and if I paid attention I could learn things to help me through the week.

It was a definite revelation.

As parents, we plant seeds, and sometimes it takes years - decades, perhaps - for our seeds to pay off. The spiritual seeds my parents planted didn't really take root until college, and looking back I realize how perfect the timing was. As much as I enjoyed college, it also tapped into my deepest insecurities, and having a church to tether me offered calm among the chaos.

As a freshman at the University of Alabama, I finally had freedom to CHOOSE going to church. While my parents lived fifteen minutes away, they never called or showed up on my doorstep to guilt me into going. It was my decision, but if I did go I knew I'd see them.

It started by accident, attending church on my accord, and largely because of friends I made. I'd hit it off with someone and soon discover that they, too, were Catholic. They'd ask if I wanted to ride together to Mass, and I'd go because I enjoyed their company and figured that a service would do me good.

The campus priest at the time, Fa-

ther Ray, was a prolific speaker, and his sermons instantly drew me in. Sometimes I'd go to hear him. Sometimes I'd go to pray for good test results. Sometimes I'd go for answers, or to feel better about life. And while I didn't visit every Sunday, I went a good bit, oftentimes after a late Saturday night out.

My purpose in sharing this is to encourage parents to get the kids to church even when they resist. Even when they hang on you like dead weight, or force you into the cry room, stick with it. The more time children spend in God's house, the more at home they'll feel. And the more at home they feel, the more likely they'll sustain the habit - and eventually attend church because they want to, not because they have to.

We live in a world of quick thrills and fleeting pleasure. We hunger for substance, yet only one thing - God - can meet that craving. Now's our chance to plant spiritual seeds that can benefit our kids down the road. Now's our chance to teach them church is a place to love and respect, not fear and avoid.

So the next time you're at your wit's end on a Sunday morning, and tempted to call it off, remember you're setting a habit. Remember you're teaching your kids to keep holy the Sabbath and associate Sundays with God. Of course, there's no guarantee your child or mine will keep the habit long-term, but there is peace of mind knowing we tried. As parents, that's all we can ask of ourselves - to try and give our best, and pray for God to take it from there.



## Nativity's Preserving Our Heritage Update

### **EXPENSES (2007-2012)**

#### **Campaign**

Office Supplies	\$2,381.40
Printing	\$12,113.57
Postage	\$1,587.60
Kickoff	\$8,425.43
Meals	\$129.63
Committee	\$738.68
Equipment	\$125.78
Misc.	\$5,642.36
Prof. Fees	<u>\$98,850.00</u>
Total	\$129,994.45

#### **Building**

Roof	\$1,647,631.66
Gutters/Downspouts	\$704.00
Wood Repair	\$12,450.99
Painting	\$150,202.88
St. Gl. Window Repair	\$145,188.19
Brick Repair	\$255,618.61
Bibb Chapel Access	\$79,634.35
Misc. Repairs	\$10,887.43
Arch./Eng. Fees	\$81,994.35
Contingency	<u>\$1,933.00</u>
Total	\$2,386,245.46

#### **Miscellaneous**

Property*	\$1,395,192.50
Info Technology	\$9,981.66
Organ Repair	\$93,648.92
Vans Purchase	\$64,523.16
Playground	\$75,653.73
Interest Expense	\$8,573.30
Fence/Ext. lights	<u>\$29,546.86</u>
Total	\$1,677,120.13

**TOTAL EXPENSES                    \$4,193,360.04**

\* Health Dept. Building/Land purchase, demolition; debt payoff for 333 Franklin

These are the expenses from the Preserving Our Heritage Capital Campaign and Implementation as of March 31, 2012. This includes all expenses except approximately \$8500 more for plaques honoring donors and interest on our loan.

The Vestry borrowed a total of \$492,450 (as of March 31, 2012) to pay the final bills. We are beginning to pay down that debt now and expect to be able to pay it off as soon as outstanding pledge balances are paid off. (Due to the downturn in the economy, some of our parishioners asked for an extension to complete their pledge payments.)

### **Dear Church of the Nativity,**

On behalf of the Historic Huntsville Foundation we greatly appreciate you opening your church for our covered dish supper with the outstanding program by John Cline. To have a church member who had been in the trenches through the whole renovation present the journey it has been for your congregation was very beneficial to all. We thank you again for extending your hospitality to us.

Sincerely,

Lucy Brown

Secretary Historic Huntsville Foundation

## Give yourself a priceless gift

We have waited as long as we could to write this, not wanting to cloud our thoughts and words by the residual hangover from our “God-high.” But, we cannot wait any longer and want (no, need) to share this with you.

We recently completed our second stint as staff members on a Cursillo weekend. There were 27 staff members serving 35 pilgrims, and we have never worked so hard, laughed so hard, felt so tired, and felt the presence of the Holy Spirit as much as we did that weekend. The lives of the pilgrims were clearly changed, but so were the lives of the staff. We are all still in touch and are planning post-Cursillo get-togethers as we speak.

Involvement in the Cursillo movement has profoundly changed our lives. We have always been relatively active in church life, but Cursillo has taught us to be **INTENTIONAL** in the things we do for God – intentional in prayer, intentional in giving, intentional in study, intentional in attendance, and, most certainly, intentional in service. The Cursillo movement is not outside the church, but rather a vital part of the church. The Cursillo movement is supported by clergy across the Diocese as well as our bishop, who sits on the governing body of Cursillo and supports it mightily.

Each Cursillo weekend consists of a series of talks given by laity and clergy. The talks center around several broad themes, including piety, study, and action. These talks break down often difficult Christian concepts into steps that can easily be followed to strengthen your relationship with Christ and provide healing to a broken and hurting world. The speakers often use humor and personal stories to bring the concepts to life and often touch the audience deeply.

Cursillo does not end with the weekend, however. Those of us who have gone through Cursillo meet regularly in reunion groups to discuss our Christian lives, focusing again on our piety, study, and action. Nativity has about a dozen active reunion groups who meet regularly during the week. We also meet throughout the year as one large group, gathering in various homes to sing, pray, and welcome back those who have recently attended a Cursillo weekend.

Some people have expressed concern over attending Cursillo because of “secrets” that no one will tell them about. Well, there are no secrets at Cursillo, just some wonderful surprises that would be spoiled if you knew about them (think Christmas morning or a surprise birthday party – neither of which you would want ruined because of someone telling you all about it!). These surprises are truly wonderful and will never embarrass you or make you do anything uncomfortable. They are all meant to bring you closer to Christ.

As we drove back in the car from Camp McDowell (where all Cursillo weekends are held), we said more than once that we wished **EVERYONE** could attend a Cursillo weekend – that if they did, it would truly change the world. So, we’re going to make a plea to some of you to take a chance and trust the Holy Spirit by attending a Cursillo weekend:

**HUSBANDS** – many of your wives want to go, but won’t go alone because they want to share this with you. Give them (and yourself) this gift and attend a Cursillo weekend. You’ll be surprised at how much you get out of it!

**WIVES** – many of you don’t want to go without your husbands, and that’s understandable. But, you also have to consider yourself – if you want to go, sign up and go! Cursillo is an incredible experience – both the weekend itself and the rest of your life afterwards – don’t miss out just because he won’t go!

**SINGLES** – Cursillo is open to **ALL** – you do not need to be married to attend Cursillo

**YOUNG PARENTS** – it’s hard to be away from your kids, we know. But, Cursillo is a tool that will help you do all things better, including raising your kids. Your sponsor will help arrange childcare, if needed.

**OLDER, YOUNGER** – Cursillo has no age limits and the usual group of pilgrims ranges from 30 to 85 years old.

By now, we hope you’re wondering, “How do I sign up?” There are three remaining Cursillo weekends in 2012. The June weekend is full, so the remaining opportunities are in September and October:

September 6-9, 2012 (application deadline is July 25)

October 11-14, 2012 (application deadline is August 25)

If you are interested in attending or want more information, contact us at home (256-830-2451) or via email ([drc3898@knology.net](mailto:drc3898@knology.net) or [drc3898@knology.net](mailto:drc3898@knology.net)).

Cursillo is a priceless gift and has the potential to transform lives. We hope you will experience it this year!

DEBBIE and DAVID COLLETTE, Lay Rectors for Nativity Cursillo

## STEEPLE SCHEDULE

*The Steeple* is published each  
1st and 3rd Wednesdays.

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

[linda.wheeler@nativity-hsv.org](mailto:linda.wheeler@nativity-hsv.org)

**The deadline for the next issue  
is Monday noon, May 14.**

### CLERGY & STAFF

**The Rev'd Dr. Andy Anderson**  
Rector

**The Rev'd Mary Anne Akin**  
Associate

**The Rev'd Brad Landry**  
Associate

**The Rev'd Jeannie Robison**  
Deacon

**Suzanne Purtee**  
Organist/Choirmaster

**Lane Tutt**  
Adult Christian Formation

**Liz Williams**  
Youth Minister

**Elizabeth Foster**  
Children's Formation

**Cassie Chenoweth**  
Assistant Children's Formation

**Audrey Clayton**  
Nursery Coordinator

**John Buyse**  
Property Manager

**Al Ford**  
Sexton

**Sally Stockton**  
Kitchen Coordinator

**Beverly Franklin**  
Bookkeeper/Business Mgr

**Connie Gadowski**  
Worship & Ministry Assistant

**Linda Wheeler**  
Assistant to the Rector  
Communication/Publication  
Admin

**Prentice White**  
Verger/Wedding Coordinator

**Vestry**  
**Pat Goodson**

Senior Warden

**Russ Alexander**

Junior Warden

**Frederick Lanier**

Treasurer

**Hannah Boon**  
Clerk

### AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY

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  
church phone 256-533-2455  
and follow the prompts to leave a  
message for a priest to respond.

## Church of the Nativity, Episcopal

208 Eustis Ave. SE Huntsville, AL 35801

256-533-2455 Fax: 256-533-2374