

THE *Apostle*

January 2009 The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama Vol. 94, No. 1

Five Priests Ordained

On Tuesday evening, December 16, Bishop Parsley and Bishop Sloan ordained Robyn Elizabeth Arnold, Walter Marion “Chip” Broadfoot, Judith Walton Comer, Thomas Roland Joyner, and James Lee “Jamie” McAdams as priests. The Rev. Rob Morpeth, our diocesan Deputy for Finance and Administration, preached at

the service, which was held at the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham. Robyn will serve as a priest in the Diocese of California, Chip at the Ascension in Montgomery, Judith at St. Philip’s in Fort Payne, Jamie at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham, and Thomas at the Holy Comforter in Montgomery.



Bishop Sloan, the Rev. Susan Sloan, the Rev. Robyn Arnold, the Rev. Jamie McAdams, the Rev. Judith Comer, the Rev. Thomas Joyner, the Rev. Chip Broadfoot, the Rev. Rob Morpeth, Bishop Parsley, the Rev. Walter Brownridge, and the Rev. Mark Johnston

Come Venture Out!



Alicia Hall, the Camp McDowell Venture Out! coordinator, explains that the program “aims to get youth and families out there and experiencing the natural world around them while building a

strong sense of community.” She encourages everyone to “get your hiking shoes on, grab a paddle, and come explore the beauty and wonder of Alabama!” ***For more about Venture Out! please see page 6.***

Radical Abundance: A Theology of Sustainability

Trinity Wall Street Episcopal Church in New York City is hosting the 39th Trinity Institute National Theological Conference on January 22-23. Keynoters Majora Carter, Timothy Gorringer, David C. Korten, and Néstor O. Míguez and preacher Miriam MacGillis will address the theme Radical Abundance: A Theology of Sustainability. “Environmental sustainability and the care of creation are urgent concerns for people of faith in this century,” emphasizes Bishop

Parsley. “This provocative conference promises to stimulate and show us ways to be better stewards of God’s world.”

St. Luke’s in Birmingham invites everyone to participate in the conference via video simulcast and interactive reflection groups. ***For more information about the conference please visit www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute; for more information about the video simulcast at St. Luke’s, please see the description of the event on page 10.***

Caring for Creation at the 178th Convention

By Charles Scribner, Director of Development for Black Warrior Riverkeeper and a Member of our Diocesan Task Force for the Stewardship of Creation

Our diocesan Task Force for the Stewardship of Creation eagerly awaits the upcoming 178th Annual Diocesan Convention on February 19-21 at the Renaissance Marriott Hotel and Spa in Montgomery. This year's host, the Church of the Ascension in Montgomery, numerous Task Force volunteers, professional environmentalists, and clergy members are collaborating to make the 2009 convention especially creation-friendly. We have been organizing environmentally educational and sustainable features, and we hope to build on the momentum from last year. At the conclusion of the 2008 convention, Mark P. Noyes, the general manager of the Sheraton in Birmingham, noted that our diocese "is setting a great example for us and the larger community as the first convention to take such aggressive steps to be eco-friendly."

On the educational front, the Task Force is again pre-

senting a workshop during convention. Last year's Task Force Workshop showcased an excellent presentation about rain barrels, water conservation, and the Cahaba River, and this year we are very pleased that the Rev. Mark Johnston, vicar and executive director of Camp McDowell and a renowned environmental leader, will share his thoughts and prayers on the important topic of Environmental Justice.

The most active way each of us can participate in the Stewardship for Creation during the upcoming convention is by recycling. Separate bins will be marked for paper, plastic, glass, and aluminum recycling throughout the various meeting rooms and halls. Task Force volunteers will be taking glass back to Birmingham for recycling at the Alabama Environmental Council's Recycling Center. The other recyclables will be picked up by helpful Montgomery City Sanitation workers. Meanwhile, in accordance with our



diocesan policy, no Styrofoam will be used at any time during convention. The Rev. Deacon Gerri Aston, chair of the Task Force, has helped coordinate a set of thought-provoking Stewardship for Creation messages, which will be presented on environmental displays in the hallways and exhibitors' room. Please come visit us in the exhibitors' room, where you can learn more about the Task Force and our Parish Liaisons.

All Saints' in Montgomery Celebrates 50th-plus Anniversary and Homecoming

All Saints' Sunday, November 2, marked the celebration of more than 50 years since the founding of All Saints' in Montgomery. The parish sent out invitations to former members all over the country, and attendance was heavy.

Bishop Sloan was on hand for the event, beginning with a Dixieland band leading the service professional with "When All Saints



Come Marching In." During the service Bishop Sloan confirmed and/or reaffirmed 12 current members presented by the Rev. Jim Wallace, parish rector, and subsequently ren-

dered a sermon perfect for the day.

Following the service, attendees were entertained by the MaxxBass, a local brass quintet, and enjoyed a catered luncheon and time to visit and reminisce. Everyone enjoyed looking at the scrapbook containing photos and documents dating back to the earliest days of All Saints' and receiving anniversary mugs and coolies for mementos. Later in the day many participants gathered in the nave to sing Cursillo songs and savor the special spirit of the occasion.

When committee members, led by senior warden Walt Hines, began the planning process months ago, we thought that this year would be our parish's 50th anniversary. We soon discovered however that All Saints' was officially named a mission church sometime between July 1957 and the end of that year, the exact date not yet having been located either in the church's or diocesan records. The best we could determine was that it occurred very late in 1957. Hence, the committee pressed on with the 50th-plus theme.

While the day was a grand success in every way, perhaps the most impressive outcome was the raising of more than

\$3,500 for the mission work of Laura Catherine Conville as she prepares to depart next month for a year in Bogotá, Colombia. Although a small parish, All Saints' continues to focus on outreach as a principal part of its mission.

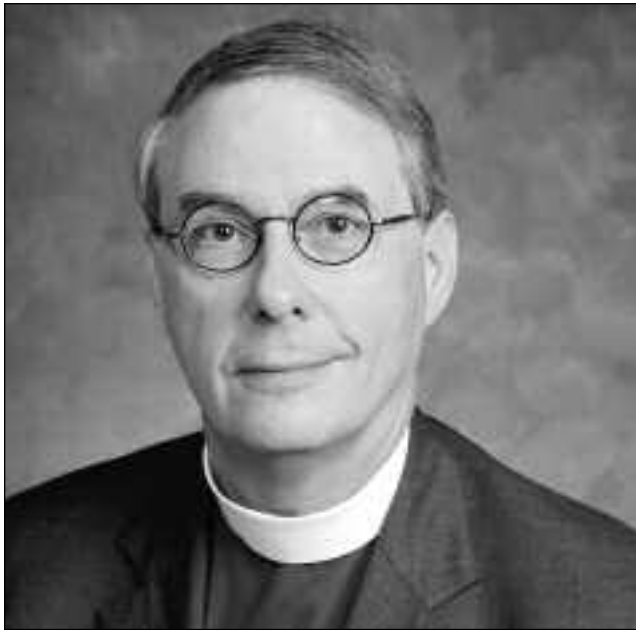
Clergy News

The Rev. Dr. Hernan Afanador-Kafuri, our diocesan Missioner for Hispanic Ministries, recently earned his Ph.D. from the Graduate Theological Foundation of South Bend, Indiana. His doctoral thesis, "The Theology of the Purification: The Purgatory in the Prophesy," will be printed in both Spanish and English.

The Rev. Milt Glor is serving as part-time interim rector of St. Bartholomew's in Florence.

The Rev. Sara-Scott Wingo will begin serving as priest in charge of St. Mark's in Birmingham in late January. She previously served on the staff at St. Luke's in Birmingham.

Learning To Be Astonished



Photograph by Billy Brown

Sabbath is one of the richest and most meaningful words in the Holy Scriptures. It derives from the Hebrew word to stop or to cease. The Sabbath, one day in every seven, was commanded to be a time for the people of God to stop all work and simply “be.” Sabbath time is for rest, for worship, for love, and for remembering that life and the world are gift, God’s extravagant and abundant gift. The great rabbi Abraham Heschel described the Sabbath as “a cathedral in time.” It is a space in time where in the stillness we remember that life is holy and that we are human beings, not human doings.

Becky and I have recently returned from three months of sabbatical leave (which our clergy in Alabama are to receive

every five years). Part of it was spent on a two-week trip to China, part in England after the Lambeth Conference, and the balance in an old cottage on the Carolina coast. We lived simply, we rested, and we enjoyed rare, free Sundays in the pew and elsewhere. We read books and did important family projects, and we savored watching pelicans, sunsets, the restless sea, and sea oats bending in the wind.

A poem by Mary Oliver, given to me by a friend on my recent 60th birthday, contains these lines:

Are my boots old? Is my coat torn?
Am I no longer young, and still
not half-perfect? Let me
keep my mind on what matters
Which is my work
Which is mostly standing still
And learning to be astonished.

During sabbatical, in this spirit, we were able to stop, stand still, and learn again to be astonished by the sheer grace of life.

Not always, of course. There were still the dishes to be done, e-mail to address, lots of deferred maintenance to be done on the family place, and duties to be fulfilled. The unfolding financial crisis constantly impinged on our solitude. But at the heart of it all was a rare stillness and simplicity that refreshed and renewed our souls.

My sabbatical study was centered on the environmental crisis of our time and how our Christian faith speaks to the care of creation. Some call this “deep ecology,” a spirituality of environmental stewardship and conservation. I read writers such as Wendell Berry, Mary Evelyn Tucker, Thomas Berry, Annie Dillard, Jürgen Moltmann, and E. O. Wilson, all of

whom challenge the community of faith to renew our ancient commitment to God’s earth.

Our short journey into China was fascinating and rich from a cultural perspective. But it was also a shocking experience of industrial pollution, the like of which I had never seen. Much of it is the byproduct of all the things we in the West buy that are “made in China.” It is a fascinating country with its 6,000 years of history and beautiful people, but its environmental challenges epitomize the ecological crisis before all of us on earth.

As people of faith, we are being challenged to help the world recover our sense of awe before nature and reverence for the earth and its myriad creatures. Are we to be merely consumers or stewards of God’s gifts? Are we to succumb to a materialism that saps the soul’s fire or renew a spirituality that honors the holiness of God’s creation? As Mary Evelyn Tucker writes, “Is the earth a commodity to be bought and sold or a community of life that invites participation?”

My sabbatical reading made it clear to me that these are the kind of questions that people of faith—we who believe

Such astonishment is part of the meaning of Christmas after all, as we celebrate God’s coming to us in the life of Jesus and in the glorious message of the angels.

that this is God’s world—must engage in our time. And I am glad to say that one of the things the Lambeth Conference made most clear is the urgency of environmental stewardship as a Christian duty and prophetic witness.

Becky and I are grateful for our sabbatical time and to you and the diocesan staff for making it possible. We are glad to be home again, renewed and refreshed for the future. There is much to be done but we will not forget to continue to be still and learn to be astonished—at least a little every day.

Such astonishment is part of the meaning of Christmas after all, as we celebrate God’s coming to us in the life of Jesus and in the glorious message of the angels. The Word has become flesh. Spirit fills matter. God is with us and the world is charged with holiness.

May each of you have a joyful and holy celebration of our Lord’s birth and Epiphany to come.

With every blessing,

The Rt. Rev. Henry Nutt Parsley Jr.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In the Diocese of Alabama

About 34,000 baptized members in 91 parishes and worshipping communities and 8 college campus ministries. Established in 1830.

Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Henry Nutt Parsley Jr.

Bishop Suffragan

The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan

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Volume 94, Number 1
January 2009
USPS 070-910
ISSN 1041-3316

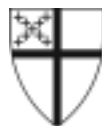


In the United States

A community of about 2.4 million members in 119 dioceses in the Americas and abroad. Established in 1789.

Presiding Bishop

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The Anglican Communion

An 80-million-member worldwide community of 38 provinces.

Archbishop of Canterbury

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The Apostle is published 9 times per year, with combined issues March/April, July/August, and September/October, by the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. Previous names for this publication have been *The Diocese of Alabama* (1892), *The Church Record* (1893-1922), *The Alabama Churchman* (1923-1987), *The Apostle* (1988-1997), and *The Alabama Apostle* (1998). Periodicals rate postage paid at Birmingham, Alabama.

All editorial submissions should be mailed to Norma McKittrick, Editor, *The Apostle*, 2156 Kent Way, Birmingham, AL 35226; or E-mailed to Apostledit@aol.com. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope for any materials to be returned. The deadline for each issue is the 1st of the preceding month.

All address corrections or additions should be mailed to Denise Servant, Circulation Secretary, *The Apostle*, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203; or E-mailed to dservant@dioala.org.

POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to Denise Servant, Circulation Secretary, *The Apostle*, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203.



I said something pretty smart recently. This doesn't happen all that often, so it was memorable. I was talking to some people about to be confirmed, and I said that one of the great gifts of the Episcopal Church is our capacity to faithfully engage the complexity of life's difficult issues. I said that, they all nodded politely, and I moved on to something else. Some time later I had time and cause to wonder what I'd meant.

This past week Bishop Parsley and I spent several days with most of the bishops of Province IV. We talked at length about the controversy in the Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church, about unrest and dissension. While we were there, we heard that our Presiding Bishop had accepted the voluntary renunciation of the orders of Jack Iker, who until recently was the Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, a majority of whose convention delegates recently voted to become part of the Province of the Southern Cone. The bishops expressed our regret, frustration, and sadness.

I believe that our capacity to faithfully engage the complexity of life's difficult issues is one of the great gifts we bring to Christ's Church. I believe that, and I'm grateful to have been raised in this part of the Church. But our willingness to engage difficult issues faithfully sure is painful sometimes: painful, frustrating, scary, inefficient, and sloppy. Like most people, I wish things could be simple. I wish I could just figure out what we can simply say or do or decide or declare that will just make everybody happy, or at

Wrestling with Complexity

least make it all just go away. But the simplicity we long for just doesn't take complexity into account, just isn't adequate, just pretends complicated things are simple. We can't just wish complexity away any more than a child afraid of the night can just wish the darkness would go away.

The bishops talked and worried, we speculated and imagined the worst, and we prayed, renewing our commitment to trust in God, to hope for the best. There were moments when the fearing and fretting seemed to have more energy than the trusting and hoping, and by the time we came to the Eucharist that closed the program, I was aware of my sadness growing larger and deeper. We had prayers and readings, a good sermon but nothing of much use in this column, and we celebrated the Eucharist. But what

We are called to wrestle with life's complexity, not to wish it away.

really opened my eyes were a couple of the hymns we sang: familiar Advent hymns written years ago, with fresh insight and meaning for me trying to make my way through troublesome times.

From Hymn 56: "O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear . . . O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight . . . O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind; bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel."

And from Hymn 68: "Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear; the evening is advancing, and darker night is near. The Bridegroom is arising, and soon he draweth nigh; up, pray, and watch, and wrestle: at midnight comes the cry . . . Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear! Arise, thou Sun so

longed for, over this benighted sphere! With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see the day of earth's redemption that brings us unto thee."

We sang in the gathering gloom of a late afternoon, old hymns given new meaning by my need for them to speak to the pain in my heart. And I saw what had always been there: we are asked as faithful followers of Jesus Christ to sing glad songs even in our darkest days. We ask our Lord to come among us as we mourn in lonely exile, in gloomy clouds of night, in death's dark shadows, despite our sad divisions, and give thanks that Jesus comes to us not in the stained-glass sanctity of life artificially sterilized, but to incarnate God in this world, in this reality, this benighted sphere. We are called to *wrestle* with life's complexity, not to wish it away.

Our hymns call us to rejoice. Not because we don't have any problems, or because it's easy or simple, or because we all agree, or because everything is just the way you think it ought to be. Rejoice because we are beloved children of God, because Christ did come and continues to come and will come again, because we are willing and able to engage the complexity of life's difficult issues *faithfully*. And rejoice because we know by faith that the Light of Christ can overcome whatever darkness we create or encounter.

The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan

Rejoice because we are beloved children of God, because Christ did come and continues to come and will come again, because we are willing and able to engage the complexity of life's difficult issues faithfully.

Our Presiding Bishop's Christmas Message 2008

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it (John 1:5).

The world settles into winter, at least in the northern hemisphere, and life to many seems increasingly bleak. Foreclosures, layoffs, government bailouts and financial failures, continuing war on two fronts, terrorist attacks, murders of some identified only by their faith—this world is in abundant need of light. We know light that is not overcome by darkness for God has come among us in human flesh.

Born in poverty to a homeless couple, to a people long under occupation, Jesus is human and divine evidence that God is with us in the midst of the world's

darkness. Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, Divine Counselor is come among us to re-mind, re-member, and re-create. A new mind and heart is birthed in us as we turn to follow Jesus on the way. The body of God's creation is re-membered and put back together in ways intended from the beginning. And a new creation becomes reality through Jesus' healing work. Christians tell the story again each Christmastide, and the telling and remembering invites us once again into being made whole. Our task in every year is to hear the story with new ears, and seeing light in the darkness of this season's woes, then to tell it abroad with gladsome

hearts to those who wait in darkness.

Where will you share the joyous tale of light in the darkness?

† The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori

Obispa Presidenta de la Iglesia Episcopal Mensaje de Navidad 2008

Una luz resplandece en las tinieblas, y las tinieblas no han podido extinguirla (Juan 1:5).

El invierno está comenzando, por lo menos en el hemisferio norte, y para muchos la vida se hace cada vez más difícil. Ejecuciones de hipotecas, despidos, rescates del gobierno y quiebras financieras, la guerra en dos frentes, ataques terroristas, asesinatos por causas religiosas—este mundo tiene mucha necesidad de luz. Sabemos que la luz no puede ser apagada por las tinieblas porque Dios se hizo presente entre nosotros en carne humana.

Nacido en la pobreza de una familia sin hogar, en un pueblo sujeto a una antigua ocupación, Jesús es la prueba humana y divina de que Dios está con nosotros en medio de las tinieblas del mundo. El Emanuel, Príncipe de Paz, Divino Consejero ha venido para reformar las mentes, reparar el cuerpo y recrear la creación. A medida que nos convertimos para seguir a Jesús en el camino, nace en nosotros una nueva mente y un nuevo corazón. El cuerpo de la creación divina es recompuesto en la forma en que se había intentado desde el principio. Y una nueva creación se hace realidad por medio de la obra sanadora de Jesús. Los cristianos cuentan esta historia cada Navidad

y al escucharla y recordarla nuevamente somos invitados a una nueva integridad. Nuestra tarea anual es escuchar la historia en una nueva forma y a ver la luz en medio de las tinieblas de los problemas de esta época y, entonces, salir a contar la historia con corazones gozosos a quienes todavía aguardan en la oscuridad.

¿Dónde usted compartirá la alegre historia de la luz en la oscuridad?

† S. E. Rvma. Katharine Jefferts Schori



Make a New Year's Resolution to Help Alleviate Poverty



In northern Ghana hope does grow on trees. At age four, Mary went blind from measles and was never able to attend school. As she grew older, her family worried about how she would support herself with no formal education. When she received a micro-loan through ERD, it gave her financial control over her future, and her family stopped worrying.

ERD has partnered with the Anglican Diocese of Tamale and the Anglican Diocesan Development and Relief Organization (ADDRO) to create unique economic opportunities

and strengthen communities in north Ghana. Through her church, Mary learned about mango cultivation, and when she received her micro-loan, she started her own business. Now, with the help of her family, she runs a successful mango farm and cultivates 17 fruit-bearing trees. Not only do the delicious mangoes she grows provide a nutritious element of her family's diet, but she can also now support her entire family with the income she earns from selling the fruits of her labors. *Your support truly does make a difference!*

To schedule a program regarding Episcopal Relief & Development for your congregation please contact Judy Quick jgquick@bellsouth.net, 205/669.6862, and visit www.er-d.org.

CAMP McDOWELL

Think Summer Camp!

You can register for Summer Camp online at www.campmcdowell.com now.

If you attended camp last year, you will receive an application in the mail in January, and applications will be available at your parish after the diocesan convention in mid-February.

If you'd rather WORK at camp this year, please download a Summer Camp Counselor application at www.campmcdowell.com. Be sure to complete it and return it by JANUARY 23!



Come Venture Out! into the Woods of Alabama!

By Alicia Hall, Coordinator

Folks around here know that you don't have to go far to have a grand adventure—we've got creeks, canyons, and forests here at Camp McDowell and nearby just waiting to be explored! Whether it's backpacking, canoeing, or camping, Venture Out! aims to get youth and families out there and experiencing the natural world around them while building a strong sense of community.

Each trip is geared for specific age groups and activity levels, so if it's your or your family's first time Venturing Out! we're here to show you the way! Been there, done that? Then come check out some new sights while sharing what you've learned.

When you sign up for a trip, you'll be joining me and other Camp McDowell staff for a few days of good food, new adventures, and making memories. I've been part of the Camp McDowell family for a year now, and I am excited to be the new Venture Out! Coordinator. I bring more than 10 years of wilderness experience to the program. I've backpacked in the Grand Tetons of Wyoming, rock-climbed in Montana, and led canoe trips for youth in the cold waters of northern Wisconsin.

So get your hiking shoes on, grab a paddle, and come explore the beauty and wonder of Alabama, with Venture Out! at Camp McDowell. Questions? Please call Camp McDowell at 205/387-1806 and ask for me or check our Web site, www.campmcdowell.com. We'll be posting the Summer 2009 schedule soon.

The Alabama Folk School Welcomes Danielle Dunbar



By the Rev. Mark Johnston, Executive Director and Vicar of Camp McDowell

Since the age of seven, Danielle has loved to dance. Little did she know that as an adult her love of dance would lead her to become the new Director of the Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell.

As an adult, Danielle would take a dance class at the John C. Campbell Folk School (in Brasstown, North Carolina) each year as a "girl's retreat" to enjoy time with her mom and sister. Over the last 10 years she has learned about English clogging, English Country dance, Morris dancing, and contras. She is very excited about the opportunity to help build a folk school in Alabama, and she says, "Helping people discover or rediscover their creativity isn't work, it's fun!"

Growing up, Danielle took classes at the local toe, tap, and twirl. When she started middle school at Woodward Academy in Atlanta she was fortunate enough to include dance in her daily curriculum. Then for years she barely danced a step. She believes that as we grow older, we don't place emphasis on maintaining those creative skills. For Danielle, working at the Folk School is a way to remind people of their latent talents and gifts. At a place like Camp McDowell, we're reminded of how life can be simple and spiritual. The Folk School is just one more way to experience that.

Danielle lives in Birmingham with her husband, Rob, and their two school-aged children, Hayden and Evan. They are members of St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands. Hayden and Evan began coming to camp the first year they were able, and they are thrilled that Mom is part of such a "cool" place!

Sample the Arts

Workshop at Camp McDowell

February 3-6, 2009

Have you ever noticed your spirituality deepen as you worked on a creative project? As your hands work, your mind and spirit will be free to wander at the new Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell. Join a limited number of adult students for a rare opportunity to **Sample the Arts**. Choose as many as three of the following classes during this one-of-a-kind workshop: *quilting, carpentry, photography, pottery, storytelling, and old-time music (fiddle, banjo, guitar, and bass)*.

Beginning with supper on Tuesday, the workshop will feature nationally and locally recognized folk artists sharing the traditions of their crafts. Class instructors include National Heritage Fellow, quilter Bettye Kimbrell; renowned musicians Herb Trotman, Kathy Hinkle, and Joyce & Jim Cauthen; potter Sandra Heaven; and our diocese's own photographer Kenneth Boone and carpenters Clyde Pearce and Mark Johnston. Concluding with a student art exhibition and lunch on Friday, this workshop is offered at a very low, introductory rate that includes meals, lodging, tuition, and art supplies.

For more information or to register please call Danielle Dunbar at 205/563-9990 or visit www.campmcdowell.com/folkschool. Space for this workshop is limited so call soon!

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

Compiled by Fiona Watts, Publicity Chair

From Dee Buzby, ECW President

Happy New Year! A new year offers us new beginnings, and I pray your 2009 will bring you peace, good health, renewed prosperity, and joy. President Elect Gethryn Giles has designed a beautiful calendar/handbook with the theme "St. Anne, Grandmother of our Savior." We will look forward to learning all about St. Anne and remembering our own grandmothers. I encourage you to read Bishop Parsley's heartfelt letter.

As I was thinking of the ECW and the New Year, I am reminded of a stewardship theme our parish used several years ago: "Just Imagine the Possibilities." The ECW has always been a creative group of women who have worked in good and hard times to care for not only our church families but also for people everywhere. In these financially uneasy times, let us find ways to explore every possibility to keep our churches strong and actively doing God's work. If you have a good idea, please share it with the other ECWs in our diocese by writing an article for *The Apostle* and the ECW Web site, tell your Convocation Coordinator, come to the ECW Workshop at the PLTE, or contact a diocesan ECW Board member. Just imagine the possibilities and what we can accomplish together with God's help!

This coming year will be filled with opportunities for all of us to again support UTO, ECW College Scholarship, CPC, ECW ACTS2 pledge, Women's Weekend, Convocation Meetings, PLTE ECW Workshop, and our Annual Fall Conference. Our new ECW calendar/handbook includes many upcoming events as well as answers to all your ECW questions. Presidents, please read over the President's Checklist for 2009

and remember that January is the time to send in your Annual Contribution and Convocation dues. Also please send the information sheets found in your 2009 calendars to Fran Lowe, Missions and Ministries, and to Lisa Gruner, Corresponding Secretary.

I ask that you join me in thanking our diocesan ECW Board members for all the work they do because they really are a very dedicated group of women and a joy to work with. At the Fall Conference, the new slate of officers for 2010 was elected, and I thank these ladies for continuing to serve the ECW on a diocesan level. The newly elected officers include President Elect Fiona Watts of St. Stephen's in Birmingham, Treasurer Jill Whitten of St. Joseph's in Mentone, Secretary Nancy Thompson of the Advent, and UTO Chair Brenda Mayhall of Christ Church in Albertville. The 2010 officers, including President Gethryn Giles, will be installed at this year's Fall Conference to be held at St. Matthew's in Madison. The women who attended the 2008 Fall Conference also elected the following delegates to the 2009 Triennial to be held in Anaheim, California, this coming summer: Gethryn Giles, Barbara Carpenter, Fran Lowe, and me, with Marilyn Atkins as an alternate.

Again, Happy New Year to each of you! As I look at the January article on St. Anne, I have learned that she is not only the patron saint of homemakers, mothers, and single women, but also an Intercessor, second to St. Mary in intercessory prayers. I look forward to learning more about St. Anne in the coming months.

Blessings to you all.

Upcoming ECW Events and Deadlines

- January** Parish Pledges to ECW Diocese of Alabama are payable. If you do not plan to pay in January, please notify the ECW Treasurer of the amount and expected date of payment.
- January** Parish ECW Presidents: Attend the organizational convocation meeting for parish presidents arranged by your Convocation Coordinator
- March 28** Parish Leadership Training Event (PLTE)
- April 30** ECW Scholarship Application Deadline
- May 15-17** Women's Weekend at Camp Mc Dowell

Please keep your Convocation Coordinator and the ECW Board up to date when ECW leaders change at your parish. For details and additional events, please see the ECW Calendar Handbook and visit www.alabamacew.org.

The ECW of St. Matthew's in Madison will soon be holding their second annual frozen soup sale with soup "tasting" between the parish's worship services on January 11 and delivery on January 25. Last year this very successful event raised \$1,200 for the ECW ACTS2 Pledge. Please come and stock up for those cold winter days! **For more information, please contact Claudia Glasgow at 256/852-7589.**

Plans are well under way for the **2009 Women's Weekend on May 15th-17th at Camp McDowell**. Our speaker this year is Sissie Wile, the Interim Director for the Education for Ministry (EFM) program at the School of Theology in Sewanee. Sissie is from Mississippi and has been active in the EFM program for many years. She is a new grandmother, and her program will center on the 2009 ECW theme "St. Anne, Grandmother of Our Savior," with talks on a grandparent's love. Please see the upcoming February issue of *The Apostle* or visit www.alabamacew.org for more information.

A New Beginning for New Beginnings!

By Monica Romano and the Youth of St. Stephen's in Birmingham



After a brief hiatus New Beginnings, a spiritual retreat for 7th, 8th, and 9th graders, was held at Camp McDowell in October. Throughout the three-day event, 48 junior-high participants and 24 high schoolers and adult staff members gathered for fun and fellowship focusing on the theme The Family of God. A series of talks and small group activities invited those present to seek a better understanding and deepening of their relationships with God, parents, siblings, friends, Jesus, and the Church.

New Beginnings was blessed to have Colin Thompson of St. Stephen's in Birmingham and Kathleen Lynch of St. Thomas' in Birmingham lead the weekend as Shepherd and Observing Shepherd of the retreat. As peer leaders, Colin and Kathleen were responsible for several talks, activities, and the evening worship services. They also made sure the weekend ran on schedule and everyone had the supplies they needed. The Rev. Lynette Lanphere, rector of Epiphany in Leeds, and the Rev. Thomas Joyner, curate at Holy Comforter in Montgomery, served as Spiritual Directors for New Beginnings and brought much humor and wisdom to conversations about God's love for God's people and reconciliation. Additionally they guided the participants through an open-mike discussion of matters of faith and various worship services. And the weekend would not have been complete without long hikes in the woods, a canoe trip down Clear Creek, and a Saturday night dance in Eppes Hall!

For more thoughts on New Beginnings, check out the following reflections from participants and youth staff:

What was one thing you learned at the New Beginnings retreat?

Kettler: How to love everyone for their personality and look at the good in everyone, not the bad.

Logan: God isn't the same thing for everybody, and everyone was affected differently. For me, I found that the most meaningful part was writing affirmations on people's hearts. It was so cool!

Will: That following God doesn't always mean doing one thing, like praying. You can do

lots of different things to worship.

Hannah: How much God can help us!

Hallie: It was the first time I've ever been to an overnight camp before.

Emily: The five types of prayers.

Did you encounter Christ during New Beginnings?

Kettler: Yes, I saw Christ in the face of every person there.

Logan: I think Christ is everywhere, in people and things.

Will: Yes, some of the little "speeches" really spoke to me and made me think differently.

Hannah: YES! When I heard the teenagers talk about their experiences with Christ, it made me think of him in a different way. It's kind of hard to explain, but when you're a kid you don't really understand completely what he went through, but once the teenagers started talking about him and sharing stories, I finally, really got it!

Hallie: Yes, when we saw the stars.

Emily: Yes, when we saw the shooting star.

Other comments . . .

Kettler: I loved the youth counselors and all the fun and silly times.

Logan: The youth staff was awesome and did a great job, and the topics we went over were cool.

Will: My favorite part was the youth counselors sharing their experiences of Christ.

Hannah: I loved hearing the teenagers' stories!

Hallie: I loved that I got to meet new friends.

Emily: I loved everything about the retreat.

Andrew: I saw Christ in the excitement and happiness of everyone. The food was good! I want people to know that New Beginnings is tons of fun!

GOT COMMUNITY? 2009 EYC Convention St. John's in Decatur January 30-February 1

**Sponsored by the Youth Department
of the Diocese of Alabama
The Rev. Richard Lawson,
Program Director**

Open to all 9th-12th grade youth and their advisors. Each parish can bring as many participants as they'd like, but they will have three voting delegates for our election of our newest Youth Department.



Need more info? Want to sign up? Deadline is January 19!

www.dioala.org/ministries/youthupcomingevents.html

Watersheds and Warming—Train the Teacher Program

By Joyce Lanning, a Member of St. Luke's in Birmingham



Barbara Baïtes of St. Alban's in Birmingham, Joyce Lanning of St. Luke's in Birmingham, Cammie Sanders of St. Catherine's in Chelsea, the Rev. John Mark Ford of St. Catherine's in Chelsea, Elizabeth Lindsay of Grace in Woodlawn (Birmingham), and Michelle Bende of the Nativity in Dothan at the teacher training session at St. Luke's in Birmingham on November 15

Watersheds and Warming is a six-session adult Christian education curriculum created in 2007 by the Diocesan Task Force on Stewardship of Creation with a grant from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The program starts with The Wonders of Creation to experience the connectedness of all things God created. The second week celebrates the Wonders of Alabama and its gifts of beauty and rich biodiversity and is followed by a third session on Awareness of Pollution to our Watersheds. Care of Creation in Alabama Watersheds, session four,

turns to specific ways we can answer God's call to care for the streams, rivers, forests, stream banks, and all of God's creatures. In sessions five and six, we have the opportunity to create and then celebrate individual and group covenants for action, what we *will* do chosen from among the many things we *could* do.

After Task Force members pilot-tested the curriculum in several parishes, the WWF awarded another grant to train teachers to teach it in their parishes or churches. The first training session was held in Tuscaloosa on

November 7, another at Saint Luke's in Birmingham on November 15, and a third in Huntsville on November 22. Training sessions are planned for other parts of our diocese in 2009. For information on future training for prospective teachers or interested church members please contact the Rev. Deacon Gerri Aston at 205/879-8390 or gerriaston@charter.net. To review or download the curriculum log on to www.stewardsforcreation.org/watersheds.htm.

Sharing Christmas Joy— from Cullman to Baghdad

The Rev. Bob Blackwell, rector of Grace Church in Cullman, and parishioners Donald Jones and Jim Hinson boxed up toys and clothing collected by the parish's Monday Morning Men's Prayer Breakfast and sent them to St. George's Episcopal Church in Baghdad, Iraq. Church member Col. Cliff Drouet is currently serving in Iraq, and he attends the Episcopal services held at the American embassy in Baghdad. The priest who serves at the embassy,



the Rev. Andrew White, also serves as the priest at St. George's, which meets outside the "green zone" and has a primarily Iraqi Christian congregation. Col. Drouet and Andrew White are coordinating "Christmas gifts" for children who live around St. George's. More than 15 boxes of toys and clothing were sent.

Serving Our Military Personnel

St. Alban's in Hoover is seeking the names of Episcopalians who are members of any branch of the United States armed forces at home or abroad. The parish would like to provide them with an abridged version of *The Book of Common Prayer* prepared especially for those serving in the military, and the employer of one of the parishioners is offering its teleconferencing services to allow families of military personnel to communicate with those serving at certain military installations. **Please e-mail the names of servicemen and women to stalban@bellsouth.net.** Teleconferencing is available to family members with a soldier or Marine stationed at or near the following camps: Iraq—Camp Taji, Camp Fallujah, Camp Taqaddum, Al Asad Airbase, and Camp Victory; Kuwait—Camp Arifjan. The teleconferencing facilities are located at the offices of the Hare Wynn law firm in downtown Birmingham. For more information about the Hare Wynn Foundation Freedom Calls visit www.hwmm.com. To set up a free video conference, please call Janice Brush, Darcy Power, or Andi Marquez at Hare, Wynn, Newell & Newton at 205/328-5330 or 800/568-5330.

All Saints' Athletes Raise Funds for Defibrillator

Team All Saints' participated in the 2008 J-Rag USA Buster Britton Triathlon on June 14 to raise money for the purchase of an Automated External Heart Defibrillator (AED) for All Saints' in Homewood (Birmingham). The team consisted of Jay "El Capitán" Wellons (swim), Catherine "The Flash" Diethelm (run), and Russ "The Hammer" Mawn (bike) and took first place in their division with a winning time of 1:09:41. Through the goodwill of All Saints' parishioners, the AED was purchased and installed in the fall.



UPCOMING RETREATS, CONFERENCES, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

NUTS AND BOLTS: A CHRISTIAN FORMATION TOOL BOX

January 10, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at St. Stephen's in Birmingham



Everyone is cordially invited to Nuts and Bolts: A Christian Formation Tool Box on Saturday, January 10, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Stephen's in Birmingham. Our diocesan Department of Christian Formation and the Province IV Christian Formation Committee are hosting this year's workshop, which was previously called All Under One Roof. You will be able to choose from a variety of informative sessions that will focus on programs and curricula for children, youth, and adults.

The Children's Track includes The Theology of I Wonder led by Kathy Graham and Sabrina Evans, How To Have a Successful Children's Chapel led by Kathy Graham, and Helping Our Children Pray led by Sabrina Evans. The Youth Track includes Connecting with Youth, Connecting with Each Other As a Christian Community, and Connect: YOU . . . th, all led by Cookie Cantwell. The Adult Track includes Adult Curriculum led by Jenny Beaumont, Nurturing the Nurturers led by Tracey Herzer, and Parenting led by Jenny Beaumont. Additional sessions include The Gift of Small Churches led by Tracey Herzer, Special Days—Intergenerational Classes That Delight led by Debbi Rodahaffer, Scope and Sequence led by Nita Tidwell, and Midweek Offerings led by Tracey Herzer.

For more information please contact Sarah Sartain at ssartain@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.

VIDEO SIMULCAST OF 39TH TRINITY INSTITUTE

January 22-23 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at St. Luke's in Birmingham

St. Luke's in Birmingham invites everyone to participate in the 39th Trinity Institute—Radical Abundance: A Theology of Sustainability via video simulcast and interactive reflection groups. “Environmental sustainability and the care of creation are urgent concerns for people of faith in this century,” emphasizes Bishop Parsley. “This provocative conference promises to stimulate and show us ways to be better stewards of God's world.”

What is the relationship between justice and environmental sustainability? How can the Church respond to the current environmental crisis in a manner that is engaged, practical, and prophetic? The call for Earth stewardship arises from the Genesis admonition to tend and keep God's garden—and now we recognize more than ever the need to build sustainable environments with social and economic justice. How then will we build our relationships with the

Earth and with one another wisely, justly, and in ways that are sustainable and in balance with the vast web of life on this globe? The Church has been and can be a dialogue partner in current civic issues, including the contemporary quest for sustainability through inclusion of the marginalized in our communities. What might happen if we measure abundance not by how much stuff we have but by the quality of our relationships with others and the natural world? Our theology connects us with the poor and marginalized, and in this difficult time, recognizing global interdependence and economic distress, we will explore the importance of the vitality of local economies for food and other natural resources.

This year's Trinity Institute, featuring keynoters Majora Carter, Timothy Gorringer, David C. Kortzen, and Néstor O. Míguez and preacher Miriam MacGillis, provides an opportunity to examine the link between justice and well-being in social environments and the understanding of communities as economic units that bind together urban and rural communities. The participants will explore how grassroots community work supports sustainability and how local congregations can support that work. Interactive reflection groups throughout will enable the people at the video simulcast to share personal experiences and solutions.

For more information please visit www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute. To make reservations to view the video simulcast and participate in the interactive reflection groups, please contact St. Luke's clergy secretary, Barbara Vandergriff, at 205/802-6207. For more information about the two-day event at St. Luke's please contact the Rev. Rebecca DeBow at 205/802-6202 or rdebow@saint-lukes.com.

SIXTH ANNUAL CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE

January 30-31 at the University of Alabama School of Music

Everyone is cordially invited to the sixth annual church music conference at Moody Music Building on the University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa. This year's conference, A Mendelssohn Year (1809-1847), features organist Dr. Gail Archer and includes workshops on sacred small organ repertoire, handbell techniques, organ and vocal masterclasses, liturgical dance, liturgical drama, commissioning new choral works, choral vocalizes for the older voice, and “How To Fix a Choir in 30 Minutes.” Dr. Archer will present an organ concert on Friday evening, and the University Singers along with a massed choir of members of local church choirs under the direction of Dr. John Ratledge will perform “Hymn of Praise” featuring the compositions of Felix Mendelssohn. For more information please contact Fayette Freese, associate professor of organ at the university, at

Bishops' Visitation Schedule

Sunday, January 4

10:30 a.m. Bishop Parsley, Holy Comforter, Gadsden
10:30 a.m. Bishop Sloan, Epiphany, Guntersville

Tuesday, January 6

7 p.m. Bishop Parsley, Epiphany, Tallassee

Sunday, January 11

9:30 a.m. Bishop Sloan, St. Mary's, Childersburg

Sunday, January 18

10 a.m. Bishop Parsley, St. Wilfred's, Marion
10 a.m. Bishop Sloan, St. John's Deaf, Birmingham

Sunday, January 25

10 a.m. Bishop Parsley, Holy Trinity, Auburn
10:30 a.m. Bishop Sloan, Holy Cross—St. Christopher's, Huntsville
6 p.m. Bishop Parsley, St. Dunstan's, Auburn

Sunday, February 1

10 a.m. Bishop Parsley, Messiah, Heflin
11 a.m. Bishop Sloan, St. James', Livingston

Sunday, February 8

10:30 a.m. Bishop Parsley, Holy Cross, Trussville
10:30 a.m. Bishop Sloan, Trinity, Florence

Sunday, February 15

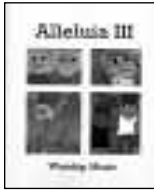
9:30 a.m. Bishop Parsley, St. Bartholomew's, Florence
10 a.m. Bishop Sloan, St. James', Alexander City

Sunday, February 22

10 a.m. Bishop Parsley, St. Michael's, Fayette
11 a.m. Bishop Sloan, St. Stephen's, Smith Station
3 p.m. Bishop Sloan, St. Matthew's, Seale

faythefreese@earthlink.net or visit www.music.ua.edu/organ/events.

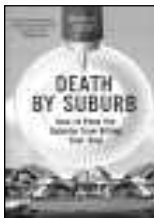
WHAT'S NEW/NOTEWORTHY AT THE EPISCOPAL BOOK STORE



Alleluia III

They are most definitely here—and they are flying off the bookstore shelves. The bookstore has paperback, spiral-bound *Alleluia III* songbooks and musicians' songbooks, which come in a

large three ring binder with plenty of room for additional music (the editorial committee strongly recommends that each sheet of music be put in plastic sheet protectors). The plastic-coated, sturdy paperback songbook is recommended for pew holders, and the spiral bound is for music stands.



Death by Suburb by David Goetz

On Friday and Saturday, January 9 and 10, St. Luke's in Birmingham will host the annual John Claypool Lecture Series with this year's featured speaker David Goetz, author of *Death by Suburb*. This provocative, witty book

provides a study in the dis-ease and disconnection often found in the modernized American world. Goetz offers the reader a chance to examine lifestyles and attitudes "typical" of our suburban existence and look for antidotes to some of the prevailing problems.



Barbara & Susan's Guide to the Empty Nest by Barbara Rainey and Susan Yates

Susan Yates is the keynoter for the 2009 Christian Women's Conference hosted by Birmingham-area churches on

January 23-24 at Independent Presbyterian Church. Yates will speak on the theme "Refresh Your Spirit." In her newest book, *Barbara & Susan's Guide to the Empty Nest*, she and coauthor Barbara Rainey talk about the downside of the empty nest years, but they do so with an upbeat attitude of hope and encouragement. They offer helpful suggestions on finding out who you are once you separate your identity from your children's and then discovering what to do with yourself in a meaningful way for the many years you probably have left to make a difference on this earth. It's a great read whether your children have already left the "nest" or are just getting ready to leave.

The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community by David Korten

David Korten is one of the featured keynotes for

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Diocesan Convention February 19-21 in Montgomery
EYC Convention (9th-12th graders) January 30-February 1
Happening Weekend (9th-12th graders) #54 March 6-8
Province IV Youth Event/PYE 2009 June 23-28
Sawyerville Day Camps July 10-19 and 21-23
Spring Break Conference (9th-12th graders) March 14-18
Taizé Pilgrimage (ages 16-30) May 23-June 2
Winter Weekend (for 7th-8th graders) January 16-19
Youth Ministry Sabbath Retreat (all Youth leaders) April 24-25

January 3 Centering Prayer Workshop presented by the Rev. Tom Ward at the Center for Spiritual Development at St. Mary's Sewanee (Tennessee). For more information please visit www.StMarysSewanee.org or call 931/598-5342.

January 4-11 8-Day Intensive and Post-Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat presented by the Rev. Tom Ward at the Center for Spiritual Development at St. Mary's Sewanee (Tennessee). For more information please visit www.StMarysSewanee.org or call 931/598-5342.

January 9-11 Vestry Conference with keynote speakers the Rt. Rev. James Mark Dyer and Dr. Amelia Dyer at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. For more information please call 828/692-9136, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or visit www.kanuga.org.

January 10 Nuts and Bolts: A Christian Formation Toolbox (formerly All Under One Roof) workshop sponsored by our diocesan Department of Christian Formation and the Province IV Christian Formation Committee from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Stephen's in Birmingham. For more information please see the description on page 10 or contact Sarah Sartain at ssartain@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.

January 15-18 Kanuga Knitting and Quilting Retreat at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. For more information please call 828/692-9136, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or visit www.kanuga.org.



this year's Trinity Institute, which will be available for viewing via video simulcast at St. Luke's in Birmingham on Thursday and Friday, January 22 and 23 (please see the description of the event on page 10). Korten and the other speakers will address the theme "Radical Abundance: A Theology of Sustainability." Reviewers are praising Korten's latest book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*—"If you have the time to only read one book within the broad literatures of imagination, corporatism, and constructive prospects for the planet, this is probably that book." "This will be one of the most important books you will ever read." It is "a

January 22-23 39th Trinity Institute Video Simulcast from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at St. Luke's in Birmingham. For more information please see the description on page 10 or visit www.trinitywallstreet.org/institute; to make reservations to view the video simulcast and participate in the interactive reflection groups, please contact St. Luke's clergy secretary, Barbara Vandergriff, at 205/802-6207; for more information about the two-day event at St. Luke's please contact the Rev. Rebecca DeBow at 205/802-6202 or rdebow@saint-lukes.com.

January 25 Organ recital presented by Cathedral Organist Dr. Stephen G. Schaeffer in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Grieb-Williams organ at 4 p.m. at the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please contact Music Associate Charles Kennedy at 205/226-3505 or kennedy@cathedraladvent.com.

January 30-31 Sixth Annual Church Music Conference at the University of Alabama School of Music. For more information please see the description on page 10; contact Faythe Freese, associate professor of organ at the university, at faythefreese@earthlink.net; or visit www.music.ua.edu/organ/events.

January 16-19 Winter Weekend for 7th-8th graders at Camp McDowell. For more information please contact Youth Ministries Assistant Leslie Manning at lmanning@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 325.

February 6 Midday Musical Menu featuring Lucina Horner playing the viola and Judith Sullivan-Hicks playing the harp at 12:30 p.m. at the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please contact Music Associate Charles Kennedy at 205/226-3505 or kennedy@cathedraladvent.com.

February 7-13 Iconography with Suzanne Schleck—The Gospel in Line and Color workshop at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. For more information please call 828/692-9136, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or visit www.kanuga.org.

March 1-4 Bowen Conference—Christian in a 21st Century World: How Now Must We Live? featuring keynoter Phyllis Tickle at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, North Carolina. For more information please call 828/692-9136, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or visit www.kanuga.org.

remarkable achievement and a monument to sustainable human conduct and relation with all other life forms and the environment that supports us all." Korten also wrote the international bestseller *When Corporations Rule the World*.

For more information about these and other books or to have a staff member research and special order a particular book, please contact the Episcopal Book Store, 2015 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203; 205/323-2959; e-mail ebinfo@episcobooks.com. You can also visit the bookstore online at www.episcobooks.com. The bookstore is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Celebrating the Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe



More than 200 people attended the celebration of the Feast of the Virgin of Guadalupe at All Saints' in Aliceville on December 12, and about 300 celebrated at La Gracia in Birmingham on December 13. Bishop Sloan confirmed 4 people and 17 received First Communion at the worship service at La Gracia. Mariachis provided the music for the services and the fiestas that followed.



Following the Star



The preschoolers at **St. Stephen's in Birmingham** literally followed the star and an angel's voice to the manger, where they carefully placed handfuls of straw around Baby Jesus. The children came to school dressed



in simple costumes and reenacted the Christmas story. The Rev. Russell Kendrick, rector of the parish, dressed as a shepherd and led the children on the wonder-filled journey.

A Different Kind of Jesse Tree

By Sabrina Evans, Director of Children's Christian Formation at St. John's in Montgomery

I found this idea on the Internet, and it worked great! I drew the stump and branches on a piece of canvas and colored them in with markers. Then I drew tendrils for the leaves. I purchased a silk grapevine branch and pulled the leaves off their plastic spine. I made a list of things that would be appropriate for the Jesse tree, and the children drew pictures of the items on 1 x 1-inch wooden blocks. We glued each wooden block onto a silk leaf and attached the leaves to the canvass with pieces of Velcro. We are planning to have our Jesse Tree framed in a shadow box.



MAILING ADDRESSES AND DEADLINES

Postmaster, parishes, and individuals, please send all address changes to Circulation Secretary Denise Servant, Carpenter House, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203-2682; 205/715-2060 ext. 300; E-mail dservant@dioala.org.

Please send all submissions to Editor Norma McKittrick (205/979-2680). **Please e-mail text and photos** to Apostledit@aol.com **or mail them** to 2156 Kent Way, Birmingham, AL 35226.

The submission deadline for the **February** issue is **January 2**; the deadline for the combined post-convention **March/April** issue is **February 2**.