Camp McDowell To Open Folk School

The new Camp McDowell Folk School will begin offering classes in September. Director Megan Huston explains that the school will provide the opportunity for people to spend a week studying under master teachers in classes ranging from playing the mandolin and other instruments to painting, book binding, storytelling, chair making, basketry, cooking—and much more. The McDowell Folk School staff invites you to join in the fun! For more information please see page 17 or contact Megan at folkschool@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.
Preparing To Elect a Bishop Suffragan

In his address to our 176th Annual Diocesan Convention (please see page 3), Bishop Henry Parsley announced that “as we move forward, in order to keep us firmly on mission and to ensure the strength and stability of our diocese, I ask you in this convention to approve the election of a new bishop suffragan.” In response to Bishop Parsley’s request, delegates enthusiastically and unanimously adopted a resolution to hold the election on Sunday, September 30, and for the consecration of our new bishop suffragan to take place in early January 2008.

Bishop Parsley will ask our new bishop suffragan “to focus on the oversight of our smaller parishes that need special attention, on the pastoral care of clergy and families, on our campus ministries, and on the implementation of our ACTS 2 initiatives, especially lay training and multicultural ministry.” A bishop suffragan, who is elected by the clergy and lay delegates of the diocese to serve as an assistant to the diocesan bishop, does not automatically succeed to being the diocesan bishop on the retirement, resignation, or death of the current diocesan bishop.

With the consent of our diocesan Standing Committee, a nominating committee of 11 lay and clergy members has been named and commissioned. Judge Bernard Harwood, a member of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa, is serving as chair of the nominating committee, which met for the first time on March 1. Nomination forms will be sent to every parish, to all diocesan clergy and lay delegates to the 176th Diocesan Convention, and to all active bishops of the Episcopal Church. The nomination form will also be available on our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org. The nominating committee will accept nominations until April 16.

St. Peter’s Is Seeking a Christian Formation and Youth Ministries Director

St. Peter’s in Talladega, a pastoral-sized parish, is seeking a qualified and enthusiastic full or part-time director of Christian Formation and Youth Ministries. Applicants must have interest and experience in Godly Play and building a comprehensive formation program through high-school level on this foundation. For more information please contact Father Neil-St. Barnabas J. Lawson at 256/362.2505 or stpeters@bellsouth.net.

Gribbin Scholarship Fund Accepting Applications

In July 1988 friends and colleagues of the Rev. Emmet Gribbin Jr., a former chaplain to the University of Alabama, established an endowed scholarship fund in his name to promote the education of students enrolled on a full-time basis at the University of Alabama. The intent of the donors is to assist the University of Alabama in attracting good students. Interest earnings from the fund are used to award scholarships to students pursuing a course of study leading to a baccalaureate degree with priority going to dependents of active and retired Episcopal clergy. Even though financial need is not a prerequisite, it may be considered in evaluating otherwise equally qualified applicants. The recipient is selected by a scholarship committee composed of the chaplain of the Canterbury Chapel at the university, the vice president for academic affairs or his/her designee, and a representative of the office of student financial aid and scholarship. To obtain an application for a Rev. Emmet Gribbin Jr. Scholarship for the 2007-2008 academic year please write to the Rev. Kenneth L. Fields, 812 5th Avenue, Tuscaloosa, AL 35401; the submission deadline is April 15.
Bishop Henry Parsley’s Address

Dearly beloved clergy and people of the Diocese of Alabama: it is my joy and privilege to address you in this my 11th annual convention as your bishop. We gather in this Epiphany because we believe that “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” We are here to be servants of the light who is Christ and to let his light shine through us for the sake of the world.

At this time last year we did not know if I would be here. But here I am and very glad indeed to be home with you. The ever-clever Bill Yo, in his inimitable way, said to me after the presiding bishop election last summer, “Well you were the best man for the job—but we needed a woman.” We wish Katharine Jefferts Schori very well in her role as our presiding bishop, and I bid you keep her in your prayers. Becky and I are very grateful for your prayers and encouragement through the uncertainties of 2006, and we thank God for you. All is in God’s gracious providence.

We gather in this Epiphany because we believe that “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” We are here to be servants of the light who is Christ and to let his light shine through us for the sake of the world.

Let me say loud and clear that I feel deeply called to our ongoing ministry together in this diocese. I believe that as your bishop I may have the best ministry in the Church. Combined with the honor of serving as the Chancellor of Sewanee, with all due respect to Mark Johnston, I may have the best job in the whole world! Thanks be to God.

Yes, 2006 was quite a year. With the launch of the ACTS 2 Campaign, Bishop Andrus’s election as the Bishop of California, the presiding bishop discernment process, the General Convention, our new companion diocese relationship with Haiti, and the continuing tensions in the larger Church, our cup has been running over since our 175th Convention, leaving your bishop and diocesan staff a little breathless at times!

Through it all our diocese has remained resolutely on mission, moving forward in the work Christ has given us to do for the building up of the Church and the healing of the world. On mission is exactly where God means us to be.

I am very grateful to Bob Miller for his invaluable service as assisting bishop. It is a gift to have Bob making visitations and being more present among us at this time, and we thank you.
We ordained seven new priests in 2006, the largest group in many years. Our newest parish, Holy Spirit in Alabaster, has just moved into its new building, which we dedicated last Saturday. The Birmingham Episcopal Student Center, to be called Trinity Commons, will be occupied this month, which is a tremendous step forward for our campus ministry in Birmingham. We are making plans to plant a new parish in Chelsea later this year, and we are seeking a new youth ministries assistant who will work with our young people across the diocese and coordinate our tremendously important Sawyerville Project. Your parish covenants have increased this year by 3.5 percent so far, which helps keep our shared ministry strong, and we are grateful. These are all signs of vitality and the Spirit’s energy among us.

The most extraordinary news of this 176th Convention is the excellent progress of our ACTS 2: Living the Vision Together Campaign. . . . Our success so far says a lot about us Alabama Episcopalians. It is a wonderful witness to the strength and generosity of our diocesan community.

The ministries that ACTS 2 will fund at Camp McDowell, in planting new churches, in multicultural ministries, communications, lay training, and campus ministries will strengthen our diocese and be lifegiving for many people in years to come. Our excellent progress toward our goal shows that when we Episcopalians are focused on doing Christ’s work and providing ministry that impacts the lives of people our Church steps forward in commitment and sacrificial giving.

We are very indebted to Felix Drennen and his fine cabinet for their superb and dedicated leadership. RSI has given us excellent counsel and support. I have been especially moved by our clergy and their families having pledged nearly $500,000 to ACTS 2, and it has been a great joy for me personally in these recent months to meet with individuals, families, and small groups across our diocese to share our vision. It continues to be a lot of work, but the generosity of many of us has been extraordinary and heartening.

As Felix Drennen said moments ago, it is now up to us to see that ACTS 2 reaches and exceeds our goal. We really need more than $5.5 million to do what needs to be done since building costs have increased since we began this journey. Now is the time for all of us throughout our parishes to make commitments to ACTS 2 that will make this happen. Broad participation and ownership of these mission initiatives is as important as the financial goal. “Together” has been a main theme of our campaign. As the second chapter of Acts tells us, a church alive in the Spirit should be “together and have all things in common.” Together we can be successful, so let us as leaders do our best to encourage all our people to participate generously and help us go “over the top” in this great endeavor.

If you have not made your personal commitment to ACTS 2 I urge you to do so at this convention. Pledge cards are available on your tables and at the ACTS 2 exhibit table [please see page 12 for more about ACTS 2]. Mite boxes for the children of the diocese are being distributed so that during this Lent and at other times all our children can make gifts, which will be given to build the altar in the new Chapel of St Francis at Camp McDowell in their honor.

As we move forward, in order to keep us firmly on mission and to ensure the strength and stability of our diocese, I ask you in this convention to approve the election of a new bishop suffragan. My vision for the bishop suffragan will be to join me in the proclamation of the Gospel in word and deed, to share fully in parish visitations, and to assist in the oversight of our parishes and ministries. I will ask our new bishop suffragan to

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Becky Parsley, Anne Kimzey, and Alleen Cater talking with Father Fritz and Carmel Veldema at convention
Our commitment to campus ministry is, I dare say, among the strongest—if not the strongest in the Episcopal Church, and we heartily salute all whose gifts and dedication make this possible.

This 176th Convention highlights our Episcopal Campus Ministries and the superb work of our eight gifted chaplains and the many students, faculty members, and lay volunteers who make our ministry flourish on the campuses of our diocese. The work of Canterbury Chapel, led by Chaplain Ken Fields and Austin Kendrick, and many from our other campus ministries in hosting this convention is extraordinary. I recently visited St. Dunstan’s in Auburn where we had an overflowing congregation, 3 student baptisms, and 11 student confirmations. The new campus center in Birmingham, to which Bill Blackerby has dedicated so much time and energy for more than five years, is a great addition to our Church’s ministry. These are some examples of the great work of our campus ministries.

Our commitment to campus ministry is, I dare say, among the strongest—if not the strongest in the Episcopal Church, and we heartily salute all whose gifts and dedication make this possible. I ask all who are a part of our campus ministries to rise and be recognized.

In keeping with the spirit of ACTS 2 and our campus ministries the theme of this convention is “Reaching Beyond Ourselves.” This strikes a note at the heart of the Gospel, that in reaching out in self-giving service to others we find Christ and our truest selves. God as we know him fully revealed in Jesus Christ is the Holy One who reaches out in endless love to create the universe, to come among us in Jesus Christ and dwell within us in the Spirit, and to bless all people with his grace and peace. We are made in God’s image and are called to be alive as God is alive—by loving, by giving, by serving.

In our sinful nature, nonetheless, it is natural for us to be turned inward, on our own needs and concerns and agendas. Martin Luther said, we are incurvates in se, turned in on ourselves. This leads us to a kind of self-orientation and spiritual narcissism that erodes the soul. The Bible consistently tells us that this is the way of spiritual death.

The Holy Spirit always pushes us outward, not toward ourselves but beyond ourselves, toward God and others. This is why our Lord’s final, new commandment is to love one another. The Greek word for this love is of course agape—the love of God within us that is not turned inward, seeking for self, but that overflows for others. This is not ours by nature but by grace, by God’s image and the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. Living in agape is the way to real life, life that is not just bios, physical existence—but that is zoe, real and eternal life. As the lay theologian Elizabeth O’Connor wrote, “The spiritual law at the core of our being requires that we reach out. . . . So wondrously are we made that we are happiest when we are loving and miserable when we are not loving. The nature of our own being witnesses to the nature of God’s being. The task of the Church’s liberation movement is to free love in others and to free love in ourselves.”

Many of us have been living this truth recently in reaching out to those on the Gulf Coast who are struggling to recover from the hurricanes of 2005. Countless groups have gone from our diocese to reach out and well over $500,000 has been given by all of us, directly and through Episcopal Relief and Development, to relief and rebuilding efforts in Mississippi and New Orleans. As Bishop Gray said last night, this has been turning and is continuing to turn darkness into day for many. We are grateful for his moving words and for his courageous witness during these difficult days.

Some of us are learning how we can be involved with the Church in Haiti to help our courageous sisters and brothers build new hope and possibility for people there. Father Fritz Valdema and Carmel, who are with us, are doing remarkable ministry with children and schools and parish ministries in the Croix de Bouquets area, and we are grateful for the privilege of partnering with them and learning from them how to make a difference in the midst of great human need. This is a primary way that we are living our commitment to the Millennium Development Goals with at least 0.7 percent of our budget committed to this action-based evangelism.

I have rarely been so moved as I was on a trip to Haiti last October with a team from our diocese. At a school in the village of Thomazeau a young girl stood and asked if we could help them get a well to provide water for their school. It was then that I realized that they had none. Theirs is an Episcopal school of 240 students without running water, food service, or adequate supplies but that is doing superior and heroic work teaching children and forming young lives in faith and skill.

The words from Matthew 25 read last night reminded us that “when I was thirsty you gave me something to drink . . . as you have done it to the least of these who are members of my family, you have done it to me.” I felt that it was Christ who was speaking through that young girl in Thomazeau. In helping her and the school we are serving Christ himself. I am glad to say that the offerings received in the services of this convention will be divided equally between building that well in Haiti and reaching out to help restore lives on the Gulf Coast.

A healthy church today is one that is open to the community around it and doing sacrificial, loving service for others. Churches that live for themselves die by themselves.
Many of us have been There is a place in this Church for all of us. We do

There are 6 176th Annual Diocesan Convention The Apostle

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Our Church historically has been a model of Christian unity in the midst of human differences. I believe we urgently need to recover this heritage in these polarized times. . . . I remain firm in my belief that the Windsor Report, with its excellent account of Anglican ecclesiology, is the way forward for us.

There is a fiction being created in some quarters today that Episcopal and Anglican Churches can somehow be separate. The truth is that the Episcopal Church and Anglicanism in this country are one and the same, and I believe we must be resolute in seeing that this remains so. There is a place in this Church for all of us, the great catholic, evangelical, and liberal traditions that woven together as a rope make a strong and resilient community of faith known as Anglican Christianity. We are the Church of reconciliation.

There is a place in this Church for all of us, the great catholic, evangelical, and liberal traditions that woven together as a rope make a strong and resilient community of faith known as Anglican Christianity. We are the Church of reconciliation.

Our General Convention’s resolutions in response to Windsor admittedly were not perfect, going too far for some and not far enough for others. But they clearly and unequivocally stated our commitment to the Anglican Communion, our regret for our part in recent actions that have injured our Communion, our commitment to work for healing and reconciliation and to exercise much of the restraint that was called for. We do not know how the Primates’ Meeting this week and the ongoing Windsor process will evaluate our response, and I expect that there will be continuing stress and strain as we approach the Lambeth Conference scheduled for 2008.

As we journey through these times we must take to heart our Church’s witness. I am weary—and I know you are too—of seeing newspaper headlines about our conflicts. I want to see headlines about our glorious worship of God, our work in

Rabbis use the Hebrew expression “tikkun olam” to describe the mending of the world. This is what God is doing. This is what we are called to do in and through the Diocese of Alabama. We are a country and Church of enormous resources in a world of great need. Faithfulness in our time means reaching beyond ourselves to use our many gifts to help mend the world. As former Secretary General of the United Nations Dag Hammarskjold once wrote, “In our time the road to holiness passes through the world of action.” Our churches need to be engaged—really engaged—with the needs of human beings by reaching out to provide childcare, relief and shelter for the poor, recovery ministry, and initiatives that bring people together to meet needs, both spiritual and material.

A healthy church today is one that is open to the community around it and doing sacrificial, loving service for others. Churches that live for themselves die by themselves.

That appeal leads me finally to a word about the continuing tensions in our Church nationally and in the Anglican Communion. Many of us have been grieved over the divisions in our Church and the Communion that have led in recent days to some dioceses and parishes in our country distancing themselves from the Episcopal Church. I continue to give thanks for the spiritual maturity of this diocese and the unity we have in Christ over a spectrum of differences. But we are not unscathed by the conflicts. There are now several independent and self-styled “Anglican” churches within our diocesan boundaries made up of people who have left the Episcopal Church and chosen to be under the apparent oversight of another Anglican primate.

This kind of separation is not what God wants for us. We are all one family in God. Our Church historically has been a model of Christian unity in the midst of our human differences. I believe we urgently need to recover this heritage in these polarized times.

I am sorry to report that the loss of membership and income at Christ the Redeemer parish in Montgomery during the past two years has been so...
Haiti, our ministries on campuses and with children, our efforts to make our cities and state more compassionate and just, our care for the poor and hurting, and our commitment to the stewardship of the earth and its creatures.

I prefer to view this ferment as a kind of birthing process, the coming forth of something new in the Anglican Communion. Birthing is usually painful. Out of all this I believe will come fresh clarity and structures to help the Communion strengthen our shared life and mission across the world and deal with our differences in more healthy ways than we have of late. Archbishop Rowan Williams is exactly right in his letter The Challenge and Hope of Being an Anglican Today when he writes, “What our Communion lacks is a set of adequately developed structures that is able to cope with the diversity of views that will inevitably arise in a world of rapid global communication and huge cultural variety. The tacit conventions between us need spelling out—not for the sake of some central mechanism of control but so that we have ways of being sure we’re talking the same language, aware of belonging to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ.” The process of developing an Anglican covenant is a key way to do this. Covenant is how we live together under God toward a common ideal, with our human differences and imperfections. I believe a fresh Anglican covenant offers real hope for the future.

As we journey through these times we must take to heart our Church’s witness. I am weary—and I know you are too—of seeing newspaper headlines about our conflicts. I want to see headlines about our glorious worship of God, our work in Haiti, our ministries on campuses and with children, our efforts to make our cities and state more compassionate and just, our care for the poor and hurting, and our commitment to the stewardship of the earth and its creatures.

Our divisions do not serve the cause of Christ or witness to his mercy and forgiveness. They communicate that the Christian faith is about arguing and conflict rather than about reconciliation and love. They are the way of darkness not light.

How we deal with our differences says a great deal about our faith. One of the great spiritual gifts of Anglican Christianity has been our ability to live with differences with grace and charity within the faith of the Prayer Book. At our best we are blessed with humility, balance, and a generous orthodoxy, proclaiming Christ crucified and risen but not pretending to know all the truth, which belongs only to God. We have much to offer a world struggling in so many ways to live with vast differences and find spiritual paths that lead to the reconciliation for which Christ died and was raised.

I visited the Church of the Ascension in Montgomery several weeks ago, a wonderful Sunday with a full church and an overflowing luncheon afterward. I noticed on the beautiful bronze doors this inscription: “Be watchful. Stand firm in your faith. Be courageous. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.” Those are good words for our time, especially “Let all that you do be done in love.” As the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr once wrote, “Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we are saved by love. No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as from our standpoint. Therefore, we must be saved by the final form of love, which is forgiveness.”

Let us remember that our children are watching us, seeking a Church that shows forth love, mercy, and forgiveness of Christ. Let us remember that the world is watching us, seeking light and hope. Let us not give them a scorpion. Reconciliation must be our constant, passionate theme. Let us be united in the faith of the Prayer Book, honor the journey of our Church toward healing and renewal, respect the dignity of every person, make room for all God’s people, and “keep the main thing the main thing”—that is the reconciling work of Christ for the healing of the world. Our witness matters—let it be not to division but to the divine love that transforms our hearts and gives life to the world.

Let us remember that our children are watching us, seeking a Church that shows forth love, mercy, and forgiveness of Christ.

This means not turning in on ourselves and our internal issues in the kind of spiritual narcissism that saps our strength. It means reaching beyond ourselves in glorious worship, in loving service, and in blessing all people with the grace of Christ. It means staying true to ourselves and seeking always to “free love in others and free love in ourselves.” That is the way of the cross, the way to life and peace. Let it be our way in the Diocese of Alabama. With the initiatives being made possible by the Acts 2 Campaign we have important new work to do. Let us do it together with renewed zeal and unity. Christ is counting on us.

A poem written by W.H. Vanstone, “The Risk of Love,” puts it eloquently:

Love that gives, gives evermore,  
Gives with zeal, with eager hands,  
Spare not, keeps not, all outpours,  
Ventures all, its all expends.

Drained is love in making full,  
Bound in setting others free,  
Poor in making many rich,  
Weak in giving power to be.

Therefore he who shows us God  
Helpless hangs upon the tree;  
And the nails and crown of thorns  
Tell of what God’s love must be.

Here is God: no monarch he,  
Throned in easy state to reign;  
Here is God, whose arms of love  
Aching, spent the world sustain.

This is the One whom we serve, the outstretched Christ. In all things let us stretch out our arms of love with him and serve God and others with gladness and singleness of heart.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” That is why we are here. God bless you in all that you do in the name of Christ, the Light of the world.

Amen.

*Henry*

Resolutions Passed
The lay and clergy delegates of our 176th Annual Diocesan Convention passed the following resolutions.

#1 2007 PROPOSED PROGRAM AND DIOCESAN BUDGET

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.
#3 SUPPORTING ACTION BY THE ALABAMA LEGISLATURE TO ALLOW THE PEOPLE OF ALABAMA TO VOTE ON CALLING A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION TO REWRITE THE ALABAMA CONSTITUTION

Be it resolved that the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama, through its ordained and lay leaders and its members, be encouraged to actively support, work, and pray for rewriting the Alabama Constitution by means of a Citizens Constitutional Convention; and

Be it further resolved that this 176th Convention of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama strongly urges action by the members of the state legislature, the governor, and other elected officials of the State of Alabama to support and pass the bills that will be introduced in the House and Senate in the current session that will allow the people of Alabama to vote as to whether or not they want a constitutional convention to be called.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

Background:
The 1901 Alabama Constitution with its approximately 800 amendments, racist language, regressive tax codes, and restricted local authority is the longest and most lowly rated constitution in the country. It was deliberately designed to suppress the poor and empower the legislature. It is in need of renewal. Efforts to revise it article by article over the last century have produce very little effect.

In 2006 bills were introduced in both the House and Senate that defined the structure of a Citizens Constitutional Convention and that would allow the voters to decide, yes or no, on establishing a convention. The legislators were presented with more than 75,000 signatures on a petition asking them to take action, but neither bill reached the floor of its respective house. The bills will again be introduced in the current session. Widespread support is urgently needed to get these measures passed.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#4 SUPPORTING A LIVING WAGE

Be it resolved that the 176th Convention of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama actively support the establishment of a living wage for all workers; and

Be it further resolved that a living wage standard be defined as the Alabama poverty guideline for a family of four, to wit: 125 percent of the most recent federal poverty guideline for a family of four as adjusted and published annually by the United States Department of Health and Human Services; and

Be it further resolved that this 176th Convention strongly urge those responsible for planning events hosted by the Diocese of Alabama to comply with this resolution and commit the Diocese of Alabama at all levels, whenever possible, to obtain confirmation that local prevailing living wages are paid by hotels the Church uses; and

Be it further resolved that the standard defined above shall be the goal of all parishes, worshiping communities, and institutions of the Diocese of Alabama as the minimum compensation of lay employees.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

Explanation:
One of the central biblical imperatives is the call for us to uplift those living in poverty. Persistent and widespread poverty is for us a primary issue. As recorded in the Hebrew scriptures, the biblical prophet Isaiah offered us God’s vision of a good society. His words are as relevant today as they were 3,000 years ago, and they show us the way forward. Isaiah envisioned a society where: No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days or an old person who does not live a lifetime . . . . They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen will long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain or bear their children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord (Isaiah 65:20-25).

As recorded in the New Testament, Jesus defines his mission to be: ‘to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, new sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free’ (Luke 4:18-19). Jesus identifies so completely with poor and oppressed people that he told his followers that to meet or fail to meet the needs of the hungry, the stranger, the one without clothing, the sick, or the prisoner is to serve or not serve Jesus himself (Matthew 25).

This vision includes fair and good wages, housing and health, safety and security. In America people who work should not be poor, but today many are. We must ensure that all people who are able to work have jobs where they do not labor in vain, but have access to good healthcare, decent housing, and are able to support their families. The future of our country depends on strong and stable families that can successfully raise their children.

As encouraged by General Convention Resolutions GC2003-A130 and GC2006-D047 and in the midst of our prayerful conduct of the business of this diocesan convention, we call your attention to those who work in the hotels we occupy here—those workers who make the beds, vacuum the rooms, clean the toilets, carry our bags, and prepare and serve our food. We trust all will agree that in their work they deserve justice, respect, and a living wage that will support their families in our current economy. We therefore call your attention to the following facts and invite your support of this resolution.

It is our understanding that none of the hotels here in Tuscaloosa are either union hotels or providing a living wage. We deeply lament this. Some facts to consider:
* In Alabama, 4.6 percent of hourly workers, or 53,000 people, earn the minimum wage of $5.15 or less, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.
* The average hourly wage in Alabama for a Food Preparation & Service-Related worker is $7.04
soaring housing, health, and transportation costs. It is also reported that in 1999 (the last year for which figures are available) about 24 percent of persons at work in nonagricultural industries were employed less than 35 hours per week (Source: http://www.allcountries.org/us/census/658_persons_at_work_by_hours_worked.html).

This proposed resolution provides a definition and formula (125 percent of the federal poverty guideline for a family of four as published by the US Department of Health and Human Services at http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/) for determining the current poverty guideline, and it is also intended as a minimum guideline, on an annual basis, for compensation of lay employees of parishes, worshiping communities, and other institutions. The living wage is the minimum compensation to be paid to those employees.

For the year 2006, the federal poverty guideline is $20,000 annually for a family of four. The living wage guideline in this proposed resolution is 125 percent of that number, or $25,000. This equals $12 per hour for a full-time worker.

#6 COMMENDATIONS RELATED TO THE ACTS 2 CAMPAIGN

**Whereas** Bishop Parsley in his address to this convention reported the excellent progress of our Acts 2: Living the Vision Together Campaign, therefore

**Be it resolved** that this convention commends the visionary goals of this campaign in planting new churches, multicultural ministries, communications, lay training, building the chapel at Camp McDowell, and campus ministry; and

**Be it further resolved** that this convention commend the leadership of the campaign and those who have already pledged, enabling the diocese to pass the $5-million mark; and

**Be it further resolved** that we encourage the members of this convention to share the goals of the campaign with their parishes and encourage everyone to participate by making a pledge.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#7 COMMENDING BISHOP PARSLEY ON HIS PRAYERFUL LEADERSHIP AND PASTORAL SERVICE TO OUR DIOCESE

**Be it resolved** that this convention recognize the inspired leadership of Bishop Parsley, including but not limited to his profound listening during difficult times and his clear and courageous call to unity; and

**Be it further resolved** that we honor his example of being watchful, standing firm in faith, and living the phrase “Let all that you do be done in love.”

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#8 DECLARING CHRIST THE REDEEMER EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN MONTGOMERY DORMANT

**Be it resolved** that this Convention accept the report of Bishop Parsley that Christ the Redeemer Episcopal Church in Montgomery is dormant; and

**Be it further resolved** that this Convention commend to Bishop Parsley and the Department of Parish Development and Evangelism a planning process for the use of the property for the continuing ministry of the Church.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

**Explanation:**

As reported in Bishop Parsley’s Address, the vestry of Christ the Redeemer Church in Montgomery adopted a resolution on January 28, 2007, declaring the parish dormant.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#9 CALLING FOR THE ELECTION OF A BISHOP SUFRAGAN

**Be it resolved** by the 176th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama as follows:

* The Convention hereby approves the request of Bishop Parsley for the election of a bishop suffragan for the Diocese of Alabama.
* The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Alabama is hereby instructed to initiate the canonical process to obtain the required consents from the bishops and standing committees of the several dioceses of The Episcopal Church in the United States of America.
* The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Alabama is hereby further instructed to appoint a Committee for the Nomination of a Bishop Suffragan and to designate the chair of the committee. The nominating committee shall work with Bishop Parsley in developing a profile for the position of bishop suffragan.
* The nominating committee shall not exclude from consideration any qualified priest or bishop of the Church.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.
#10 CONGRATULATING THE REV. SHANNON S. JOHNSTON

Be it resolved that it be made known that the Diocese of Alabama sends congratulations and best wishes to the Rev. Shannon S. Johnston, formerly of Trinity Church in Florence, on his election to be Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Virginia, which is the largest diocese in the United States and also one of the oldest; and

Be it further resolved that it be made known that we are all proud and thrilled for him and we realize how challenging and difficult being a bishop in the Episcopal Church is with all of the issues confronting us; we trust and know Shannon Johnston will make wise decisions because he reflects God’s Will and Love in such a truly God-like way.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#11 EXTENDING WARM GREETINGS TO THE MOST REV. KATHARINE JEFFERTS SCHORI

Be it resolved that the 176th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama extend warm greetings to our presiding bishop, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori; and

Be it further resolved that the delegates of this convention assure her of our prayers and support in her ministry.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#12 HONORING THE WORK OF CANDICE FRAZER, YOUTH MINISTRY ASSISTANT, FOR THE DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

Be it resolved that the 176th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama recognize and honor the work of Candice Frazer for her years of ministry with the youth of the diocese; and

Be it further resolved that the youth of the Diocese of Alabama extend their thanksgiving and appreciation for her leadership and dedication to the Youth Department of the Diocese of Alabama; and

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mrs. Frazer conveying the gratitude of the Diocese of Alabama for her work among us.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#13 RECOGNIZING OUR GUEST PREACHER

Be it resolved that in recognition of his unwavering leadership and inspiration following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, we extend our deepest gratitude to the Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray III for his gospel message of grace and vulnerability and the renewed bond and relationship he affirms between our dioceses. May his flags of hope continue to color our lives together.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#14 WELCOMING THE REV. FRITZ AND MRS. CARMEL VALDEMA FROM THE DIOCESE OF HAITI

Be it resolved that the 176th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama welcome the Rev. Fritz and Mrs. Carmel Valdemar from our Companion Diocese of Haiti and thank them for their participation and contribution to the life of our diocese as we partner in serving the churches and schools in Haiti; and

Be it further resolved that the delegates of this convention assure them of our continued commitment.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#15 EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO DR. ROBERT WITT AND THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Be it resolved that the 176th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama express our gratitude to Dr. Witt for his words of welcome and the University of Alabama for its comfortable facilities and hospitality.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#16 EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO THE HOSTS OF THE 176TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

Be it resolved that the 176th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama express our gratitude to the Episcopal Campus Ministries and Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa and its rector, the Rev. Ken Fields, for their many hours of hard work, enthusiastic service, and aviator sunglasses. Please note that the hospitality you gave us was more like loaves and fish than brussel sprouts, thus feeding us all.

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

#17 ACCEPTING THE INVITATION OF ST. STEPHEN’S IN BIRMINGHAM TO HOST THE 177TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

Whereas St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church is located at 3775 Crosshaven Drive, Birmingham, Alabama, within the city limits of Vestavia Hills, in an area that was once known as Cahaba Heights and was established as New Merkle; and

Whereas St. Stephen’s mission is “To know Jesus Christ and to make him known to all God’s people through our open windows, open doors, and open hearts”; and

Whereas St. Stephen’s parish is also known as God’s tree house; and

Whereas St. Stephen’s is known for its hospitality and creative skills in celebration; and

Whereas the 177th Annual Diocesan Convention should be one to celebrate among all others; therefore

Be it resolved that the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention accept the invitation of the Parish of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham to host the 177th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama in February 2008.

Respectfully submitted by the Rev. Russell Kendrick, Rector of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham; the Rev. Alison Carmody, Associate Rector of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham; and St. Stephen’s 2008 Convention Committee—Mr. Derrick Hill, Mrs. Beverly Hurley Hill, Mr. Robert Black, Mrs. Martha Black, Mr. Robert Rutherford, Mrs. Lisa Rutherford, and Ms. Jamie Plott

Adopted by the 176th Annual Diocesan Convention.

People Elected To Serve

The lay and clergy delegates of our 176th Annual Diocesan Convention elected the following people to serve our diocese.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL MEMBERS

NORTHERN DISTRICT
The Rev. Bob Blackwell
Barbara Jacobs

MIDDLE DISTRICT
The Rev. Diane Hill
Tom Gamble

SOUTHERN DISTRICT
The Rev. Ben Alford
Mike Sexton

STANDING COMMITTEE MEMBERS
The Rev. John Fritschner
Nancy Terrell

JUDGES TO THE ECCLESIASTICAL COURT
The Rev. Lee Lowery
The Rev. Deb Braden
James Dorroh
A Diocesan-Wide Campaign To Raise $5.5 million To Grow and Enhance Our Shared Mission and Ministry

**Land Acquisition for New Parishes**

$1,600,000 needed

To acquire new land in growing communities that will provide a foundation for new parishes, which will enable us to reach new members and continue our growth into the future.

**A New Chapel at Camp McDowell**

$2,300,000 needed

For a new chapel located up the hill to provide a welcome focal point for camp and allow for up to 500 people to gather for worship, meetings, and fellowship.

**Multicultural Ministry Outreach**

$400,000 needed

To continue and strengthen our commitment to new ministries among our Hispanic and African American brothers and sisters around our diocese.

**A Communication Investment**

$325,000 needed

To help spread the Gospel and news about diocesan happenings to our brothers and sisters around our diocese by enhancing our communications abilities and linking congregations through advanced technologies.

**A New Campus Center at Montevallo University**

$300,000 needed

To fund the much-needed replacement for the current student center at the University of Montevallo; the new facility would house six students and provide a nurturing place for college-age Episcopalians to grow in faith.

**Comprehensive Lay-Certification Program**

200,000 needed

To give our parishes the best opportunity for growth by training and educating individuals to serve in their home parishes in Youth Ministries, Christian Education, and Spiritual Formation.

Please visit WWW.ACTS2CAMPAIGN.ORG and add to the success of the campaign with your pledge.

---

"Lord, what do you want to do through me to accomplish your will?"

If you are called to help accomplish this goal, please fill out this pledge card and return it to:

Episcopal Diocese of Alabama
Attn: ACTS 2
521 North 20th Street
Birmingham, AL 35203

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St. Stephen’s in Birmingham Welcomes New Rector

By Billie James, A Member of St. Stephen’s

“Bishop Parsley, we have come together to welcome the Reverend J. Russell Kendrick, who has been chosen to serve as Rector of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church. He is well qualified and has been prayerfully and lawfully selected,” proclaimed the senior wardens at the beginning of the service of institution on February 25. A capacity crowd of jubilant parishioners, visiting priests, bishops, and friends welcomed Russell, his wife, Robin, their son Aaron, age 15, and their daughter, Hannah, age 11.

Russell comes to our diocese from St. Paul’s in Newman, Georgia, where he served as rector since August 1998. Prior to that he served as curate at the Nativity in Dothan, Alabama. Russell graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, where he received a Master of Divinity cum laude in 1995. He earned his undergraduate degree from Auburn University and worked as an architect in private practice in Florida for eight years before going to seminary.

Bishop Henry Parsley praised St. Stephen’s as “a warm and committed parish marked by openness, graciousness, and generosity.” He blessed the joining of Russell and St. Stephen’s as “a fruitful partnership, led by the Spirit,” and he described the union as being “charged with a splendid new beginning, full of promise in embracing new horizons.”

Representatives of the children, St. Stephen’s Preschool, youth, and adult members of the congregation presented their new rector with gifts and symbols meant to represent the many ministries at St. Stephen’s. Russell thanked those gathered for this celebration of his ministry, noting that while it was a service marking the beginning of a new relationship between a new rector and a church, more importantly the night was a time of rededication of St. Stephen’s mission as the people of God. “It is the celebration of our ministry,” the ministry of all peoples of St. Stephen’s,” he emphasized.

Through the graciousness of Bishop Parsley an ecclesial dispensation had been given to sing and say Alleluia during the evening’s service. As the word echoed throughout the congregation, everyone retired to the parish hall for a celebratory reception filled with beautiful floral arrangements and wonderful food prepared by parishioners.

St. Stephen’s was formed in 1973 under the leadership of the parish’s first rector, the Rev. Douglas Carpenter. Now a congregation of 1,471 baptized members, the parish has joyfully embraced our second rector, and we look forward to the challenges we have accepted as this entity led by the Spirit of God. The Rev. Alison Carmody, associate rector, and the Rev. Joy Phipps, priest associate, are assisting Russell in serving St. Stephen’s.

Holy Cross School Sponsors Lenten Outreach Project

By Gail Alsobrook, Director of Development, Marketing, and Public Relations

An important aspect of observing Lent at Holy Cross Episcopal School in Montgomery is adopting an outreach project. In so doing we are reminded that spiritual formation is not an end in itself, but it is closely connected with ministering to the needs of our neighbors.

This year we are collecting items to support relief efforts on the Gulf Coast. A mission team from the Montgomery Convocation will take the items with them to Camp Coast Care, which is headquartered at Coast Episcopal School. Paul Stephens, our guest speaker for Holy Cross Day this year, serves as the headmaster of the school.

Special Lenten Services

THE ADVENT HOSTS NOONDAY PREACHING SERIES AND LUNCHES

Dean Frank Limehouse cordially invites everyone to come to the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham at noon each weekday during Lent to hear an inspirational message from guest preachers and enjoy a special lunch. The worship service begins at 12:05 p.m., and lunch is served every day except Good Friday.

- March 19–22—The Rev. Dr. Graham Tomlin, St. Paul’s, London
- March 23–The Rev. Forrest DeBuys, Curate, All Saints’, Birmingham
- March 26—Dr. Neal R. Berte, Chancellor, Birmingham-Southern College
- March 27—The Rev. Dr. Harry L. Reeder III, Senior Pastor, Briarwood Presbyterian, Birmingham
- March 28–29—Bishop William H. Willimon, Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church
- March 30—Dr. Gary F. Fenton, Pastor, Dawson Memorial Baptist, Birmingham
- April 2–5—The Rev. Andrew John Dow, England
- April 6—The Very Rev. Frank F. Limehouse III, The Cathedral Church of the Advent

NATIVITY IN HUNTSVILLE HOSTS TUESDAY SERVICES AND LUNCHES

The Church of the Nativity in Huntsville is hosting a preaching series during Lent. The services begin at 12:05 p.m. followed by box lunches served in Ridley Hall.

- March 20—The Rev. Susan Heath, Columbia, South Carolina
- March 27—The Rev. Diane Hill, St. Mark’s in Birmingham

For more information or to make reservations for lunch please contact the parish office at 256/533-2455 or e-mail Virginia Caruso, chair of the Spiritual Development Committee, at vicaruso@yahoo.com.

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2007 ECW Report to Diocesan Convention

By Alleen Cater, ECW President

Someone asked recently how many women “are in ECW.” Well that’s easy to answer—women make up half of our diocese, 17,000 or so. ECW includes all of us as sisters in Christ—every age, every parish!

Last year we studied Jesus in the House of Martha and Mary, those two iconic Biblical personalities. We learned of many ways that women live out the dynamic between active ministry and contemplative spirituality, keeping all under the broad umbrella of friendship. We had our full complement of luncheons, teas, bazaars, frozen soup sales, and the ever-popular cheese ball sales, all to benefit children of God who need help.

A record-breaking crowd at Fall Conference was spellbound by the Rev. Barbara Crafton. The women of the Black Belt Convocation extended their ever-gracious hospitality (think “Martha ministry”).

The United Thank Offering awarded an $8,500 grant to St. Timothy’s in Athens for a bilingual teacher for the parish’s multicultural preschool; this teacher also tutors the church staff. At last year’s convention $240 was collected in the blue boxes and blessed at the closing Eucharist. Let’s top that amount we gave the year before.

The Daughters of the King are using our Web site to further their prayer ministry.

Lastly on this subject—we are richly blessed to have Bishop Parsley still here with us!

Things to watch for this year: Women’s Weekend at Camp McDowell in May will include lots of activities and short workshops. The Rev. Susan Sloan will facilitate the weekend.

Our theme this year is “And All Shall Be Well”—Julian of Norwich. The Rev. Dr. Julia Gatta, of the School of Theology at Sewanee, is a noted scholar on Julian, and she will be our speaker at Fall Conference in October in Auburn.

Our theme was chosen prayerfully. I’ve heard comments on its timeliness—or irony—in light of current disagreements in the Church. Your diocesan ECW has made a statement of faith: “And All Shall Be Well.” The late Urban Holmes described Julian as the “prototype of Anglican Consciousness.” Julian lived during the 14th and 15th centuries, a golden age of mysticism but also a time of great upheaval, some of which sounds eerily familiar—the Great Papal Schism, outbreaks of the plague, drought and floods, a peasants’ rebellion, and persecution of John Wycliffe. As a young woman Julian had a near-fatal illness, during which she experienced divine revelations. She spent the remainder of her life studying, praying, and writing about these visions from God. How could anyone living through these things declare with utter seriousness that “all shall be well”? We could say that she “decided,” as an old Gospel song says, that ultimately God will bring all things to Himself. Bishop Parsley describes Julian as “a saint for our time,” and he urges us to “see with her eyes and hold to her unconquerable hope.” Julian’s assertion that “Love is our Lord’s meaning” is food for deep thought. ECW invites all men and women in this diocese to join our study blog this year. Just go to our Web site!

I want to say that serving as ECW president is a rich blessing. I have been received with warmth and hospitality all over our diocese. It’s much like visiting siblings and cousins in their homes—they are family. The gospel is truly preached and truly lived during the 14th and 15th centuries, a golden age of mysticism but also a time of great upheaval, some of which sounds eerily familiar—the Great Papal Schism, outbreaks of the plague, drought and floods, a peasants’ rebellion, and persecution of John Wycliffe. As a young woman Julian had a near-fatal illness, during which she experienced divine revelations. She spent the remainder of her life studying, praying, and writing about these visions from God. How could anyone living through these things declare with utter seriousness that “all shall be well”? We could say that she “decided,” as an old Gospel song says, that ultimately God will bring all things to Himself. Bishop Parsley describes Julian as “a saint for our time,” and he urges us to “see with her eyes and hold to her unconquerable hope.” Julian’s assertion that “Love is our Lord’s meaning” is food for deep thought. ECW invites all men and women in this diocese to join our study blog this year. Just go to our Web site!

The board has approved a goal of $65,000 toward the sacristy in the new chapel at Camp McDowell. Each parish ECW is asked to participate in this fundraising, and we invite altar guild members to join us.

Anne Kimzey will present a report on missions and ministries at our Kanuga conference in June, when we join our Province IV sisters. I understand that the Diocese of Haiti has an active ECW. We send them greetings and will keep them in our prayers.

St. Lydia’s Needle Arts Guild will have its first meeting at this year’s PLTE on March 24 at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham. We will use our Web site to work together on prayer shawls, preemie caps, kneelers, rosary beads, and liturgical needlework. The Livingston group, known as the Sucarnochee Purls, is a fine example of this ministry.

Our communications system has been vastly improved to include e-mail for parish officers. Our Web site [www.alabamaecw.org] usage is increasing. The site is free for all parishes to promote their events, check the calendar, and send e-mails.
Women’s Weekend—May 18-20

We’re from the Tennessee Valley, and we’ve come to say: Y’all need to come to Women’s Weekend in the month of May.

Susan Sloan will be the speaker—Celebrate Sisters is the theme. Come and share the weekend and experience what that means.

Upon arriving Friday folks will Wine and Unwind! And Saturday night a banquet and karaoke you will find.

We haven’t forgotten those who like to munch—Saturday noon we’ll have an ALL-vegetable lunch.

There will be a silent auction of treasures that are dear To raise funding for Women’s Weekend the following year.

There will be things to do on Saturday from dawn until the dark Like . . .

Shop the bookstore,
Do some yoga,
Build a rosary,
Learn to belly dance,
Play some cards,
Solve a puzzle, two, or three.

You can swim, rock, or paddle,
Read, sleep, or hike,
View stained-glass making or take
An African safari, if you’d like.

We’ll celebrate Compline around the swimming pool With candles and moonlight—quiet joy is the rule.

Come to Women’s Weekend—make sure that you’re a part; The music, care, and worship are sure to bless your heart.

Deadline for registration is May 4. For information please contact Barbara Carpenter at 256/721-7599 or bcarp23@aol.com. A cute t-shirt featuring the Celebrating Sisters theme is available for purchase—please order by April 25. For your convenience you can find the Women’s Weekend registration form and t-shirt order form on the ECW Web site, www.alabamaecw.org.

ECW Scholarships—Submission Deadline April 30

If you are a high-school senior or know of a student who will be graduating this year or if you’re currently working and would like to continue your education by going back to school, you should know that the ECW gives a number of scholarships every year to members of the Episcopal Church in our diocese. To be considered applicants should be actively involved in their church, have a minimum GPA of 3.0, and be able to show evidence of financial need.

You can download scholarship applications and church involvement surveys from the ECW Web site (www.alabamaecw.org). All applications and other requested materials must be postmarked by April 30, and all requested material must be received before an applicant may be considered. Grants are sent to the student accounts office of the college or university in which the student is enrolled.

From the ECW President

Alleen Cater, alleenc@bellsouth.net

It will soon be time for spring convocation meetings. Please visit www.alabamaecw.org or ask your parish ECW president for the time and place of your area convocation meeting. These meetings are open to all women, including those from other convocations. They feature good speakers, good fellowship, and good information you can use in your parish.

Our Web site is also the best place to advertise your upcoming parish events and items for sale—CDs, cookbooks, aprons, baseball caps, etc.

Watch for information on St. Lydia’s Needle Arts Guild or contact Sherrie LaDuke at sladuke@mcglaw.com or 205/970-0573. This is for the entire diocese!

Upcoming Events and Deadlines

| April 25  | Deadline for ordering Women’s Weekend t-shirt |
| April 30  | Deadline for ECW Scholarship applications |
| May 4     | Registration deadline for Women’s Weekend |
| May 6     | Church Periodical Club Sunday |
| May 15    | UTO Spring Ingathering deadline |

Please update your convocation coordinator and the ECW board when ECW leaders change at your parish. You can complete an online form at www.alabamaecw.org/2007ParishECWInfoSheet.pdf. For details and additional events please see the ECW Calendar Handbook and visit www.alabamaecw.org.
Camp McDowell

Come Have Fun—and Fund a Scholarship Too!

This year Camp McDowell will be hosting two events to raise funds for scholarships. Children throughout our diocese rely on our support as their brothers and sisters in Christ to make it possible for them to enjoy the ministries of Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell. The fundraiser we held last year in Birmingham provided $14,000 for the scholarship fund, and we need your help in raising more this year so we can make an even bigger impact on the lives of children. Come have fun—and help fund a scholarship too!

Picnic on the Green
Thursday, April 12, at Grace Church in Mt. Meigs
6 p.m. in the Church Gardens
Music by the Alabama Gravy Soppers
$45 per person

Take a springtime stroll through the lovely gardens as you enjoy a delightful picnic supper and help raise money to help children experience Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell! For more information please contact the parish at office@gracemtmegis.org or 334/215-1422.

Croquet Tournament
Sunday, April 29, at Camp McDowell
Box Lunch – Noon
Tournament Play – 12:30 p.m.
Championship Play – 4:30 p.m.

Gather a group from your parish and join us for an afternoon of friendly competition, food, and fun. Awards will be given in many categories. For more information please contact Emily Rodgers at emily34@knology.net or 256/881-0808.

The Environmental Center Offers Summer Workshops for Teachers

McDowell Environmental Center is offering the following two free teacher workshops in earth sciences this summer. Grants from Legacy Inc. Partners in Environmental Education, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Alabama Sierra Club are making these incredible events possible. Teachers may apply for one or both workshops; elementary and middle-school teachers will receive priority placement, and enrollment will be limited to 25.

“Lost Worlds in the Alabama Rocks: An Up-close Look at the Geology of Alabama and How To Make It Real in Your Classroom” June 3-6

Alabama’s own Dr. Jim Lacefield, the author of Lost Worlds in the Alabama Rocks, will teach this course. For more information or to apply please contact Marijean Hadley at marijean@legacyenved.org.

“Living Streams: Creating a Real Appreciation for the Water on Which We Depend”
July 11-13
Auburn University’s Dr. Bill Deutsch, the founder of Alabama Water Watch (AWW), will be the primary teacher for this course. For more information or to apply please contact Maggie Wade Johnston at Maggie@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.

Sewanee Summer Bridge Program Invites Minority Students To Apply

Minority high-school juniors interested in experiencing a taste of college life and advancing themselves in science and math are invited to apply to the University of the South’s Summer 2007 Bridge Program. Running from June 17 to July 7, this three-week residential program will introduce 20 rising high-school seniors from diverse backgrounds to college-level courses. Now in its ninth year, the Bridge Program in Math and Science offers a research-rich educational experience. Students will learn introductory calculus and physics from Sewanee professors using state-of-the-art equipment and computerized classrooms. Participants will stay in one of the residence halls staffed by live-in college students and a head resident. The program offers full access to the sports and fitness center, a student activities center, and miles of hiking and biking trails, as well as a number of related field trips. Interested students should immediately call Director Robin Hille Michaels at 931/398.1997 or e-mail rhille@sewanee.edu. You can also download application materials from www.sewanee.edu/BridgeProgram.
Indulge Your Creative Side at the New McDowell Folk School

By Megan Huston, Director

Have you ever looked at a beautiful handmade quilt or a hand-thrown piece of pottery and felt the desire to create these works of art for yourself? What about learning to contra dance, paint with watercolors, or pick a banjo—do these intrigue you? The new McDowell Folk School will give you a chance to indulge your creative side by taking classes in these and countless other fascinating folk arts. Starting in September the McDowell Folk School will provide the opportunity for people to spend a week studying under master teachers in classes that interest them. You will arrive on Sunday and depart on Friday, giving you up to six hours a day for six days to dedicate to learning a new artistic skill or perfecting an old one. The Folk School will offer a variety of classes ranging from book binding, journaling, and storytelling to chair making, basketry, and cooking—and much more. At the social hour after dinner each evening you may learn a simple skill, go for a hayride, or listen to a bluegrass artist.

The McDowell Folk School staff hopes that you will come and join in the fun! If you have any questions or comments feel free to contact me at 205/387-1806 or folkschool@campmcdowell.com. I am thrilled to be part of this new “school” at Camp McDowell. I graduated from the University of North Alabama and went to work as the Community Relations Coordinator for the Huntsville Havoc Hockey team and the Tennessee Valley Vipers arena football team before joining the McDowell Environmental Center staff. After teaching for a few seasons I am delighted to now call Camp McDowell home full-time. I enjoy photography, painting, being outdoors, and spending time with my two dogs and three horses.

The McDowell Folk School will offer classes in everything from playing the mandolin to quilting, watercolor painting, contra dancing, and storytelling.

Servicios en Español/Services in Spanish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iglesia Episcopal de la Gracia</th>
<th>Sábados 6 p.m.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>901 Kingman Road</td>
<td>Saturday 6 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birmingham, AL 35235</td>
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<td>205/838-2565</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iglesia Episcopal de Todos los Santos /All Saints/</th>
<th>Domingo 9 a.m.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd Avenue NE/PO Box 401</td>
<td>Sunday 9 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aliceville, AL 35442</td>
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<td>205/372-4071</td>
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<tr>
<th>Iglesia de la Ascensión/Ascension</th>
<th>Ultimo Domingo de Mes</th>
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<tr>
<td>315 Clanton Avenue</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montgomery, AL 36104</td>
<td>Last Sunday of the month</td>
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<tr>
<td>334/263-5529</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Iglesia Episcopal de la Gracia/Grace Church</th>
<th>Domingo 10:30 a.m.</th>
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<tr>
<td>5712 First Avenue North</td>
<td>(Bilingüe)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birmingham, AL 35212</td>
<td>Sunday 10:30 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Mrs. Magaly) 205/937-2441</td>
<td>(Bilingual)</td>
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ERD Update

Theresa Marin, an Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) Database Associate, sent the following e-mail to all everyone in the New York office:

This morning I received a call from Debbie Guthrie, secretary of the Episcopal School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Debbie wanted to share the wonderful news with us of how the students raised $6,155 for our Gifts for Life program and how it all started. Last fall Principal Cheryl Olman felt moved when watching one of Oprah’s shows that was based on helping others and changing lives—Oprah gave each person in the audience $1,000, a camcorder, and one week to make a positive change in someone’s life. Cheryl decided to challenge the students (grades K and up) to make a change in someone’s life with very little money. Each student was given $10 and had to come up with ideas on how to make the $10 grow. The students made things ranging from Christmas tree decorations to candy canes and sold them to friends and family. These wonderful students turned $200 into $6,155. They were excited to know that the money they raised was going to people who are in need worldwide. They gave the gift of giving and wanted share this experience with ERD.

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church recently approved a resolution that helped form a unique partnership between ERD, Jubilee Ministries, and the council, named the MDG (Millennium Development Goals) Inspiration Fund, which is set to raise $3 million by 2009 to fight malaria and other preventable diseases. Over the next two years the council has designated $924,000 and ERD will identify additional contributions to reach a goal of $1 million for the fund. The $1 million will be used to “inspire” individuals, congregations, and dioceses to contribute $2 million with the aim of raising a total of $3 million by 2009. Adopted by the world’s leaders in 2000, the core objective of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 (for more information please visit www.un.org/millenniumgoals). “The most important thing about the MDG Inspiration Fund is that it will address many of the MDGs and reach out to our greater population who are voiceless and in need,” notes Hisako Miyazaki Beasley, a council member from the Diocese of Olympia in Province VII.

For more about ERD and a list of available materials about ERD programs please visit www.er-d.org.
“Exploring Excellence in Liturgical Arts,” PLTE (Parish Leadership Training Event)

March 24 at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham

Everyone is cordially invited to participate in this year’s Parish Leadership Training Event (PLTE), sponsored by our diocesan Department of Christian Formation. The Rev. Dr. James W. Farwell, an associate professor who holds the H. Boone Porter Chair of Liturgies at the General Seminary in New York, will give the keynote address, “Becoming Who We Are: Liturgy and the Christian Life.” Dr. Farwell will also lead a workshop on the purpose and use of the Episcopal Church’s new liturgical resources Enriching Our Worship (EOW). Additional workshops include Floral Art for the Altar, Needlework, Children’s Choirs, Art with Children, The Inviting Church, The Welcoming Web Site, Designing Effective Bulletins/Newsletters, Why We Do What We Do, Senior Wardens and Vestry, Speaking God’s Word Effectively (Lay Readers), and Keeping a Sunday Focus Throughout the Week. For more information please contact Sarah Sartain at ssartain@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.

Alabama Environment Education Consortium (ALEEC) Conference
April 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Samford University in Birmingham

The Stewardship for Creation Task Force is pleased to welcome Dr. E. O. Wilson and the Rev. Sally Bingham to Birmingham on April 21 for the Alabama Environment Education Consortium (ALEEC) Conference at Samford University. Dr. Wilson and Sally Bingham will address the conference in the morning, and the afternoon session will focus on the “Art of Action,” with strategies for action on a local level.

Dr. Wilson, one of the world’s top scientists, will give the keynote address at the conference. As a professor of biology at Harvard University, he is hailed as one of “America’s 25 Most Influential People” and has long been one of the most prominent scientific voices to speak out about the species extinction crisis that has recently engulfed our planet. At the conference he will focus on his book The Creation, in which he challenges the religious sector to work with scientists toward the common goal of saving Creation.

The Rev. Sally Bingham, who is serving as the Environmental Minister at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, has brought widespread attention to the linkage between ecological issues and religious faith. She has been active in the environmental community for 20 years serving on the boards of Environmental Defense and the Union of Concerned Scientists, and for 6 years as chair of the Diocese of California’s Commission for the Environment. She is also founder and codirector of the Regeneration Project, an interfaith movement to encourage the faith community to take an active role in decreasing the negative impact of human behavior on the global climate. For more information or to be added to the e-mail list for this event, please e-mail Virginia Brown at vnbrown@samford.edu or call her at 205/726-4246.

Enneagram Basics Workshop
April 27 and 28 at Grace Church in Anniston

Mentors in spiritual direction and formation have drawn from the wisdom of the Enneagram for centuries. The Enneagram, which has ancient roots in the Middle Eastern culture, offers a fascinating tool for spiritual illumination and self-inquiry that will help you view yourself and others in different, more helpful ways. Dr. Joseph Howell, a lively and entertaining speaker, is presenting this workshop on the Enneagram at his home church, Grace in Anniston. The workshop will begin Friday evening at 7 and continue on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. A sack lunch will be provided. For more information please call the parish office at 205/236-4457 or visit www.greennjinston.org.

Pilgrimage to Compostela June 16-29

The Nativity Center for Pilgrimage & Reconciliation, an outreach ministry of the Nativity in Huntsville, is inviting a small group of pilgrims to walk a short part (80 miles) of the Camino to Compostela, Spain. The pilgrimage will include backpacking 10-15 miles a day while praying for reconciliation among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. The pilgrims will stay in hostels, giving them the opportunity to meet others from around the world. For more information please contact Zara Renander, director of the Nativity Center, at zara.renander@nativity-hsv.org or 256/533-2455 or visit www.nativity-hsv.org.

“One Destination—Many Pathways,” Ecumenical Music Ministry Conference June 28-30 at John Carroll Catholic High School in Birmingham

The nonprofit Foundation for Liturgical Music (FLM) is sponsoring its 11th annual music conference (MMS XI) at John Carroll Catholic High School in Birmingham on June 28-30. The theme for this year’s event is “One Destination—Many Pathways.” For the past 10 years, FLM has brought topnotch liturgical musicians to the Birmingham area to serve as faculty for their Music Ministry Series Conferences, which are designed to help improve the quality of music for liturgy by bringing together music educators, church musicians, and others involved in liturgical planning. This year’s outstanding faculty includes renowned liturgical artists Tony Alonso, John Angotti, Jaime Cortez, Gary Daigle, Bobby Fisher, Deanna Light, Steve Petrunak, Paul Tate, Janet Vogt, and Bishop Ron Herzog (Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana). For more information and/or to be added to FLM’s mailing list, please contact Nancy Brown at Nhbrown43@sbelouis.net or write to FLM, PO Box 530324, Birmingham, AL 35235-0324.
What’s New/Noteworthy at the Episcopal Book Store

My Heart Rejoices: One Benedictine Sister’s Spiritual Autobiography by Mary McGhee, O.S.B.
Mary McGhee’s autobiography provides a convincing refutation of the mistaken assumption that nuns live uninteresting lives. Sister Mary has been involved in social issues throughout her lifetime, and her life is a demonstration of the principle that if we take care of the depth, the breadth will take care of itself. These readings and reflections will encourage you to notice the God-threads in your own ordinary life and spend time with your own story.

The Rapture Exposed by Barbara R. Rossing
An accomplished scholar and ordained minister, the Rev. Barbara R. Rossing boldly debunks the “Left Behind” series and makes the case for reclaiming Christianity from the destructive “Rapture,” interpretation of the Book of Revelation based on a psychology of fear and destruction. The idea of “The Rapture, the return of Christ to snatch born-again Christians off the earth,” is an extremely popular interpretation of the Book of Revelation. Most Christian Churches and biblical scholars however condemn Rapture theology as a distortion of Christian faith with little biblical basis. In The Rapture Exposed, Barbara argues that the “Left Behind” novels’ script for the world’s future distorts the Bible and is flat-out wrong—there is neither “Rapture” of Christians off the earth, nor does the Book of Revelation predict a seven-year tribulation culminating in war in Israel and the Middle East. Rather, Barbara emphasizes, the Book of Revelation offers a vision of God’s healing love for the world—a love that will not be left behind.

Chanting the Psalms by Cynthia Bourgeault
Cynthia Bourgeault’s book will provide a helpful guide to anyone seeking to find a viable daily Christian practice, while those who already have a daily discipline may find that her suggestions for chanting deepen and enrich their experience. With a blend of Christian and Eastern mysticism running throughout, as well as recognition that learning to chant may be difficult, Cynthia gently guides readers first through the “whys” and then through the “hows.” The companion CD, which demonstrates the various chanting techniques, encourages even the most vocally challenged reader to try the chants. The book’s final section explores other contemporary and popular forms of chant and song, including Taizé and Iona.

Miss Fannie’s Hat by Jan Karon
Miss Fannie is 99 years old and very small—in fact she’s “grown” to be the same size she was as a little girl. Miss Fannie owns lots and lots of hats, and each hat is her favorite. But when she gives up her very favorite—the famous pink straw hat with roses—to help raise money at the church auction, Miss Fannie is in for a big surprise. This special edition includes an audio CD of Jan Karon reading the story of as well as a storyboard and reusable stickers.

America’s Battle for God by Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz
As struggles over the global war on terrorism continue to rage, many in the United States and around the world do not understand the course of events that led from September 11, 2001, to the current expanded conflict. In this exploration of the elements in America’s civil religion that have steered the country on its present course, a path to understanding emerges. German theologian Geiko Müller-Fahrenholz knows our country well—he came here for graduate study in 1965 and has spent long periods here since. In America’s Battle for God he presents a portrait of how the United States is perceived throughout the world and how the current religious factor in American politics can look like a pious cloak thrown over national selfishness. In exploring superpatriotism, the “lost opportunity” of 9/11, and the dangerous clash of fundamentalisms, he boldly and empathetically confronts America with its image in the eyes of the world—and with the urgent need to reevaluate its core values in a global perspective. He advocates some very Christian practices for setting US relations with the rest of the world right: acknowledgment of sin and reconciliation through ecological responsibility and political humility.

Mark Your Calendar

Cursillo Weekends #157 April 12-15, #158 June 14-17, #159 September 20-23, #160 October 18-21
Happening Weekends (10th-12th graders) #51 June 15-17, #52 November 3-4
New Beginnings Weekend (7th-8th graders) April 13-15
PLTE March 24
Province IV Youth Event (10th graders-college freshman) July 17-22
Spring Break Conference (9th-12th graders) March 17-21
Young People Painting Birmingham (8th-9th graders) June 3-8
March 24 “Exploring Excellence in Liturgical Arts,” PLTE Parish Leadership Training Event with keynote speaker and parish leader the Rev. Dr. James Farwell at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham. For more information please visit page 18 or contact Sarah Sartin at ssartin@diocese.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.
March 26-29 “Meditation as Prayer” Lenten Retreat led by the Rev. Marshall and Jan Craver at Kanuga. For more information please visit www.kanuga.org, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or call 828/692-9136.
March 30 The Alabama Touring Choir under the direction of Karen Nicolosi at 7:30 p.m. at the Nativity in Huntsville. For more information please contact Organist/Choirmaster Suzanne Purtee at suzanne.purtee@nativity-lss.org, visit www.nativity-lss.org, or call 256/533-2455.

April 1 Performance of the Lent and Easter portions of Handel’s Messiah at 2:30 p.m. at Saint Luke’s in Birmingham; the parish choir under the direction of Dr. James Dorrill, will be accompanied by a 14-member orchestra.
April 13 Book-signing and talk featuring the Very Rev. Paul F. M. Zaul and his new book Grace in Practice at noon at the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please call the Episcopal Book Store at 205/323-2959.
April 19 Diocesan Youth Ministers Meeting from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Carpenter House. For more information please contact Sarah Sartin at ssartin@diocese.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.
April 21 Alabama Environment Education Consortium (ALEEC) Conference from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Sanford University in Birmingham. For more information please see the description on page 18 or contact Virginia Brown at vnbrown@sanford.edu or 205/726-4246.

April 22-27 Photography RetreatVI at Kanuga. For more information please visit www.kanuga.org, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or call 828/692-9136.
April 27 Midday Musical Menu featuring organist Charles Kennedy at 12:30 p.m. at the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please call 205/226-3505.
April 27 and 28 Enneagram Basics Workshop led by Dr. Joseph Howell at Grace Church in Anniston. For more information please see the description on page 18, call the parish office at 256/236-4457, or visit www.graceanniston.org.
May 6 400th Anniversary of the Founding of Jamestown celebration officiated by Bishop Parsley at the chapel in the American Village in Montevallo. For more information please contact Program Services Officer and Creative Director Barbara Sloans at bilsuan@americanvillage.org or 205/665-3535 ext. 28.
May 6 Spring Choral Concert featuring the Cathedral Choir under the direction of Dr. Stephen Schaeffer performing anthems and motets from the Renaissance to the present at 4 p.m. at the Advent. For more information please call 205/226-3505.
May 6-9 Inaugural Lansing Lee Conference featuring the Very Rev. Samuel T. Lloyd III, dean of the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, at Kanuga. For more information please visit www.kanuga.org, e-mail info@kanuga.org, or call 828/692-9136.
May 10 Diocesan Youth Ministers Meeting from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Carpenter House. For more information please contact Sarah Sartin at ssartin@diocese.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.
May 13 Concert featuring countertenor Gregory Peebles at 7:30 p.m. at the Nativity in Huntsville. For more information please contact Organist/Choirmaster Suzanne Purtee at suzanne.purtee@nativity-lss.org, visit www.nativity-lss.org, or call 256/533-2455.

Everyone is cordially invited to a book-signing and talk featuring the Very Rev. Paul F. M. Zaul and his new book Grace in Practice on Friday, April 13, at noon at the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please call the Episcopal Book Store at 205/323-2959.

For 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, 205/323-2959; 205/323-2999; e-mail: ebsinfo@episcobooks.com. You can also visit the bookstore online at www.episco-books.com. The bookstore is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 9:30 to 1 p.m.
Reaching Out to Our Sisters and Brothers in Haiti

For our recent diocesan convention, spouses of clergy from around our diocese organized and staffed a booth filled with Haitian artwork and music CDs to raise funds to help the people of Haiti, our companion diocese. The proceeds, which totaled more than $4,000, are helping meet needs at Holy Trinity Episcopal School in Port-au-Prince, the Church of the Transfiguration in Gorman, and St. Simeon’s Church and School in Croix de Bouquets.

Our diocesan Companion Relationship Committee has developed a way that everyone in our diocese—individuals, groups, and parishes—can help our Haitian sisters and brothers: “The Haiti Connection Catalogue.” The catalogue lists specific items and projects ranging from cinderblocks (50 cents each) and classroom chairs ($5 each) to supporting a seminarian ($100 per month), providing a nursing scholarship ($1,300 per year), and furnishing a simple apartment for volunteers who come to help the Sisters of St. Margaret minister to elderly, indigent women in Port-au-Prince ($2,500). For more information or for a copy of the catalogue, please contact the Rev. Bill King at bking@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 317.

St. Peter’s Offers the Pond House for Retreats

Nestled among pines and hardwoods on 40 acres outside Pell City near Logan Martin Lake, the Pond House Retreat Center offers an ideal environment for both individual and small group reflection. Meandering hiking trails and a fishing pond enhance the relaxing atmosphere, and the facility includes a chapel, kitchen, dining areas, decks, and meeting areas suitable for overnight as well as multiday stays for individuals and small groups. Hugh and Violet Cort gave the property to St. Peter’s in Talladega in October 1999, and the parish administers the facility for the benefit of our diocese. “Our prayer is that all who come to this place will be blessed with the gift of God’s love and restoration so that each may in turn manifest God’s love to all whose lives they touch,” notes the Rev. Neil-St. Barnabas Lawson, rector of St. Peter’s. For more information or to reserve the Pond House Retreat Center, please contact the parish at stpeters@bellsouth.net or 256/362-2505.

St. Luke’s in Birmingham cordially invites everyone to a special performance of the Lent and Easter portions of Handel’s Messiah on Palm Sunday, April 1, at 2:30 p.m. A 14-member orchestra will accompany the parish choir and soloists, under the direction of Dr. James Dorroh.

Raising a Cross for Holy Cross

Holy Cross Episcopal School in Montgomery will host its Second Annual Low Country Boil and Silent Auction on Sunday afternoon, April 22. This year’s event is honoring Mrs. William (Harold) Nicrosi and the Rev. Robert Wisnewski, who played key roles in establishing the school. The festivities will begin at 4 p.m. with the Silent Auction, where participants are invited to raise a cross to raise funds for Holy Cross. A delicious Low Country Boil dinner on the grounds, with entertainment provided by The Capital Sounds, will follow at 6 p.m. The proceeds will help cover the school’s operating costs, provide scholarships, make chapel improvements, and help fulfill a host of the other dreams that are part of the school’s strategic plan.

Bishop Parsley will officiate at a special worship service on May 6 commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown. The service will be held in the chapel at the American Village in Montevallo.

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 to Apostledit@aol.com; mail photographs and printed materials to 2156 Kent Way, Birmingham, AL 35226.

The submission deadline for the April issue is March 21; the deadline for the May issue is April 1.