Bishop Suffragan Consecration To Be Held January 12 at the Cathedral
All Are Welcome

On Saturday, January 12, at 11 a.m. in the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, the Rev. John McKee “Kee” Sloan will be ordained and consecrated as a Bishop in the Church of God. The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori will preside. Co-consecrating bishops will be the Rt. Rev. Henry Parsley Jr.; the Rt. Rev. Robert Miller; the Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray III, Bishop of Mississippi; and the Rt. Rev. Duncan M. Gray Jr., retired Bishop of Mississippi. The Rev. David H. Meginniss, rector of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa and president of our diocesan Standing Committee, will preach. The Advent Choir, under the direction of Dr. Stephen Schaeffer, and the choir of St. Thomas’ in Huntsville, as well as a brass quartet will add to the beauty and majesty of the service.

All persons are invited to attend this rich and inspiring service of our Church. No tickets are required, and overflow seating will be available if necessary.

Kee was elected at a special meeting of our 176th Annual Diocesan Convention at the Advent on September 30. Consents to his election have been received from well over a majority of bishops and diocesan standing committees of the Episcopal Church.

Following the service there will be a reception in Clingman Commons. The diocese is also invited to the Tea and Conversation with the Presiding Bishop at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, January 12, at Trinity Commons: The Episcopal Student Center in Birmingham. On Sunday, January 13, Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori will preach at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham at 9 a.m. and visit St. John’s Deaf in Birmingham at 11 a.m. All are welcome at these occasions and invited to greet our presiding bishop with warm hospitality.

The Presiding Bishop’s Visit to Our Diocese

Friday, January 11
10:30 a.m. Clergy Meeting and Lunch with Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori

Saturday, January 12
11 a.m. The Ordination and Consecration of John McKee Sloan as a Bishop in the Church of God with a Reception at the Cathedral Church of the Advent
ALL ARE WELCOME

4:30 p.m. Tea and Conversation with Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori at Trinity Commons: The Episcopal Student Center (1170 11th Avenue South, directly behind St. Andrew’s)
ALL ARE WELCOME (casual attire)

Sunday, January 13
9 a.m. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori Preaches at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham
11 a.m. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori Visits St. John’s Deaf Church in Birmingham
ALL ARE WELCOME

Our 177th Annual Diocesan Convention February 21–23

St. Stephen’s in Birmingham will host our 177th Annual Diocesan Convention at the Sheraton Civic Center on February 21-23. Our Bishop Suffragan-Elect Kee Sloan will preach at the convention’s opening service on Thursday evening, and on Friday the Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald, the former Bishop of Alaska who now serves as the Anglican Church of Canada’s National Indigenous Bishop, will give the keynote address on the convention theme, “Tending the Garden—Our Stewardship of Creation.” In addition to considering and voting on a variety of resolutions, the clergy and lay delegates will elect lay and clergy people to serve on our Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, and as Judges to the Ecclesiastical Court. The delegates will also elect deputies to General Convention, which will be held in Anaheim, California, in 2009.
Celebrating the Life of Frank Mathews

By Dr. Don Palmer, a Member of St. Paul's Chapel in Magnolia Springs

The Rev. T. Frank Mathews died at the age of 82 on November 16 with his son, Virgil by his side at his home in Gulf Shores. With hospice in attendance, Frank uncomplainingly fought pancreatic cancer for several months before his death.

Interment took place in the cemetery of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Bon Secour, where his wife is also buried.

Frank's first assignment after he graduated from Virginia Theological Seminary was to serve as curate at the Church of the Advent in Birmingham (1953-55). Subsequently, from 1955 to 1971, he served as rector of St. Paul's in Selma. During those violent years of integration, Frank's position was crystal clear: He welcomed Episcopal seminarian Jonathan Daniels to St. Paul's and personally escorted African Americans to his services, defying the mindset of some members of his congregation. Jonathan Daniels came to Selma in March 1965 to assist in voter registration work. After being arrested and released along with several other civil rights workers in Hayneville in August, he stepped between Ruby Sales, a young African American, and sheriff's deputy Tom Coleman, who was threatening her—Jonathan died from a blast from the officer's 12-gauge shotgun.

After serving several additional parishes in Alabama, Frank retired to Gulf Shores in 1995, where for many years he served as a supply priest. Frank is survived by his two sons, Thomas F. and Virgil Mathews, two grandchildren, and his sister-in-law, Judy Wright Mathews, the widow of the Rev. Lex Mathews of the Diocese of North Carolina. Bishop Henry Parsley, Bishop Robert Miller, and the Rev. Robert Childers, rector of Grace Church in Anniston, will participate in a memorial service at 11:30 a.m. on December 20 at St. Peter's in Bon Secour.

We are all, each of us, unique individuals, but perhaps Frank was more unique than most. I have known no one who was as manifestly comfortable around the Almighty as Frank. He received the coveted prize for preaching during his senior year in seminary and later became widely recognized as a great preacher. People also remember him as a humorous and lovable, sincere gentleman. Rest in peace, good friend.

James Tuohy Receives Award for Service

The Rev. Dr. James F. Tuohy, rector of St. Andrew's in Montevallo, received the DuBose Award for Service during the University of the South's School of Theology Homecoming Dinner on October 18 in Sewanee. The DuBose Award Committee chose to honor James for his exemplary service to the Episcopal Church.

James, who is a native of Ireland, earned his master of divinity degree in 1961 at All Hallows College in Dublin and his doctor of ministry degree at Vanderbilt Divinity School through a joint program with the School of Theology. After he was received as a priest in our diocese in 1980, he accepted a call to serve as the priest associate and in campus ministry at the University of Montevallo.

By Dr. Don Palmer, a Member of St. Paul's Chapel in Magnolia Springs

Lay and clergy persons will be elected for the following important positions in the Episcopal Church at the 2009 General Convention in Anaheim, California: the Executive Council, Trustees of the Church Pension Fund, the General Board of Examining Chaplains, Trustees of the General Theological Seminary, and the Court for the Trial of a Bishop. The Joint Standing Committee on Nominations has issued a call for nominations, and suggestions are due by February 1, 2008. If you are interested or wish to offer suggestions please contact Bishop Parsley's office at Carpenter House, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203-2882; 205/715-2060 ext. 305, 205/715-2066 (fax); hparsley@dioala.org with cc to dmurrell@dioala.org.

Clergy News

The Rev. John Klein and Linda Pauline Wilkins were married at St. Dunstan’s in Auburn on November 17.

The Rev. Jeremy Lucas and his wife, Penny, have accepted a call to serve as Episcopal missionaries to Namibia. They will leave for Africa in June. Jeremy is currently serving as the rector of St. Timothy’s in Athens.

The Rev. Charles Taylor, a retired priest of our diocese, is currently serving on a part-time basis as our diocesan Deputy for Clergy Deployment.

The Rev. Barry Vaughn has accepted a call to serve as rector of St. Alban’s in Bluff Park (Hoover/Birmingham). Barry previously has served as rector of St. Stephen’s in Eutaw and interim rector of several other parishes in our diocese.

Nominations Requested for General Convention Elections
Advent’s Peculiar Joy

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

As I write this in the first week of November, Santa has already arrived at The Summit, Christmas ornaments adorn the local florist, and a neighbor has a lighted tree blazing in a den window. In spite of all the commercialism there is a lovely quality about the popularity of Christmas. It says something about our longing for joy and beauty.

As Christmas overflows its banks in our culture, what is being lost is the season of Advent. Advent is one of the most spiritually rich seasons of the Church’s year. It highlights our deepest longings and bids us wait and watch for God’s coming in our lives.

In an age of instant gratification Advent’s spirituality is even more precious and needed. As we are bidden to prepare our souls for Christ’s coming at Christmas and his second coming at the consummation of history, we are reminded that learning to wait is a gift. Waiting slows us down, keeps us from being consumed by our appetites, and reminds us that we are not gods.

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Advent brings to mind our profound desires, for wholeness, for justice, for peace, for joy. It invites us to love our longings because they draw us toward God in whom alone we can find what we seek. As St. Augustine wrote in his Confessions, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” Those memorable words express what many have said over the centuries, that our deepest desire is for God and that there is a place within us that only God and his love can fill.

When we sing “O come, O come, Emmanuel . . . O come, O come, Thou Dayspring from on High . . . O come, O come, Desire of Nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind,” we are expressing our holy longing. Such longing makes our hearts grow deep. It opens a place inside of us where God can dwell. Only what is beyond ourselves can save us, the “power from on high that comes down into the world, that wells up from the rock bottom worst of the world like a hidden spring,” in Frederick Buechner’s words. That is the power of God that transforms us and gives us hope. We can never possess such power. It only comes as gift.

This is the peculiar joy of Advent, a joy not found in having but in longing. One of C.S. Lewis’s characters says, “It was when I was the happiest that I longed most. The sweetest thing in all my life has been the longing . . . to find the place where all the beauty came from.” And Lewis wrote in Surprised By Joy that the “very nature of Joy makes nonsense of our common distinction between having and wanting. There, to have is to want and to want is to have.” This is the spirituality of Advent, reminding us that as we long for God we are prepared to receive the surprising gifts of grace.

Let us not rush Christmas like a poinsettia that is forced to bloom too early. Let us learn to wait and hope. Because God has come in Christ and is coming, we can abide in joy.

May the grace and peace of this holy time of the year be with you and with all those you love, and, when it arrives, a very Merry Christmas to all!

Your servant in Christ,

From Our Bishop Suffragan-Elect

The next time you go to Camp McDowell, don’t be surprised if you see a purple shirt—a very large purple shirt. Bishop Suffragan-Elect John McKee “Kee” Sloan is a big man with a big heart and a big devotion to camp ministry. Kee has spent part of nearly every summer since age 15 at a Church camp first in Mississippi and later in Alabama, and he is the founder of our diocesan Special Session at Camp McDowell.

Each step of Kee’s journey from teenage camp counselor to election as bishop suffragan at age 51 has been marked by a call and response, and he recounts one example after another of ministries that have resulted from others offering the call and his responding. The first call came, most appropriately, from a teenage buddy who “called” Kee to camp by telling him that being a camp counselor was a lot more fun than staying home. As Kee recalls it, “My friend said, ‘If you stay here, you have to cut the grass.’ And I thought, ‘That’s a compelling argument. So I went.’”

Kee’s next call came at that first camp session in Mississippi when an influential older counselor invited him to join the staff of Special Session. So he went and never stopped going back. “I had a real positive experience,” he says about working for the first time with campers with a range of physical challenges. “Toward the end of the week there was a real blurring of the boundaries between counselor and camper, between white and black, so we were just the children of God.”

After earning his undergraduate degree at Mississippi State and his master of divinity degree at the School of Theology at the University of the South, Sewanee, Kee served several small parishes in the Diocese of Mississippi, including serving as assistant at St. Peter’s in Oxford for the Rev. Duncan Gray III, who is now the Bishop of Mississippi, and as chaplain at Ole Miss. Kee met his wife, Tina (pronounced TIE-nah), when she was on the staff of the Special Session camp in Mississippi, and of course their children 18-year-old McKee, who is now a freshman at Sewanee, and 13-year-old Mary Nell, who is an eighth-grader, have been summer campers.

Kee came to Alabama in 1993 when he accepted a call to be rector of St. Thomas’ in Huntsville. Here he experienced another set of calls and responses, and the first, not surprisingly, was about camp. “Most of my preaching is telling stories,” he explains. “People had heard stories for several years about counselors and campers at Special Session, and they asked me, ‘Why don’t we start one here?’ I talked to Executive Director Mark Johnston, and he surprised me by saying, ‘Yeah! Let’s do that.’”

The going was bumpy at the first Special Session at Camp McDowell in 1998, with just 24 campers and 15 counselors. “If it is true that you learn from your mistakes, then we learned a lot that first year,” Kee emphasizes. “But even then, it was miraculous. It was part of the Kingdom of God, glimpsing our Lord in other faces. The overwhelming message of the privilege of serving other people, and God’s love and grace came through.” Special Session has grown to 88 campers with 54 counselors, which Kee calls the upper limit of what one session can handle.

The next call and response resulted in St. Thomas’ annual medical mission trip to Honduras. Kee had been active with a similar diocesan-wide mission in Mississippi, and that appealed to the people of St. Thomas’, who had a long history of helping with missionary efforts in Honduras. So within a year of coming to Huntsville, Kee found himself leading the parish in launching a full-fledged medical mission. “It never occurred to us that we couldn’t do this,” he says. “It was just a question of how.”

The Rev. John McKee Sloan
Deacons in Our Midst

By the Venerable Louise Thibodaux, Archdeacon

The emphasis of the Episcopal Church on the United Nation’s millennium development goals (MDGs) has opened new and exciting ways for deacons to begin building global consciousness. Not every deacon is called to do mission work abroad, but for those for whom this is possible, this work offers many exciting and life-changing opportunities. Kathi Jacob describes in her own words what her successive visits to Panama have meant to her.

THE REV. DEACON KATHI JACOB

Kathi’s placement at the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham has allowed her to pursue mission work abroad, which has opened up for her a new understanding of what it means to serve the poor.

“Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’” (Matt. 28:18-20; the Great Commission—Jesus commissioning his disciples)

In the summer of 2006 I went on three mission trips—one to Bolivia, one to Haiti, and the last to Panama. I had gone on mission trips to each of these countries before, but Panama is where I have spent the most time. On this visit I was assigned by the bishop of Panama to do the same duties I have done on each preceding visit—only in a different location.

Imagine living in a climate where the weather is a constant hot and humid 85-90 degrees, there is no air-conditioning, the dust is thick, and the average income is $150 to $200 per month. The people to whom I was sent earned income any way they could. Imagine being a faithful churchgoer, but after church you are compelled to sell lottery tickets, earning 10 cents to the dollar—imagine further this is the main monthly income to support your family. Imagine living with several family members in a hut that is only 10 x 10 feet, built on stilts, with rugged wood stepladders to the front and back doors, and no windows—only cutouts in the walls.

Each of my mission trips to Panama over the last three summers has been eye opening in many ways. During the first two trips I joined members of the Advent and other parishes for our annual medical mission to Machuca, Panama. Doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, a veterinarian, and several helpers all joined together to minister to the people in the mountainous village of Machuca in the Coclé district. The people here are so poor that they cannot afford the $2 it takes to see a doctor, so the team treats those who are sick and provides medical and dentistry services and also medicines. We even provide veterinary services for their farm animals and pets. The team feeds those who are hungry and provides spiritual food as well.

Although the medical team went to Panama for one week each summer, I generally stayed an additional month to six weeks in the Diocese of Panama working in whatever area of the country the bishop assigned me. Twice I worked with churches in the Bocas del Toro region including St Mary the Virgin on Isla Colon, a tiny island accessible only by a 30-minute ride in a water taxi; St. Michael on the border with Costa Rica in a location called Guábito; the Church of the Transfiguration in the midst of a banana plantation; and St. George’s in a port community on the Atlantic coast.

The priest and I would split the duties needed to carry out ministry, and on Sunday, each of us would do two services, oftentimes leaving home at 5:30 a.m. to take the 30-minute boat ride to Isla Colon.

In 2006 I was assigned to work in the city of Colon in the northernmost part of the isthmus. My duties included conducting bilingual services, distributing the Eucharist to congregations, visiting the sick and shut-ins, visiting a nursing home, and visiting a children’s home in addition to conducting services of Morning and Evening Prayer three times a week. I also made presentations to each congregation on God’s call to all of us to do mission work, and I met with the ECW. I worked with youth on different projects and also assisted the bishop and priest at funerals.

The little ones who are malnourished in the region are brought from their homes to the children’s home. They stay at the facility until they are fully nourished and stable, and then they are returned home again. It is absolutely amazing to see how resilient children are—it takes a little food and lots of tender loving care to nurse them back to health. Sadly the elderly of this country, where jobs are few and financial resources are very limited, do not receive the same kind of loving nurture, and it is a sad witness to the lack of care given to them in hospitals and nursing homes.

One of my most memorable days was spent in a remote village on the Tiribe Indian reservation, where we visited the Middle Bridge and White Bridge communities affected by floods. Time truly has passed these people by! They have no electricity and no water except what they draw from a nearly dried-up stream that runs through their community. The very gentle, sweet people who live there were very glad to see us and welcomed us into their village.

All of the people we met were covered with dirt except a few of the younger men of dating age. But there is something extraordinarily beautiful about these dirty people—they are not finicky or afraid of the one thing, dirt, that we all are created from and to which we will one day return. While the rest of our team of four distributed clothing, I played with the children and handed out balloons, stickers, bookmarks they could design, bouncy balls, crayons, games, ball and jack, and other small items that were left over from the medical mission. What a truly beautiful experience! I could feel God’s presence and protection as we shared with these gentle people and played with their children. I have no idea of whether they believe in God or not—I just know He was definitely present in the innocence of the children, in the openness of the women and elders, and in those precious hours spent on those visits to the two reservations.

The government rebuilt the people’s homes after the flood, and each is one room, about 10 x 10 feet, built on stilts with a thatched roof made of palm branches and banana leaves. Several family members live in each small dwelling. Some houses had wood sides, but some simply had tarp for siding. There were no windows—just space cut out in the houses with wood siding.

The terrain was absolutely beautiful. These are truly “earth” people. The Creator has a master plan, and how we all fit into it is nothing short of amazing. I will always remember these people who have NOTHING—not even shoes—and yet seem happy.

The only concern I heard all day came from the village elder: He asked us whom to contact to get clean drinking water for his village. Many of the people were getting sick and suffering from dysentery due to polluted drinking water from the stream.

When I was working in this type of mission I often had a rather grueling schedule. I made presentations, visited the sick, made hospital calls, and assisted with youth events, and often I was the appointed clergy representative at events. I conducted Morning and Evening Prayer. I also volunteered along with other church members each Saturday evening to serve tea, coffee, and cookies to the residents at the charity hospital—the last meal of the day was served at 4 p.m. so by 7 p.m. the patients eagerly awaited the snacks and tea we brought. It was hard work at times, but I looked forward to and thanked God for each and every opportunity to be of service.

I enjoyed the time I spent in this tiny corner of God’s magnificent creation. This was a wonderful experience in ever way, and after each visit I have returned home with a very clear sense of God’s call on my life—I sense that He is calling me to be more involved with mission work abroad.

I am often reminded that God calls each and every one of us to mission, just as He called Abram at age 75 to leave his country, his people, and his father's household and go to a land where he was a total stranger. God calls each of us to heed the call, become disciples, and spread the Good News that the Kingdom of God is near.

Perhaps we cannot all go to a foreign land, but we must recognize and respond to the many opportunities for mission in our communities by reaching out to the poor, the sick, the homeless, the marginalized, the unlovable, and those who are in need. This is not only the call to deacons, but it is God’s call to each of us through our baptismal covenant.
From the ECW President

From Dee Buzy, ECW President

With the arrival of the Advent season, I feel I have been blessed with a remarkable gift. As the incoming ECW President, I am honored and thrilled to have this opportunity to work with the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Alabama. Over the next two years I look forward to exploring with you ways to be connected, expand our work and mission throughout the world, and share in the warm hospitality in which our women exceed. It is amazing what all you do from feeding the homeless, supporting missions at home and abroad, serving in free health clinics, baking casseroles, transporting the sick, making cheese balls, and fundraising—an endless list of projects by passionate and creative women. Thank you.

For those who have not been active or do not have an active ECW in their parish, I invite you to become involved and share your gifts, and in return I feel you will be gifted as well. Working together we can explore new possibilities that will enable our parishes to exceed all expectations.

On behalf of the women in our diocese, I thank Alleen Cater for her exceptional dedication to the ECW. As President, she worked tirelessly to support the parish ECWs, to expand the communication network, and to represent our diocese at all levels, all with grace and enthusiasm. Thank you, Alleen.

I would also like to thank all the women who have agreed to give their time and talents to serve on the ECW Board. The members of this energetic and committed group look forward to serving you. I will be introducing these women to you over the next couple of months, but if you need information now, please consult your 2008 calendar or visit our Web site at www.alabamaecw.org. Our Webmaster, Sally Sinclair, has created a fabulous Web site for the ECW with current information, the Calendar, Parish Check List, the Board, the Annual Contribution, and more. You can even send e-mail directly to a board member or respond to the President Information Sheet. Please visit our Web site often and stay connected with your ECW.

During this Advent, may we all find time to stop and reflect on the wonderful gift of words from Dame Julian of Norwich, “And all shall be well.” In this busy season we more than ever need to be reminded that God loves each and every one of us and that he finds delight in his creation. I pray that you have a peaceful and blessed Christmas. And as always, may we go out and serve the Lord with gladness and singleness of heart.

Blessings to you all.

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The women of the Ascension in Montgomery were proud to feed nearly 400 hungry parishioners and guests at their annual Chicken Curry Luncheon on October 25. They served traditional fare including homemade curry, tomato aspic, and marinated green beans along with the always popular rum cakes. Hattie Boo Johnson served as chair of this year’s event.

The ECW of the Cathedral Church of the Advent hosted a soup sale on October 28 to support the Malawi Seminary Fund. Their own Jennifer Edgar left on October 23 to serve as a missionary in Malawi. Several ladies cooked their best recipes for the sale, and all of the soup was sold out before Sunday school even began! In addition Lynn Wilson organized an intimate farewell dinner and put together a gracious gift basket to honor Jennifer before her departure.

You can obtain a United Thank Offering Grant application from the Rev. Rob Morpeth at Carpenter House; 205/715-2060 ext. 311; rmorpeth@dioala.org. You must return your completed grant application to our diocesan office by December 15 for approval by Bishop Parsley; you must also mail a copy to our diocesan UTO Coordinator, Mrs. Daryl (Barbara) Carpenter, 111 Silver Creek Drive, Madison, AL 35758. For more information please log on to www.alabamaecw.org/uto.htm.

Since Lent 2003 the Women at the Well ministry has offered retreats at several locations in our diocese, but this group disbanded in August. Thanks to the generosity of women of our diocese approximately $6,000 is left in the Women at the Well account, and the money will be used to establish a scholarship fund to encourage and support all women of our diocese, lay and ordained, who are seeking spiritual refreshment. Our ECW Diocesan Board will administer the fund and scholarship.

In honor of the Rev. Joy Phipps, who created the Women at the Well, the board adopted the following resolution at its September meeting.

Be it resolved that in thanksgiving for her creation and service to the Women at the Well ministry in the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama and for her energy, knowledge, many miles of travel, many hours of presentation, and her devotion to this ministry, this 2007 Board of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese at its meeting on September 4, 2007, expresses with full gratitude its appreciation to the Rev. Joy Phipps and prays for her continuing work in our journey together as children of God.

The Birmingham Convocation held its fall meeting at St. Michael’s in Huffman. The Rev. Deacon Katy Smith led the group in Morning Prayer and then installed the new officers for 2008-2010: Liz Ensey, president; Alyce Daniel, president elect; and Sylvia McCain secretary/treasurer. Following the business meeting and sharing time, the ladies of St. Michael’s served a delicious lunch.

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Upcoming ECW Events and Deadlines

| Mid-December | UTO Grant Applications due to Carpenter House |
| January | Annual contributions due from parishes to our Diocesan ECW |

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.
Need a Last-Minute Christmas Gift?

As we look toward the celebration of the birth of Jesus, we are reminded of the special needs of our children. You can help meet a very special need—and at the same time give a most appropriate gift—by making a contribution in a family member's or friend's name to our Scholarship Fund and help send a child to “Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell!” We will send a beautiful Christmas card to those you would like to honor.

Each year contributions to the Camp McDowell Scholarship Fund help make it possible for more than 470 underprivileged children to be campers at Summer Camp, the McDowell Environmental Center, “Special Session” for campers with special needs, and our camp for children infected with the HIV/AIDS virus. These children need the opportunity to experience God’s grace in a safe and beautiful environment, and they have come to depend on the continuing support of their brothers and sisters in Christ. For more information please contact Michael Goldsmith at 205/387-1806 or Michael@campmcdowell.com; you can place an order online at www.campmcdowell.com.

The Chapel of St. Francis — Completing the Vision One Brick, One Act at a Time

Camp McDowell invites everyone to help complete the Chapel of St. Francis—and honor family members and friends—by purchasing a commemorative brick for the patios and walkways. For more information please contact Michael Goldsmith at 205/387-1806 or Michael@campmcdowell.com; you can place an order online at www.campmcdowell.com.

See You at Christmas Conference at Camp!

From Leslie Manning, Our Diocesan Youth Ministries Assistant

Christmas Conference at Camp (CCC) is a great time for senior youth to get together with young people from all over our diocese for three fun-filled days at Camp McDowell. We will pray, play, and learn together more about who we are and how we connect our faith to the world around us.

Our diocesan Youth Department has planned lots of fun events for you this year, and we hope to see you often. Please mark your calendar now and make plans to join us! Please see Upcoming Youth Events below. For more information please contact me at lmanning@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 325.

Upcoming Youth Events

- December 28-30: Christmas Conference at Camp McDowell for 9th-12th graders
- January 18-21: Winter Weekend at Camp McDowell for 7th-8th graders
- February 1-3: EYC Convention at the Ascension in Montgomery for 9th-12th graders
- March 7-9: Happening #52 at St. Stephen’s in Huntsville for 10th-12th graders
- March 15-20: Spring Break Conference/Mission Trip at Camp McDowell and beyond
- Late June: Sawyerville Work Project
- July 1-8: Special Session at Camp McDowell
- July 8-13: Episcopal Youth Event in San Antonio, Texas

For more information please contact Youth Ministries Assistant Leslie Bridgers Manning at lmanning@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 325 or Deputy for Christian Formation and Youth Ministries Sarah Sartain at ssartain@ dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 314.
Haiti Construction Mission Accomplished!

By the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis, Team Leader and Cochair of Our Companion Diocese Commission

A seven-member mission team from the Diocese of Alabama spent a week in Haiti in October constructing classroom furniture for schools in the Episcopal parish of Croix des Bouquets. Our diocesan team worked with members of the parish to construct 32 desks with benches for Episcopal primary schools in the villages of Gorman and Lilavois.

The school at Gorman, which opened this fall, is housed in a temporary shelter supported by poles made from tree limbs, with the roof and walls made of mats woven from palm fronds. Blackboards separate the classrooms, and prior to the construction mission most of the children had to bring chairs from home to sit on during class. At Lilavois, students had been using chairs turned backward as their desks.

It was a wonderful experience to work side by side with our brothers and sisters in Haiti, and it was especially rewarding to watch them develop their construction skills and gradually assume a lead role in assembling the furniture. “We are very happy to have had all our friends from the Alabama diocese,” wrote the Rev. Fritz Valdema, priest in charge of the Croix des Bouquets parish, in a recent thank-you note. He went on to report that in the two weeks following the team’s departure, they had successfully completed construction of another 34 desks and 18 kindergarten tables with the tools left by the team.

A highlight of the trip was the opportunity to spend time with the children. They stole our hearts, and they were so excited to receive their new desks.

Team members carried with them more than 300 pounds of school supplies and children’s vitamins for Lespwa Timoun (Hope for the Children), a clinic for malnourished children operated by Fritz’s wife, Carmel, who is a public health nurse. Some members of our diocesan team visited one of Carmel’s mobile nutrition clinics in the remote village of Crochu; contributions from our diocese support these clinics.

Our team also visited Foyer Notre Dame, an Episcopal home for indigent elderly in the capital city of Port-au-Prince, and we toured new guest quarters that will help provide an income for operation of the home. The apartments are furnished and ready to receive guests thanks to a contribution from our diocese.

The response to this mission and our overall diocesan ministry in Haiti has been overwhelming. We are so thankful for the tremendous support the people of our diocese have provided to this important ministry—so many people have contributed so much. Our diocesan mission team included Rick Vise of All Saints’ in Birmingham; the Rev. Polk Van Zandt, rector of St. Paul’s in Selma; Mary Balfour Van Zandt of St. Mary’s on-the-Highlands in Birmingham; and Jeannie Randall, Jane Berry, and my wife, Sharon, all of St. Thomas’ in Huntsville. Generous donations from parishes and individuals throughout our diocese made it possible to buy the construction materials for the mission. Members of our diocese and others donated vitamins, school supplies, and some of the tools.

The Rt. Rev. Zache Duracin, the Bishop of Haiti, has asked our diocese to focus our companion diocesan relationship with the parish of Croix des Bouquets, which consists of six geographically separated churches led by the Rev. Fritz Valdema. We are planning a medical mission to Haiti for this coming February. If you are interested in learning more about the upcoming mission trip or our companion diocesan relationship with Haiti, please contact commission cochairs Anne Kimzey at hanahanford@yahoo.com or me at dave@stthomas-hsv.org, or call Denise Servant at Carpenter House, 205/715-2060 ext. 300.

Chelsea Church Reaches Out to the Community

The members of the brand-new Chelsea Episcopal Church deeply believe in reaching out to the people in their community, and they brought 32 coats plus a basket full of canned foods to the altar on Thanksgiving Eve. The items were donated to local area shelters. “One thing that is becoming very clear is the wonderfully generous nature of the new worshiping group in Chelsea,” emphasizes the Rev. John Mark Ford, the priest in charge. “One of the central themes growing in us is an awareness of the need for Christ’s body, the church, to be at work in the world.”
The Road to Santiago: “Pray Constantly”

From an article submitted by Zara Renander, Director, the Nativity Center for Pilgrimage and Reconciliation

Last June the Nativity Center for Pilgrimage and Reconciliation led a pilgrimage to Compostela in northwest Spain, and as we walked the ancient prayer road of the Camino, we five pilgrims did indeed come close to praying constantly. The title of Olivia Newton John’s pop song “Let’s Get Physical” might well have served as the inspiration for a very different sort of prayer form in which we engaged—indeed come close to praying constantly. The title of Olivia Newton John’s pop song “Let’s Get Physical” might well have served as the inspiration for a very different sort of prayer form in which we engaged—instead of getting down on our knees, we strapped on our prayer boots and went into physical training for a month before we left so that we’d be able to walk up to 15 miles a day carrying a backpack with all our possessions. We were going way outside of our daily comfort zones.

The Camino has been a pilgrimage route for over 1,500 years, and people come from all over the world to walk this ancient road. We met pilgrims from the Far East, Central America, Australia, Europe, Canada and the United States. The main path, the French Road, stretches from the Pyrenees in the East and crosses Northern Spain to Compostela near the Atlantic Ocean. Because of vacation schedules we could only walk for seven days (about 70 miles), but many spend several months walking for every reason imaginable, from dealing with hard life transitions, thanksgiving, grief and mourning to competitive sports enthusiasts who just wanted to burn up the miles in record time.

The culture of the Camino requires that everyone be greeted along the way. “Hola! Buon Camino,” the greeting would ring out. Along the way small spontaneous acts of kindness took place daily. A pilgrim picked up a German girl’s coat and wallet she’d accidentally dropped and he walked through town until he found her to return her possessions. A man in the street offered me a flower. In the late afternoon as we laughed together over an extended lunch of good food and wine, the camaraderie and little acts of kindness we saw and experienced all became oil of blessing whenever packs got heavy and the hills steep.

In the evening we mostly stayed in hostels that are available for pilgrims. Hospitality to pilgrims is part of the culture of the Camino too, and the way is dotted with hostels, some of which date from very early times. After a week of walking we looked a little scruffy and disreputable, but even as we carried our heavy packs, we experienced a lightness of spirit that came from just walking the path and letting go of tasks, certainty, and assumptions. When we finally arrived in Compostela, it was hard to reenter the life of a busy city. We registered with the Office of Pilgrims and attended the great pilgrim’s mass in the cathedral, meeting people we’d seen along the road, and we returned home blessed, thankful, and scrubbed clean by the Camino. We walked the Camino and now the Camino will begin to walk with us.

For more information about participating in a pilgrimage, please contact Zara Renander, Director, Nativity Center for Pilgrimage and Reconciliation, at 256/533-2455 ext. 212 or zara.renander@nativityhs.org.

St. James’ in Alexander City Sends Veterinary Mission Team to Panama

Dr. Mary Battistella, Dr. Paula Thorne, Dianna Porter, Kamala McLemore, and Samantha Collins, the members of St. James’ Veterinary Mission team, spent 10 days in Panama treating family pets and livestock and teaching the villagers how to take better care of their animals. Working closely with Jo Ellen Nutter, an American who has been living in Panama for several months serving as the Medical Clinic coordinator for the Diocese of Panama, the team started in Panama City and then traveled to Machuca and several other villages.

“The tally for all the animals treated as a result of the veterinary mission was over 500.” Samantha reports. “This is a significant impact on the welfare of these communities, and best of all, each village has been left with medication and someone who now knows how to administer it.” She adds that the team left their remaining supplies with Panama’s minister of agriculture and Spay Panama “so they can continue their good work. I feel confident that the Episcopal Church will continue to spread a lasting positive impact through Jo Ellen and workers like her and that St. James’ has had a part in reaching beyond our own community to improve the quality of life in the rest of the world.”

The team not only treated family pets and livestock, but they also taught the villagers how to administer medications so they could continue to take better care of their animals.

For more information about St. James’ veterinary mission team and their work, please contact Martha Dee at mdeew@msn.com or Mary Sims Battistella at marybdvm@mindspring.com or contact the parish office at 256/234-4752.
“SPIRITUALITY AND POETRY” SERIES
At St. Andrew’s in Montevallo
December 11—“Gerard Manley Hopkins: Charged with the Gardener of God”
January 8—“The Birds of Solomon: Poets in Love with the Nameless”

The members of St. Andrew’s in Montevallo cordially invite everyone to “a series of joyful talks,” on “Spirituality and Poetry,” presented by Dr. James Mersmann at 7:30 p.m. in the new parish hall. Dr. Mersmann taught American literature and poetry writing for more than 25 years at UAB, and he has received numerous awards, including the UAB Honors Program Outstanding Faculty Award and the Ellen Gregg Ingalls Award for Excellence in Classroom Teaching. For more information please contact jimmersmann@att.net or call the parish office at 205/665-1667.

EXPERIENCE THE LABYRINTH
December 14 (noon-8 p.m.) and 15 (8 a.m.-noon) at St. Luke’s in Birmingham

Many Christians have found blessing and renewal through the ancient spiritual practice of walking the labyrinth, a series of intricate, interweaving pathways that parallel our journey through life. Accompanied by soft music and a quiet, meditative atmosphere conducive to prayer and reflection, walking the labyrinth can unlock the quiet places in our hurried souls and help us focus on our journey toward God. St. Luke’s cordially invites anyone seeking a quiet place for peace and restoration to participate in this relaxing, satisfying, and spiritually rewarding experience during Advent on Friday and Saturday, December 14 and 15. For more information please contact Mary Ellen Calhoun (205/733-1244 or mellen@bellsouth.net) or the Rev. Steve DeGweck (205/802-6203 or sdegweck@Saint-lukes.com).

FIFTH ANNUAL CHURCH MUSIC CONFERENCE
January 25-26 at the University of Alabama School of Music

Everyone is cordially invited to attend the fifth annual church music conference at Moody Music Building on the University of Alabama campus in Tuscaloosa. Featured musicians include Daniel Roth, organist at St. Sulpice in Paris, and Faythe Freese, associate professor of organ at the university. For more information please contact faythefreese@earthlink.net or visit www.music.ua.edu/organ/events.

DIOCESAN ALTAR GUILD FESTIVAL
January 26 at the Cathedral Church of the Advent, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Our Diocesan Altar Guild invites everyone to explore “The Symbolism and Traditions of the Episcopal Church as They Relate to Altar Guild” at this year’s festival. The Rev. Canon Heidi Kinner of the Advent will celebrate the Eucharist, and the Rev. Joy Phipps of St. Stephen’s will facilitate a workshop on demystifying linens and hangings and their symbolism, use, and care. In addition Mally Love of Mountain Brook Florists will demonstrate liturgical floral arranging and share how color and flower selection can add special meaning to the worship service. For more information please contact Lynn Hendrick at 205/822-6202 or LVHEND@mindspring.com.

DIVORCE RECOVERY MINISTRY
January 31, February 7, 14, 21, and 28, and March 6, 13, and 20, 6:30-8 p.m., at Canon Joe and Susan Warren’s historic log cabin, 4151 Montevallo Road in Birmingham

“Starting over is never easy...but God is the creator of new paths.” The Cathedral Church of the Advent offers this eight-week series for individuals who are recovering from or currently going through a divorce. The Rev. Canon Dr. Joseph P. Warren, Facilitator Susan Warren, and Facilitator Toody White lead the group. For more information please call Barbara Bess at the Pastoral Care Office, 205/226-3500, or visit www.adventbirmingham.org.

“THE FRUITS OF CONTEMPLATION”—THE 15TH ANNUAL CONTEMPLATIVE OUTREACH BIRMINGHAM CONFERENCE
February 9-10 at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham

Contemplative Outreach Birmingham invites everyone to this year’s annual conference, which features the Rev. William Meninger as the guest speaker. Father Meninger, who is a Trappist monk, is one of the founding fathers of Centering Prayer. For more information or to register please contact Diana Tschache at 205/991-6964 or tschached@bellsouth.net.

GRIEF RECOVERY GROUP
February 12, 29, and March 4, 11, and 18, 7-8:30 p.m., at the Advent in Birmingham

Twice a year the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham offers this six-week grief support program led by the Rev. Canon Dr. Joseph P. Warren. Working through the issues associated with loss is not an easy process, and the Advent welcomes everyone who has lost someone near and dear to come these weekly sessions. Canon Warren along with people who have suffered the most extreme losses and found Christ to be their Salvation and the One who gives hope for the future will help participants work through their grief following a process that is Holy Spirit directed, Bible based, and God inspired. For more information please contact the Pastoral Care Office at 205/226-3500 or visit www.adventbirmingham.org.

EPISCOPAL PILGRIMAGE TO ROME
June 17-24

The Rev. Susan Sloan, rector of St. Stephen’s in Huntsville, and Dr. Daniel Lesnick, a medieval and Renaissance historian and Lifetime Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, cordially invite everyone to join them on a magnificent eight-day pilgrimage in Rome, the “Eternal City,” with three optional days in either Venice or Florence. This is the fourth Italian pilgrimage Susan and Daniel have organized, and they are drawing on their many years of conducting adult-education programs to make this a most rewarding experience. For more information please contact the Rev. Susan Sloan at 256/881-7223 or Dr. Daniel Lesnick at 205/423-9982 or dlesnick@bham.rr.com. The deadline for signing up for the pilgrimage is January 15.

Bishops’ Visitation Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Bishop Visit</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECEMBER 9, SUNDAY</td>
<td>Bishop Parsley, Trinity, Clanton</td>
<td>Montevallo, Rainbow City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Miller, St. Luke’s, Birmingham</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Miller, St. Stephen’s, Birmingham</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15</td>
<td>Bishop Parsley, La Gracia, Birmingham</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Miller, St. Stephen’s, Birmingham</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16</td>
<td>Bishop Miller, Holy Spirit, Alabaster</td>
<td>Alabaster</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Miller, St. John’s, Deaf, Birmingham</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHRISTMAS EVE, DECEMBER 24</td>
<td>Bishop Parsley, Cathedral Church of the Advent</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 p.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Miller, Ascension, Montgomery</td>
<td>Montgomery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUNDAY, JANUARY 6</td>
<td>Bishop Parsley, Epiphany, Guntersville</td>
<td>Guntersville</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan, Holy Trinity, Auburn</td>
<td>Auburn</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan, St. Dunstan’s, Auburn</td>
<td>Auburn</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUNDAY, JANUARY 13</td>
<td>Bishop parsley, St. Andrew’s, Tuskegee</td>
<td>Tuskegee</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan, Trinity, Bessemer</td>
<td>Bessemer</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan, Trinity, Bessemer</td>
<td>Bessemer</td>
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What's New/Noteworthy at the Episcopal Book Store

God's Gifts: Stories from St. Luke's by Richmond Webster

We've already enjoyed the Rev. Richmond Webster's storytelling ability and sense of humor in his sermons in the View and Snapshots of Hope, and now he has given us another “fun book.” God’s Gifts will help us never forget to look for God’s surprise and experience the “boundless love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”—all told through unexpected stories that parallel the Gospel. All proceeds from the sale of this book will go to the Outreach Ministries of St. Luke's in Birmingham.

The Scandalous Gospel of Jesus by Peter J. Gomes

Jesus came preaching, but the church wound up preaching Jesus. Why does the church insist upon making Jesus the object of its attention rather than heeding his message? Harvard minister Peter J. Gomes believes that excessive focus on the Bible and doctrines about Jesus have led the Christian church astray. “What did Jesus preach?” asks Gomes. To recover the transforming power of the gospel—“the good news”—Gomes says we must go beyond the Bible and rediscover how to live Jesus’ original revolutionary message of hope. “Dietrich Bonhoeffer once warned against cheap grace, and I warn now against cheap hope,” Gomes emphasizes. “Hope is not merely the optimistic view that something wonderful will surely happen—it’s a certainty that God will be with us and lead us through times that disappoint or threaten to destroy us.”

Christmas: Music for Tranquility CD by Tami Briggs, harpist and Donna Ricco, flutist

The heartfelt sounds of harp, flute, and violin on Christmas: Music for Tranquility will surely add a touch of grace and serenity to your Christmas preparation and celebration. The selections include “Pachelbel’s Canon”/“The First Noel” (harp, flute, and violin), “Angels”—“Angels and the Shepherds,” “Hark the Herald Angels,” “Angels from the Realm of Glory,” “Angels We Have Heard on High” (harp and flute), Vivaldi’s “Winder” (harp and flute), “Infant Holy” (harp solo), “Ave Maria” (harp and flute), “Silent Night”/“O Holy Night” (harp, flute, and violin), “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (flute solo), Still, Still, Still” (harp and flute), “O Come Little Children” (harp and flute), “In the Bleak Mid-Winter” (harp and flute), and “What Child Is This?” (harp and flute).

A Wing and a Prayer by Katharine Jefferts Schori

A Wing and a Prayer offers profound truths and vivid images of a more peaceful and just world. Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori’s essays reflect her deep concern for the total ministry of all baptized Christians and the peace and justice issues that she urges the Church to embrace with great enthusiasm. She relates snatches of her own story—earthly descriptions of mountain hikes and oceanographic voyages—as well as vivid recollections of people who have gifted her with surprising glimpses of God’s grace. Read this book as a series of daily meditations, and by the end of it you will not only know our presiding bishop better, but you will also find yourself filled with a livelier hope, reenergized for the ministry and mission of all of us baptized in Christ.

Mark Your Calendar

Christmas Conference (9th-12th graders) December 28-30

Diocesan Convention February 21-23 in Birmingham

Diocesan Ultreya February 1-3

EYC Convention (9th-12th graders) January 25-27

Happening Weekend (10th-12th graders) #52 March 7-9

Spring Break Conference/Mission Trip March 15-20

Winter Weekend (7th-9th graders) January 18-21

December 11 “Spirituality and Poetry: Gerard Manley Hopkins—Charged with the Grandeur of God” led by Dr. James Mersmann at 7:30 p.m. in the new parish hall at St. Andrew’s in Montevallo. For more information please contact jimmersmann@att.net or call the parish office at 205/665-1667.

December 14 Midday Musical Menu featuring “A Musical Feast for Christmas” 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.

December 14-15 Advent Labyrinth at St. Luke’s in Birmingham on Friday from noon to 8 p.m. and Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon. For more information please contact Mary Ellen Calhoun at 205/733-1244 or mellen@cathedraladvent.net or the Rev. Steve Decourse at 205/802-6203 or sdc@saint-lukes.com.

January 1 Centering Prayer Introductory Workshop presented by the Rev. Tom Ward at St. Mary’s Sewanee—A Center for Spiritual Development. For more information please call 800/728-1659, e-mail SMarysSewanee@holliston.net, or visit www.SMarysSewanee.org.

January 4-6 Vestry Conference at 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 6-13 8-Day Centering Prayer Retreat presented by the Rev. Tom Ward at St. Mary’s Sewanee—A Center for Spiritual Development. For more information please call 800/728-1659, e-mail SMarysSewanee@holliston.net, or visit www.SMarysSewanee.org.

January 8 “Spirituality and Poetry: The Birds of Solomon—Poets in Love with the Nameless” led by Dr. James Mersmann at 7:30 p.m. in the new parish hall at St. Andrew’s in Montevallo. For more information please contact jimmersmann@att.net or call the parish office at 205/665-1667.

January 17-20 Knitting and Quilting Retreat at 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 25 Midday Musical Menu featuring Lisa Davis (flute) and Stan Perman (guitar) 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.

January 25-27 Introduction to Centering Prayer Retreat at the Benedictine Retreat Center in Cullman. For more information please call 256/714-8302.

January 26 Diocesan Altar Guild Festival from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please see the description on page 10 or contact Diana Tschatz at 205/991-6964 or tschatz@bellsouth.net.

February 9-10 “The Fruits of Contemplation”—the 15th Annual Contemplative Outreach Birmingham Conference featuring guest speaker the Rev. William Meninger at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham. For more information please see the description on page 10 or contact Diane Tschatz at 205/991-6964 or tschatz@bellsouth.net.

February 9-15 Iconography—The Gospel in Line and Color program at 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.

February 10-13 Lenten Retreat at 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.

February 15-17 “When Israel Came Out of Egypt” presented by the Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt at St. Mary’s Sewanee—A Center for Spiritual Development. For more information please call 800/728-1659, e-mail SMarysSewanee@holliston.net, or visit www.SMarysSewanee.org.

February 18-20 Bowen Conference featuring bestselling author Bruce Feiler at 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.

February 24 Evensong for Lent sung by the Cathedral Choir 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.

Christmas Storybook Bible by Sally Lloyd-Jones and illustrated by Jago

The engaging, colorful illustrations will hold even small children’s interest, making this a must-have for every family. Rather than sticking to old standbys, Sally Lloyd-Jones includes accounts rarely seen in volumes for children, such as Jairus’ daughter and Namaaz and the little slave girl. But what is especially amazing about this Bible is that it clearly tells the story of God’s plan for salvation from Genesis to Revelation, with each episode ending with the promise that the best is yet to come. It shows its reader, from the words in the beginning through to the last period, that the happy ending of Jesus’ resurrection wasn’t an afterthought. As the author writes in her introduction, “There are lots of stories in the Bible, but all the stories are telling one Big Story—the story of how God loves his children and comes to rescue them.”

Treasury of Christian Prayer Selected by Olwen Turchetta

This treasure-trove contains prayers from around the world and of all baptized Christians and the peace and justice issues that we have today are found in prayers from centuries ago,” notes the author. “While some of the language is more formal, the sentiment is the same.”

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, 2015 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203; 205/322-2959; e-mail: chinsinfo@episco-books.com. You can also visit the bookstore online at www.epicobooks.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. The store will also be open from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, December 15 and 22.
Clergy Spouses Enjoy Weekend Retreat

More than 40 clergy wives and husbands gathered at Camp McDowell the weekend of November 9-11 for our annual diocesan clergy spouse retreat. Dr. Eleanor DelBene, wife of the Rev. Ron DelBene and chair of our diocesan Task Force for the Stewardship of Creation, gave a presentation on the Cosmic Walk, a history of the universe and the impact of humanity on creation.

The Voices of Praise choir of St. Mark’s in Birmingham is presenting “Jesus: There’s Something about That Name” at 5 p.m. on December 16. The musical conversationally retells the Nativity story. For more information please call 205/322-8449.

The Branches Ministry of Grace Church in Cullman has published Take Eat, a delightful book that offers prayers, meditations, recipes, and other inspirationally delicious tidbits from around the globe. For more information about this “unique soul/food publication” please e-mail bmccartney@askAristo.com or call the parish office at 256/734-6212.

Episcopal Place I and II in Birmingham, a subsidized apartment community for elderly and young disabled with limited income, is seeking a chaplain/lay chaplain to provide part-time pastoral-care services and opportunities to its 149 residents. For more information please contact Executive Director Jill Hoogstra at 205/939-0085 or ep1jill@bellsouth.net.

Holy Cross Kicks Off Annual Campaign

The theme for this year’s Annual Campaign at Holy Cross Episcopal School in Montgomery is “The Giving Tree!” The students add a leaf to the tree each time a donation is made with the goal of filling the tree with colorful leaves. Emma Screws (daughter of Euel and Andrea Screws), Braxton Trest (son of Kevin and Susanne Trest), and James Coleman (son of the Rev. John and Mary Coleman) had fun putting leaves on the tree, which was designed by kindergarten teacher Susie Oliver.

Servicios en Español/Services in Spanish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Iglesia Episcopal de la Gracia</th>
<th>Sábado 6 p.m.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>901 Kingman Road</td>
<td>Saturday 6 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham, AL 35235</td>
<td>Domingo 1 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205/838-2565</td>
<td>Sunday 1 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iglesia Episcopal de Todos los Santos/All Saints’</td>
<td>Domingo 9 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Avenue NE/PO Box 401</td>
<td>Saturday 9 a.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aliceville, AL 35442</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>205/372-4071</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iglesia de la Ascensión/Ascension</td>
<td>Último Domingo de Mes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315 Clanton Avenue</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery, AL 36104</td>
<td>Last Sunday of the month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>334/263-5529</td>
<td>2 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iglesia Episcopal de la Gracia/Grace Church</td>
<td>Domingo 10:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5712 First Avenue North</td>
<td>(Bilingüe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham, AL 35212</td>
<td>12:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Mrs. Magaly) 205/937-2441</td>
<td>(Bilingual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English classes are offered at La Ascensión/Ascension in Montgomery every Sunday from 4 to 5:30 p.m. If you would like to serve as a tutor for one or more of the weekly classes, please contact Pam Long at 334/390-1441 or <a href="mailto:pam@xlanguage.net">pam@xlanguage.net</a>. For more information about services and/or Spanish-speaking classes, please contact the Rev. Dr. Hernan Afanador, our Diocesan Missioner for Hispanic Ministries, at 205/381-4885 or <a href="mailto:hernan_afanador@yahoo.com">hernan_afanador@yahoo.com</a>.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>