Bishop Search/Nominating Committee and Transition Committee Appointed

Our Diocese Responds to the Albertville Tornado

Experience the Joy of Creation at Camp McDowell

Photo courtesy of Eric Schultz/The Huntsville Times
Communities for the Election of the 11th Bishop of Alabama Are Appointed

The Rt. Rev. Henry N. Parsley Jr., the 10th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama, has announced plans to retire at the end of 2011. The Standing Committee of our diocese has appointed both a Search/Nominating Committee and a Transition Committee for the election of the 11th Bishop of Alabama. The committees met together in retreat with search consultant Judy Stark on May 14 and 15, were charged by the Standing Committee, and have begun their work.

The members of the Search/Nominating Committee are:

- Dr. Drew Clark of Holy Trinity in Auburn (Chair)
- Livy Abele of St. Luke’s in Birmingham
- The Rev. Bob Blackwell of Grace Church in Cullman
- The Rev. Marc Burnette of Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa
- The Rev. John Coleman of the Ascension in Montgomery
- Jim Goyer of the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham
- Tom Heflin of Grace Church in Sheffield
- Dr. John Humber of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa
- Fred Matthews of St. John’s in Montgomery
- The Rev. Jennifer Riddle of the Epiphany in Guntersville
- Mike Sexton of St. Paul’s in Selma
- The Rev. Lee Shafer of Grace Church in Anniston
- The Rev. Susan Sloan of St. Stephen’s in Huntsville
- The Rev. Deacon Katy Smith of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham

The members of the Transition Committee are:

- Dr. Drew Clark of Holy Trinity in Auburn (Chair)
- Livy Abele of St. Luke’s in Birmingham
- The Rev. Bob Blackwell of Grace Church in Cullman
- The Rev. Marc Burnette of Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa
- The Rev. John Coleman of the Ascension in Montgomery
- Jim Goyer of the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham
- Tom Heflin of Grace Church in Sheffield
- Dr. John Humber of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa
- Fred Matthews of St. John’s in Montgomery
- The Rev. Jennifer Riddle of the Epiphany in Guntersville
- Mike Sexton of St. Paul’s in Selma
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- The Rev. Susan Sloan of St. Stephen’s in Huntsville
- The Rev. Deacon Katy Smith of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham

In the Diocese of Alabama

- About 33,000 baptized members in 92 parishes and worshipping communities and 9 college campus ministries
- Established in 1830

In the United States

- A community of about 2.4 million members in 119 dioceses in the America and abroad
- Established in 1789

The Rev. Charles Youngson of St. Thomas’ in Birmingham

Mark Smith of St. Mark’s in Birmingham
Rusty Stephenson of the Nativity in Huntsville
Margaret Warren of the Ascension in Birmingham
The Rev. Ben Alford of Trinity Church in Wetumpka
Ginny Blackmon of All Saints’ in Birmingham
Bunny Edwards of St. John’s in Decatur
The Rev. Evan Garner of St. John’s in Montgomery
Catesby Jones of St. Paul’s in Selma
Anthony Joseph of St. Mark’s in Birmingham
The Rev. Canon Heidi Kinner of the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham
Susan Koonce of Trinity Church in Florence
The Rev. Deacon Ken Lewis of the Holy Spirit in Alabaster
The Rev. Eric Liles of St. John’s in Decatur
Ann Mitchell of the Resurrection in Gadsden
The Rev. Margaret Scalise of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa
Steve Smith of the Good Shepherd in Decatur
Melissa Strange of St. Mary’s on-the-Highlands in Birmingham
Fiona Watts of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham
The Scriptures speak constantly of the Spirit’s work: heartbeat, as close as our deepest knowing and loving. who Jesus promised would “abide with you forever.” Spirit is the advocate, the comforter (strengthener) us. The in our baptisms is given to be with us. Yes, with us. The Spirit is as near to us as our breathing and our heartbeat, as close as our deepest knowing and loving. The Scriptures speak constantly of the Spirit’s work: hovering over the formless deep in creation, speaking through the prophets, giving life, bestowing gifts for faith and ministry in God’s name, gathering the church. Always the Spirit comes to create and renew, to energize and call forth. As the psalmist says of God, “you send forth your Spirit and we shall be created; and you shall renew the face of the earth.”

In the New Testament, the ministry of the Third Person of the Trinity is centrally described by the word koinonia, which means communion. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you,” Paul writes in his eloquent greeting. Jesus makes grace known, God the Father is love, and the Spirit gifts us with deep communion. The Spirit brings us together into the community and oneness God intends for the church and the world.

John Taylor calls the Spirit the “go-between God,” the invisible energy of God bestowing life-giving wholeness to our life. The Spirit does this by opening our eyes to the other, revealing our relatedness and call to reconciliation. I quote:

“The Holy Spirit is the invisible third party who stands between me and the other, making us mutually aware. Supreme and primarily he opens my eyes to Christ. But also he opens my eyes to the brother or sister in Christ . . . or the point of need, or the heart-breaking brutality and the equally heart-breaking beauty of the world. He is the giver of that vision without which the people perish. We so commonly speak of the Spirit as the source of power. But in fact he enables us . . . by opening our eyes.

Something like this has been my personal experience. When the Spirit moves in me, I see in new ways. I sense deep communion with another. I see the beauty of the creation opening up. I see hurts that beg to be healed and am given a vision of the community for which we are made. God the Spirit longs to fill us with love, with vision, with absolute hope. In the Spirit our hearts are cracked open to see the reality that “being is communion” and that we are called to be instruments of reconciliation and peace in the world.

This is what the tongues of fire brought forth in the lives of the apostles on the Day of Pentecost. In the mystery of the rushing wind and the fire they saw humanity made whole. The divisions of Babel were reversed. Different languages understood. Fear overwhelmed by joy. They became a contagious community of grace calling the world into its true community, beyond confusion.

The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins was right:

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things; And though the last lights off the black West went Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs— Because the Holy Ghost over the bent World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

May that warm breast and those bright wings brood over us in this season of the Spirit and bring forth gifts of new life, contagious unity, and unconquerable hope.

Your servant in Christ,

Henry

The bishop’s mitre is meant to symbolize the tongues of fire that lighted upon the heads of the apostles on the Day of Pentecost, when they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts tells us that they were “cloven” tongues, which the bishop’s hat is mitred in the middle to suggest.
Light and Dark

Sometimes if I’m not careful I let the news get to me. Sometimes I sit and watch and listen to the events of the day, and what I see and hear seems to be no more than variations on the old terrible themes of humanity: hatred, cruelty, fear, greed, control, lust, pride—newly repackaged in the stories of the day: the economy, the environment, the warring nations, the bickering posturing politicians, people eager to take advantage, people keen to hold a grudge, people who crave superiority. Sometimes I lack the capacity to screen out what’s going on around me—sometimes I let it get under my skin.

I expect if I invited a psychologist to go bumping around in my mind she might tell me that all of this has something to do with why I’ve found my vocation in the Church, so that I could surround myself with people of goodwill, so that I could insulate myself from the ugly side of life. And she might be right. But then what do I do when I see the old terrible themes being played out in the Church; what happens when it’s Church people who are hateing, cruel, fearful, greedy, controlling, lustful, arrogant; when it’s Church leaders who are at war with each other—bickering, posturing, taking advantage, holding grudges, claiming righteous superiority? What should we do with that? What can we do about it? Should we pay attention, should we hide our heads in the sand, should we despair?

First I need to remember that this is God’s world, and our faith is first and best our trust in God. It brings to mind one of my favorite Bible verses, John 1:5: “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” There was darkness in the world when these words were written, as there is now; but the great hope of the Church was then and is now that the light of Christ shines on. These can be dark and fearful days; I hope and pray that whatever you and I do and say serves the Light as it continues to shine in this present darkness. Our calling, as followers of Jesus Christ, is not to ignore the troubles of the day, but to not allow ourselves to be overcome by them, either. As the writer of the Letter to the Romans wrote in Chapter 12: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

“Shine in the darkness, overcome evil with good;” sounds like a preacher, doesn’t it—easy to say, very difficult to do. Please don’t think I’m pretending it’s easy; if it were, I’d be doing it consistently. Jesus told His followers that we need to love our enemies, told us we need to turn the other cheek. I think it wasn’t so much that our enemies need to be loved but that we need to love all of God’s children, even our enemies. We have to be vulnerable if we’re going to love, if we’re going to allow ourselves to be loved. I believe that we need to love people as best we can; some people we’ll just have to love with the love of God, who is their Father as well as ours. I hope I’ll have the grace to do that more reliably someday.

With my whole heart I believe it’s our job, our mission, to shine with Christ’s love and light, even and especially when it’s dark around us. It’s easy for people to sit at a distance and criticize, easy for people to find fault, easy to tell the faithful that we’re naive or simplistic. And God knows we give people plenty to be critical and skeptical about. But the alternative to shining the Light of Christ into the darkness is to accept it, and that, friends, we can not and must not do.

It is in the crowding darkness that the Light is most needed, when we’re afraid, when we’re uncomfortable, when others are being mean-spirited and hard-hearted: just when we most want to retreat, to hide our heads in the sand, to shove our light under a bushel. Do your best to shine Christ’s Light in the darkening world, dear friends, and encourage the rest of us to do our best as well.

In the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded in Chapter 5 of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus said: “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

We can’t just ignore the darkness around us, and we can’t let our light be extinguished by it—we have to engage it, to go out and shine the Light of Christ. We are the Body of Christ; we are the Light of the world. We can’t shine only when we’re comfortable, or feeling cheery, or when we believe ourselves to be safe. It is in the crowding darkness that the Light is most needed, when we’re afraid, when we’re uncomfortable, when others are being mean-spirited and hard-hearted: just when we most want to retreat, to hide our heads in the sand, to shove our light under a bushel. Do your best to shine Christ’s Light in the darkening world, dear friends, and encourage the rest of us to do our best as well.

The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan
Giving Thanks—and Taking Care of Each Other

By the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis, Our Diocesan Communications Coordinator; photos by the Rev. Rob Morpeth and the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis

It was about 10:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 24. The Rev. David Kendrick, rector of Christ Church in Albertville, had gone to bed after finishing preparing his Sunday sermon. It was a sermon he would not preach.

David could hear the wind and rain against the red-brick townhouse he shares with his wife, Laura, as a storm system that had spawned devastating tornados in Texas and Mississippi swept across North Alabama. Then he heard the siren. The power went out, and it was dead calm. “I knew something was terribly wrong,” he recalls. He and Laura dashed for the guest bathroom at the center of their home and managed to pull the door closed just as the windows in the living room and bedroom exploded and the ceilings came crashing down. Leaves and chards of glass blew into the bathroom under the door.

It was over in seconds, but “it was the longest 10 seconds of our lives,” David emphasizes two days later as he relates the story of the tornado that damaged his home and numerous structures in downtown Albertville, including the church he serves.

When the danger had passed, the Kendricks looked at each other, realized they were alive, and turned their attention to others. “Laura and I found the Simmons safe next door, and we gave thanks that no one in our families had been hurt,” he reports. Miraculously, no one in his parish was seriously injured, although many of their homes sustained damage.

Sunday morning David and about 15 parishioners, who had managed to make their way through downed trees, power lines, and police blockades, gathered at Christ Church. They were saddened by what they saw—the tornado had uprooted the huge, old trees that had shaded the churchyard and shifted the entire church structure off its foundation to the left, causing the sidewalls to lean and leaving gaping holes in the roof. The small group salvaged many of the valuables from the nave—the altar, the chalices and patens, the prayer books and the hymnals—and got out of the teetering structure.

“And then we did what Christians have always done,” David notes. “We broke bread in remembrance, to recall the Resurrected Jesus so that he would be as present with us as He was with the disciples. We celebrated Eucharist at the stone altar in the church garden, and we gave thanks.”

It was Good Shepherd Sunday, and David reminded his parishioners that “the Good Shepherd lives in each of us who are humble enough to be called his sheep. And his voice of love speaks through each of us who love each other in the name of Jesus Christ. And from that love, our parish will rise. We still have a beautiful and functional space (the parish hall) for worship and service to each other and the suffering community around us. And from the love that has brought Christ Church thus far, our Good Shepherd will rise again through each one of us.”

In remembering that Sunday morning, David admits that he and the members of the parish “are in mourning. We need to grieve;” he adds, “but we will rise. We will take care of each other and our community.”

And they are. Even as a team of volunteers from nearby Church of the Epiphany in Guntersville arrived that Monday to help clear downed trees, David and his parishioners began to serve their neighbors by hosting and facilitating a team from Tyson Chicken that came to provide meals to recovery workers and others in the community.

David plans to begin celebrating Eucharist in the parish hall as soon as the required utilities can be restored to the church property. In the meantime, he is leading worship services off site as he and the members of Christ Church continue to go forth in the name of Christ to love and to serve.

For updated information about how parishes and our diocese are helping David and the members of Christ Church as well as the Albertville community recover from the devastating tornado, please see page 16 and visit our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org.
Three Years of Watching

By the Rev. Evan D. Garner, Associate Rector of St. John’s in Montgomery

Very few of us in our diocese get to see how youth ministry really works. Instead, we see youth ministry at its fringes—lighting candles on a Sunday morning, raising money for a mission trip, hosting a pancake supper on the eve of Ash Wednesday. Most of us miss the core that ties all of the fringes together—relationships.

Teenagers, like the rest of us, are hungry for meaningful, mutually supportive, life-sustaining relationships. Most adults have had decades to build a network of close friends, but our youth have had barely a dozen years to form those relationships. Many of the youth who come to church-sponsored events are still trying to figure out what friendship really means. We should not be surprised, therefore, if the desire for intimacy and relationship is what holds our youth communities together.

For three years, I have watched 29 youth take turns serving our diocesan department as members of our Youth Department. As the department’s mission statement declares, their charge has been “to grow as disciples and serve as apostles by exploring and sharing [their] faith through worship, fellowship, and love.” My time as the department’s chaplain has allowed me to see beyond that “business-speak” and witness what really happens amongst the youth in our diocese.

For three years, I have seen these teenagers deal with both successes and failures. I have watched them struggle with each other and with the youth they have tried so diligently to serve. In them, I have witnessed the unifying power of selflessness and love, and I have seen that power overthrow the worldly forces that tend to pull people apart. I have observed in them a cycle that is indicative of all intimate relationships: forming and then straining and then breaking and then reforming—yet always growing and strengthening in each step. For three years, I have watched these children grow—partly as individuals but more significantly as relational human beings.

Our Youth Department fulfills its mission by hosting various events during the year—District Days, Christmas Conference, EYC Convention, Spring Break Conference, and more—but the department lives out the gospel imperative by building relationships among themselves and then extending those relationships to others throughout the diocese. When they gather to plan an event, these youth representatives maintain a steadfast focus on creating and sustaining community. Having experienced within the department the power of true friendship, these youth take upon themselves the duty of sharing that power with their peers. After an event, they measure their success not by counting the number of people present but by celebrating the relationships that have formed among youth.

What does it mean to “grow as disciples and serve as apostles”? What does it mean to carry out the work that Jesus has given us to do? For these 29 youth, the answer is clear: They have accepted their calling and responded to God’s commission by loving each other and sharing that love with others. For three years, I have had the privilege of watching these youth discover and share the good news of God with the youth (and adults) of our diocese. They have accomplished the apostolic work they were appointed to do, and I am thankful that I was able to see it happen.

Sawyerville Saints and Superheroeos

By Leslie Manning, Sawyerville Day Camp Coordinator

The theme for the 2010 Sawyerville Day Camp sessions is “Sawyerville Saints & Superheroes.” What a fun way to explore who we are in God’s eyes and in relation to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ—both neighbors and strangers alike!

The design team has a lot of wonderful activities and programs planned. Plenty of guest speakers will be joining us—local heroes from the Hale County community as well as the Birmingham and Tuscaloosa areas. The campers will also experience a carnival, field trip to Alabama Adventure, talent show, countless art projects, basketball tournaments, and health and wellness workshops. God continues to have a lot in store for the Sawyerville Day Camp and the community that surrounds it.

We will serve 400 campers this summer with 72 staff volunteers for the first session and 85 for the second session. That’s not counting all of the wonderful volunteers who come and help for the day both from the local community and our diocese! Thanks to all of the many, many parishes and individuals who make this camp happen each summer and this year—twice! Special thanks to the individuals who are holding key leadership roles this summer.

Staff members as of May 7:
Commission Chair—Carole Kelly
Meals Coordinator—Evelyn Pritchard
Supply Drivers—Mmenly Colvin and Carol Kendrick
Prayer Partners—Linda Kennedy
Site Coordinator—Debbie Tabb
Staff Coordinators—Louise Griffin and Jessica Harris
Camp Registrars—Emily Thornton and Jenny Phillips
Transportation Co-ordinator—Jamie Plott
Carnival Coordinator—Patrick Garman

June 25-July 3: Sawyerville I
Lower Camp or LC (6-10 year olds)
Co-Directors—Lindsay Joe and Christy Neely
Program Coordinator—Worth Stuart
Music—Fran McKendree

July 9-17: Sawyerville II
Upper Camp (11-14 year olds)
Co-Directors—Crystal Jones and Corey Jones
Program Coordinator—Jonathan Chesney
Chaplain—Donna Gerald
Music Coordinator—Corey Jones, Carley Burns, and guest musician ‘Infamous’

For and About Youth
SBC Revisited: Brevity Brings Happiness

By Saunders McElroy

For the past few years, the Youth Department (YD) as a group has struggled rather mightily trying to turn Spring Break Conference, nicknamed SBC, into an event that people get excited about. Spring Break has often been a tough time to work around with family trips and other happenings in teenagers’ lives making it increasingly difficult to find time to go to a YD event, no matter how exciting we have tried to make SBC sound. As our lovely chaplain, the Rev. Evan Garner, summed it up so elegantly, “Spring Break Conference has been the red-headed stepchild of YD events.”

In the past it has been a weeklong service venture that included fun time at Camp McDowell as well as a way to help the youth become involved in giving back to the community. Last year, for economic reasons, we had to shorten the event all the way down to one night at camp because staying for the whole week was either too pricey or too inconvenient for our usually enthusiastic crowd of event-goers. The one night “SBC 2.0” brought loads of new faces and familiar ones, too; the fact that we were able to hold it over the first weekend was convenient both for people who had other spring breaks and for people who had travel plans. I think that while last year’s rendition of SBC was outstanding, after only having one night at camp most of the participants went home wanting more.

As a result, our new YD this year faced the challenge of creating a version of Spring Break Conference that was able to please everyone: low cost and convenient while still providing enough time at camp to send everyone home satisfied. We came up with the idea of formatting it similar to our most popular event, Christmas Conference. Campers would arrive on Friday and leave on Sunday for a three-day, two-night adventure that would provide everyone with the opportunity to attend. Despite the more abbreviated stay than the traditional style of SBC, I had a really good feeling that we would have a successful event. What I did not expect was to come away with a feeling of spiritual renewal that would leave me once again praising God and the work He has done with the youth of our diocese. For whatever reason, the designed brevity of the weekend pulled together a unique dynamic of youth unlike anything I’ve ever seen before at camp. As is typical in our society, no matter how close our community is, there are cliques and different friend groups that arise. Not this time though—it felt like we were all one big family. Everyone was friends with everyone in a truly special, unified way—freshmen and seniors, guys and girls, whites and blacks, none of those labels mattered.

We were gathered together to have fun, all in the name of Jesus Christ. The fact that the format of the weekend provided an opportunity for everyone to participate, coupled with an incredible program on “Faith and Doubt” led by the Rev. Rebecca DeBow and moving music from the always great Fran McKendree, gave this group the opportunity to bond in a really special way. And all of it just happened that way. God had been at work all along, and I’m amazed by all that He is continuing to do with our youth community. It keeps growing stronger, event by event, and just when I think there’s no way an experience with our youth can be topped, I am proven wrong again. I am continually blessed by this community, and I’ll never be able to forget its effect on me. The way our group at SBC came together as one was truly spectacular and renewing in a unique way—and there was nothing more clear to me than the presence of Jesus Christ.

Spring Break Conference at Camp McDowell

Our Newly Elected 2010-2011 Youth Department
At-Large Members
Lydia Allison
Lee Auman
Betsy Cobb
Zeke Jones
Maddie Webb

Birmingham District Representatives
Sarah Katherine Cole
Abbey Moore

Montgomery District Representatives
Taylor Lollar
Ann Kathryn Parrish

Tennessee Valley District Representatives
Katie Grass
Harrison Hudson

Refreshed and Renewed

Ten youth leaders from around our diocese gathered at Camp McDowell at the end of April for a time of rest, renewal, learning, and fellowship. The Rev. Dixon Kinser, from the Diocese of Tennessee, facilitated an incredible and life-giving retreat and led the group in reflecting on the deep tradition and teachings of the Sabbath and the habits of sustainable youth ministry.
Clyde and His Merry Band of Workers

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

If you want something done, just ask the Rev. Deacon Clyde Pearce to do it! For the past 15 years he has been coming to do volunteer work at Camp McDowell the first two weeks of May, and almost every building and facility at camp has benefited from the efforts of Clyde and his “merry band of workers.”

The list of projects in 2010 was ambitious: Complete Randall Commons in the downstairs area of the Chapel of St. Francis, construct an adventure playground between Stough Lodge and Scott House, repair elements in the Group Action course, build shelves for a new Cursillo closet, and install a split-rail fence in front of the chapel.

This volunteer ministry of construction and maintenance is very valuable. Of course it saves camp a lot of funds and helps keep our rates low, but even more importantly, as Clyde and the others work together they gain a more complete understanding of the powerful ministries of Camp McDowell. They develop long-lasting friendships and a strong sense of community—and they participate in consecrating the projects they complete in their ministry of service.

Thank you, Clyde and all the merry workers who help him!
Experience the Joy of Creation

By Danielle Dunbar, Director of the Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell

Nestled in the natural beauty of “God’s Backyard,” Camp McDowell’s Alabama Folk School offers the ideal place to relax and enjoy the beauty of God’s creation while you experience the joy of God’s precious gift of creativity. Under the gentle guidance of talented folk artists, you can create your own pieces of art, make joyful music, and take classes in everything from woodworking to glass beading.

We are endowed with a rich history and culture in Alabama and the South that is unlike any other in the world. Thanks to our unique mixing of cultures as well as a landscape that defines our communities, we have been given an astounding definition of what it means to be a Southerner beautifully expressed through our unique folk traditions. In 2008, the Alabama Folk School began offering workshops for adult students to learn about these traditions as well as more contemporary art. Since that time we have been privileged to provide quality instruction from master artisans including Gee’s Bend quilters Mary Ann and China Pettway, ASCA Master Artist fiddler James Bryan, NEA Heritage Award and ASCA Master Artist quilter Bettye Kimbrell, white oak basketry makers Bill and Mary Ann Smith, glass bead artisan Terry Hale, ABMA Hall of Fame banjo player Herb Trotman, and pencil and watercolor artist Marilyn Brandenburger.

Looking back and moving forward—I find that bringing the richness of the past into the present makes life full. I hope that you will find, like many others have in the past two years, that taking classes at our Folk School will be a stepping-stone on your life’s journey.

Please join us July 23-24 for an Irish Weekend. It is sure to nourish your soul!

* Irish Ceili Dance taught by Katie Cox
* Irish Fiddle taught by Tom Morley
* Irish Mandolin taught by Rick Cunningham
* Irish Hammered Dulcimer taught by Rob Angus
* Silkscreen Printing taught by Melanie Barnes
* Splint-Weave Chair Caning taught by Gwen Chafin
* Woodcarving taught by Dylan Goodson

For more information or to register please contact me at folkschool@campmcdowell.com or the camp office at 205/387-1806, or visit www.campmcdowell.com/folkschool.

Making a pine needle basket—from blending the wool fibers to make felt (like mixing paint) and designing a leaf pendant to weaving the pine needles.
Another Extraordinary Group of Summer Camp Counselors!

By Michael Goldsmith, Summer Camp Coordinator

Summer Camp is here, and we have begun another season of fun and fellowship at Camp McDowell. The staff is excited about continuing this amazing ministry of serving the children and youth of our diocese. I have listed their names at the end of this article, and I ask you to please pray for them this summer.

As you know, it is hot and our counselors minister to the campers around the clock with patience and love. Our counselors are an extraordinary group of young adults, and we are truly blessed to have them at Camp McDowell this summer. They take very seriously the amazing opportunity they have been given to seek and serve Christ as they work and play here.

Each day at Summer Camp, we strive to provide the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to enter into the hearts of our campers. Through the joy of play and the mystery of worship, we hope to nurture, strengthen, and sometimes initiate a camper's relationship with Christ. In this Christian community, we work to create disciples who will spread the gospel through both word and example.

This mission, centered in the joy of Christ in us, urges both campers and counselors alike to engage the world with love and laughter, respect and compassion, and hope and excitement.

As I look around our diocese I am excited to see so many former counselors and campers continuing to serve Christ through various ministries. I know that Summer Camp has helped stir up their desire to serve. My prayer is that Camp McDowell will continue to live on in the overall mission of the Church as we encourage discipleship among our campers and staff. God’s peace to each of you!

2010 Summer Camp Staff

Summer Camp Coordinator: Anna Bryant, Camp McDowell

Head Counselor: Jordan Lee, St. Barnabas’ in Hartselle

Activity Director: Patrick Combs, St. Matthew’s in Madison

Waterfront Director: Kirby Simpson, Holy Comforter in Montgomery

Arts and Crafts Director: Kristin Hanson, St. Thomas’ in Huntsville

Music Director: Conner Barnes, Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa

Office Assistant: Sara Lowery, Holy Spirit in Alabaster

Lifeguards: Ashley Frye, Muscle Shoals Baptist Church, and Caitlin McCamy, Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa

Cabin Counselors: Richard Armistead, St. Michael’s in Cookeville, Tennessee; Sloane Brewer, St. Barnabas’ in Hartselle; Stratt Byars, Trinity in Florence; Spencer Cox, Christ Church in Tuscaloosa; P.J. Grass, Epiphany in Guntersville; Mary Catherine Hefflin, Grace in Sheffield; Emma Kingsley, Washington National Cathedral; Thomas Lane, Trinity in Florence; Saunders McElroy, St. Luke’s in Birmingham; Claire McIntyre, All Saints’ in Birmingham; Meagan Mullen, St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Florence; Sean Sinclair, St. Barnabas’ in Hartselle; Rachel Smith, St. Paul’s in Carlowville; and Rachel Wilkins, Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa.

Honors: Chris Allison, St. Thomas’ in Huntsville; Stephen Chambers, Christ Church in Montgomery; Dylan Jordan, Montgomery; and Matthew Massey, Montgomery.

Ducks Paddle for Trophies as Thoroughbreds Run for the Roses

By the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis, Our Diocesan Communications Coordinator

Some 400 specially-bred competition ducks of the synthetic species fought strong headwinds under overcast skies in an attempt to capture the grand trophy in Saturday’s (May 1) Great Derby Day Duck Race at St. Thomas’ in Huntsville. The parish sponsors the annual event to support First Stop, a ministry to the Homeless in Huntsville, and Special Session, the Summer Camp for mentally and physically challenged adults and young people held at Camp McDowell.

The three-heat race is run prior to the start of the Kentucky Derby on a segment of Aldridge Creek at the back of the parish property. The event also features a derby hat contest. The grand winner of the Great Derby Day Duck Race as well as the winners of the preliminary heats and the person sporting the best hat receive prizes.

Between heats, everyone enjoyed hotdogs, barbecue, derby pie, and mint juleps. This year’s race provided lots of enjoyments and raised an estimated $3,000 for the two outreach ministries.
First Global Mission Grant to Individuals Awarded

By Judy Quick, Chair of Our Diocesan Department of Mission and Outreach

Our diocesan Department of Mission and Outreach has awarded its first Global Mission Grant to Individuals to Lauren and Mike Deibert, missionaries to Nicaragua. The Deiberts are members of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, which supports their ministry financially and through prayer.

Lauren and Mike’s ministry is ESVO (Escuela Vocacional), and it focuses on vocational training as a means to teach various trade skills with the spirit of love, which they pray will transform lives and communities.

Mike teaches blacksmithing, welding, and carpentry to young men. Lauren teaches classes in jewelry-making, cooking, sewing, and leatherworking to the women of Nueva Imagen, who have recently gotten out of prostitution. Lauren also teaches single mothers of children with disabilities in a partner mission, Tesoros de Dios, in classes that include biblical worldview studies, marriage and family finances, and counseling when necessary. To date, ESVO Ministries has taught more than 80 young men and women and trained eight indigenous teachers to join Lauren and Mike in teaching classes.

Recently the Deiberts have expanded their vocational school to another community and begun the process of building both a blacksmithing shop and an auto-mechanics shop (for more about their ministry, please visit their website, www.esvoministries.com).

The Global Mission Grant to Individuals is a new grant available for individuals of any age who are directly involved in sharing God's love with people in need outside of the United States. Requests may be submitted at any time throughout the year via a letter explaining the ministry, and applicants may reapply.

For more information please contact me at jgquick@bellsouth.net or 205/669-6862. Address written requests for grant awards to the Rev. Pat Wingo, Deputy for Ministry Development, Diocese of Alabama, 321 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203; pwingo@diala.org.
GED Classes—A Story of Life-Changing Miracles

Marjorie Jones notes that this incredible journey began with one woman, Lucy Watson. Lucy has a strong passion and determination to help the lost young people who have dropped out of school with no family to support them—some on drugs, some with children, all of them living in poverty. They come to her one by one by word of mouth, and if they are willing to listen to her guidance, she agrees to be their mentor and help them get their lives back on track. She has a true servant’s heart.

Lucy began asking her friends to help tutor the young people so they could get their GED. “I volunteered,” Marjorie recalls. “I figure I have a good education, and I liked school—how hard can this be?”

Marjorie went to the store, bought a workbook, and started going to one of the girl’s apartments to help her study. “She had a new baby, and it didn’t take very long to realize my plan was not working!” says Marjorie. “One, she needed someone else to keep the baby so she could focus and study, and two, the GED test is a very difficult seven-hour exam—we needed help! I thought of St. Mary’s on-the-Highlands. It just so happens that we used to have a daycare center here, but it had closed, and I knew there were these wonderful nursery rooms mostly empty during the week. I went to the parish outreach committee, and they gave us their full support. The plan of holding GED classes at the church was born!

“I will admit to you that when we started this we were totally clueless about what it would take to get people through the GED test,” says Marjorie, “but from the very first day, it was obvious that God was leading us. He knew what we needed even before we did! The perfect people showed up at just the right time to make this program happen. The very first month when Lucy was taking flyers around to some neighborhood stores to recruit students, a lady walked up to her and said that she used to be the GED teacher at the county courthouse. They started talking, and the lady said she’d love to volunteer! Shannon Crenshaw was her name, and she was an excellent teacher. She had the exact wisdom and experience we needed to get started—that was divine intervention!”

Marjorie adds that the GED program leaders believe it is important to offer free quality childcare for the children of the women in the class. They know that the women need lots of encouragement to stick with the program, and they really care about them and want to provide all the resources they need once they come to the church for the class sessions. Marjorie also notes that there were many times when the leaders did all they could but saw no success. They had discouraging days when not one student showed up. “But that’s when God’s Word offered hope and strength,” she emphasizes. “Jeremiah 29:11 took on a whole new meaning for me: ‘For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.’ And Proverbs 3:5: ‘Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.’ We experienced ups and downs, but we trusted and believed that the Lord had a plan to change the lives of our students and give them a second chance—and we did not give up on them!”

The GED program leaders discovered that other community groups, including the Foundry and the Lovelady Center, also offered GED classes, and they started sharing resources. Sarah Beth Blair, who is a member of St. Mary’s and a GED teacher at Jefferson State Community College, stepped forward as a special consultant and showed them the way when they needed help moving forward. They also networked with the Literacy Council to get scholarships for their students to take the GED test, and they received anonymous donations to pay for workbooks and supplies in the nursery.

“Last summer was a turning point,” Marjorie explains. “We were advised by several experts to expand our class hours so more women could pass the test. That would take more money to do, so I applied for an expansion grant from the Community Foundation of Birmingham. I worked hard on our proposal, and I went downtown and turned it in on the day it was due. Before I got out of the parking lot, I got a call that our proposal was ineligible because it was missing some required financial information that I had no idea how to get. It was a Friday afternoon, and I started calling people—but they were all out of town. That’s the moment I was really tempted to give up, go home, and forget all of this.

“As I sat in my car though,” Marjorie continues. “I was aware of a battle going on in my mind. This is too hard. Why am I doing this? They’re not paying me. But also in my mind was God’s promise that with God all things are possible to him who believes. So I drove back to St. Mary’s, and Amy McCoy was in her office, and she was able to find the information I needed to complete the proposal! We were awarded the grant—that was a real miracle!”

Some of the other miracles that have happened since that trying time: Four women have passed all sections of the GED test, two have passed all but writing section, and three more have passed several sections and are continuing to work to pass the rest. Since the women have been coming to St. Mary’s for the classes, four of their children plus one adult have been baptized into the Body of Christ, and the GED program has become much more than just classes to help people pass a test—it’s now a ministry of healing and hope. “In addition, the Junior League has started sending volunteers to help us, so we have really come a long way! The Lord has proven He is faithful to those who trust Him!” Marjorie emphasizes.

“Our students have asked, ‘What kind of church is this?’ They are so amazed that people would come and do this for them! They say they feel so accepted by our church,” she adds, noting that it is truly a team effort. The GED team expresses their heartfelt thanks to everyone at St. Mary’s for their generous support, lots of prayers, use of church space and resources. They give a special thank-you to the office staff for their wonderful help. They give thanks for their wonderful staff of teachers, including Knox Bricken, Trish Cary, and Shawna Mays, and for Marian Murphy and Lucy Watson, who take such good care of the children while the mothers are in class. They also give a very special thank-you to Pat Cooper, who is chair of the lunch volunteers, and all of the “lunch ladies” who help make that study break a time of fellowship when they can laugh together and share their lives at the table of Christ.

You Are Invited To Join ENEJ

By the Rev. Eric Liles, Associate Rector of St. John’s in Decatur and ENEJ Province IV Representative

We believe that the Episcopal Church is called to the work of ECONOMIC JUSTICE, which includes the support of local economic development projects, such as housing cooperatives, worker-owned businesses, and community-based credit unions; the creation of housing, businesses, and jobs through the energy and resources of the Church; advocacy for worker justice, including the right to organize; and concerns about the effect of the globalization of the economy on workers, the poor, and the environment.

Episcopal congregations and individuals are being asked to stand in solidarity with those who are being displaced by the shifting economic tide. The Gospel requires no less.

The Episcopal Network of Economic Justice (ENEJ) is a network of individuals, dioceses, congregations, and organizations within the Episcopal Church who are engaged in a variety of economic justice ministries. Members work both within the Church and in interfaith coalitions in their respective communities. Some of our members have helped create and capitalize community development financial institutions to support local economic development efforts—including a development bank, community development credit unions, and community development loan funds.

Individuals as well as parishes and other organizations can join the ENEJ. For more information please visit www.enej.org or contact me at eric.liles@stjohnsdecatur.org or 256/353-9615. You can download a membership form from www.enej.org or our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org.
Christ Church Celebrates History with the University of Alabama

On April 12, the members of Christ Church celebrated the founding of the University of Alabama (UA) and the strong bond between the two entities that has spanned almost two centuries, beginning on the same date in 1831 when the first university president was inaugurated in the church nave, officially opening the doors of the university. “Since that time university presidents, deans, trustees, faculty members, administrators, staff members, students, alumni, and supporters have all worshiped here in Christ Church, creating a rich and cherished relationship between the church and the university,” notes the Rev. David Megginiss, rector of the parish.

This year April 12 occurred after Lent, so the parish decided to seize the opportunity to host a celebration. A historical bronze plaque was created and mounted in the atrium of the church, and a formal ceremony and reception were held. During the ceremony, former Alabama Supreme Court Justice Bernard Harwood, who was baptized and confirmed at Christ Church, spoke about the deep ties between the church and the university. “Many of our parishioners serve as university professors or staff members, are alumni, or are parents of former or current students,” he reminded the congregation. “Eighteen members of the university’s president’s cabinet currently worship at Christ Church, and the current president of the university as well as a former president are parishioners here.”

UA President Dr. Robert Witt, also a featured speaker, added, “The inauguration of the university’s first president is such a significant event in the history of the church as well as the university.” This plaque helps establish something permanent between Christ Church and the university.”

“We believe God created us with an innate curiosity to learn and grow, to be able to accept the revelation of truth wherever we find it,” Megginiss pointed out, “and so it is only natural that we would embrace the University of Alabama in our midst, where young men and women, like Solomon, seek to grow in wisdom, become more discerning, to discover new truths.”

ERD President Visits Our Diocese

By Judy Quick, Our Diocesan Coordinator

Dr. Robert Radtke, Episcopal Relief & Development (ERD) president, and Sherrye Henry, ERD development officer, journeyed to our diocese to thank parishioners and donors for their amazing generosity in supporting ERD’s wide-ranging programs to alleviate poverty and suffering in the world.

The members of the Nativity in Huntsville warmly welcomed the guests. Dr. Radtke preached at two services and gave an informative presentation and answered questions at the Adult Forum. He reaffirmed the continuing presence of ERD in Haiti and was delighted to hear from the Rev. Hyersen Joseph, who had just visited his homeland and reported the spirit of hope amidst the devastation. Dr. Radtke also expressed his appreciation for the micro-loan enterprise ideas to address the goal of economic sustainability offered by Dr. Don Evans and Dr. Robert Serio, who had just returned from our diocesan medical mission to Haiti. Dr. Radtke complimented the members of the Nativity for their fundraising efforts to support the Nets for Life® Program to prevent malaria.

The members of St. Matthew’s in Madison hosted a luncheon for ERD supporters. When Dr. Radtke addressed the people who gathered there, he reported again on ERD’s commitment to Haiti and elaborated on the overarching goals of the organization.

International Programs Fight extreme poverty and disease worldwide, working primarily within the Anglican Communion, by supporting quality programs that promote sustainable development and provide relief and recovery in times of disaster.

US Disaster Preparedness and Response Help equip dioceses in the United States to support congregations, agencies and communities in order to enable them to better respond to and recover from disasters that impact the vulnerable in their communities and elsewhere.

Church Engagement Engage all Episcopalians in the work of Episcopal Relief & Development as the compassionate response of the Episcopal Church to help heal a hurting world.

Funding Increase and diversify revenue streams to support and sustain programs and operations.

Visibility and Awareness Position Episcopal Relief & Development in the Episcopal Church, Anglican Communion, and the wider community as a valued partner and leader in responding to human suffering.

The visit to our diocese culminated in Birmingham with a reception at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Johnston Sr., members of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, with Bishop and Mrs. Parsley welcoming the guests. When he spoke to the guests that evening, Dr. Radtke reviewed a number of the programs that respond to disasters and support countries for long-term development to alleviate global poverty. He expressed his profound gratitude to the individuals, parishes, and our diocese for our generosity to ERD. Bishop Parsley praised Dr. Radtke for the good work being done by ERD and offered thanks to the guests for their heart for mission.

If you would like more information or a presentation on the work of ERD, please contact me at jgquick@bellsouth.net or 205/669-6862. Also visit www.er-d.org.
“ROOTED: THEOLOGY CONFERENCE FOR STUDENT MINISTRY”
August 10-12 at the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham

The Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham will host “Rooted: A Theology Conference for Student Ministry,” which aims to see the Gospel of Jesus Christ amplified and applied in student ministry. This conference is designed for student ministers, both college and youth, across all denominations, both congregational and para-church. Confirmed speakers include Dr. Ashley Null of Cambridge, England; Brian Habig of Greenville, South Carolina; and Angel Richard of Beverly Hills, Florida.

Recognizing a growing trend of focusing student ministry on moral rules and emotional highs, “Rooted” aims to encourage a movement to ministry emphasizing the development of a biblical, Gospel-centered worldview in students. Given that opportunities for theological development are limited and that most student ministry conferences concentrate on methodology, “Rooted” intends to equip student pastors with greater grounding in the Gospel, which will assist them in encouraging students to follow Jesus. For more information please visit www.rootedconference.com or call 205/443-8500.

“THE PALESTINE OF JESUS” COURSE
November 9-24 in the Holy Land

St. Mary’s-on-the-Highlands and St. Luke’s in Birmingham along with Christ Church in Tuscaloosa are sponsoring this trip to participate in the “Palestine of Jesus” course led by the faculty and staff of St. George’s College in Jerusalem. Participants will spend time learning about and exploring Jerusalem, Capernaum, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jericho, Emmaus, and the Dead Sea. For more information please contact Melodie Elam, Executive Assistant-Communications at St. Mary’s, at 205/933-1140 ext. 114 or melodie@stmarysoth.org.

Clergy and Spouses Gather at Camp McDowell

By the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis, Our Diocesan Communications Coordinator

Clergy and their spouses from across our diocese met at Camp McDowell on April 28-30 for worship, fellowship, reflection, and relaxation. This annual conference is designed to provide an opportunity to strengthen and nourish our clergy family community.

This year’s program, “Tongued with Fire: Faith, Vocation, and the Poet’s Voice,” was led by Bishop Parsley and Dr. Jim Mersmann, who is a member of St. Andrew’s in Montevallo and a poet as well as a retired UAB English professor. Bishop Parsley and Dr. Mersmann guided discussions and reflections on poetry written by 17th-century Anglican priest George Herbert, American poet Robert Frost, Mary Oliver, and others.

In his sermon at the Eucharist on Thursday, the feast day of St. Catherine of Sienna, Bishop Sloan spoke about her dedication and faith. He explained that St. Catherine had felt called to heal, as both a nurse and someone to help reconcile divisions in the Church. Bishop Sloan reminded the gathering that all are called to work for reconciliation in the Church.

Thursday evening, the group enjoyed an interactive drumming workshop led by John Scalici, who has shared his Get Rhythm! program with the campers and staff of the Sawyerville Day Camp for the past several years. Friday morning was reserved for “Bishop’s Time,” where a variety of matters concerning our life together in our diocese and the wider Church were discussed.

Please visit our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org, to see additional photos.

PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND
December 1-9

The Rev. Ray Waldon, Priest in Charge of St. Peter’s in Talladega, is leading this pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The pilgrimage will include stops at the major Christian sites of Israel including Bethlehem, Cana, the Garden, and a boat ride on the Dead Sea. Pilgrims will also visit major Jewish historical sites including Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, and Megiddo, as well as the Muslim Dome of the Rock and the site where Abraham was to sacrifice Isaac.

In preparation for the trip, the pilgrims will meet with Father Waldon to learn a few key phrases in Hebrew and watch videos of the Holy Land. For more information please call St. Peter’s at 256/362-2505 or e-mail Father Waldon at raywaldon@gmail.com.
The Alabama Episcopalian • May/June 2010

**What’s New/Noteworthy at the Episcopal Book Store**

**Your God Is Too Small: A Guide for Believers and Skeptics Alike** by J.B. Phillips

Someone once said, “For new ideas read an old book.” Originally published in 1952, this book is as up to date as tomorrow. To think that we create God in our own image will result in a god nor more wise or powerful than we are—and certainly incapable of creation, maintenance, or salvation. J.B. Phillips clearly identifies the source of the powerless god that we humans produce when we make the mistake of beginning with ourselves as a paradigm for holiness.

**The Ragamuffin Gospel** by Brennan Manning

Most of us believe in God’s grace—in theory. But somehow we can’t seem to apply it in our daily lives. We continue to see Him as a small-minded bookkeeper, tallying our failures and successes on a score sheet. Yet God gives us His grace, willingly, no matter what we’ve done. We come to Him as ragamuffins—dirty, bedraggled, and beat-up. And when we sit at His feet, He smiles upon us, the chosen objects of His “furious love.”

**Peace Like a River** by Leif Enger

This national best seller is a mixture of adventure, tragedy, and healing. Leif Enger introduces us to Reuben Land, an 11-year-old asthmatic Midwestern boy who has reason to believe in miracles. Along with his sister and father, Reuben finds himself on a cross-country search for his outlaw older brother, who has been controversially charged with murder. Their journey unfolds like a revelation, and its conclusion shows how family, love, and faith can stand up to the most terrifying of enemies, and the most tragic of fates.

**God Knows Everything** by Carine Mackenzie

This is a little board book that will help your young one learn that God is kind, God has power, God never changes, God knows everything, God is everywhere, God is faithful. The suggested reading level is baby to preschooler.

**The Complete Stories by Flannery O’Connor**

O’Connor published her first story, “The Geranium,” in 1946 while she was working on her master’s degree at the University of Iowa. This book, which is arranged chronologically, shows that her last story, “Judgment Day,” sent to her publisher shortly before her death, is a brilliantly rewritten, transfigured version of “The Geranium.”

**What’s So Amazing about Grace?** by Philip Yancey

Read for the first time (or reread) this book about grace. There is nothing we can do to make God love us more—there is nothing we can do to make God love us less. Yancey explores grace at street level. What is grace? If grace is God’s love for the undeserving, then what does it look like in action? If Christians are its sole dispensers, how are we doing at lavishing grace on a world that knows far more about cruelty and unforgiveness than it does about mercy? In his personal and provocative book ever, Yancey offers compelling, true portraits of grace’s life-changing power. He searches for its presence in his own life and in the Church. He challenges us to become living answers to a world that desperately wants to know “What’s So Amazing about Grace?”

**Around Our Diocese**

**Cursillo Weekends** #173 June 10–13, #174 September 16–19, #175 October 14–17

**Diocesan Convention** February 10–12 at St. Luke’s in Birmingham

**July 23–24** Irish Weekend at the Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell. For more information please see pages 8–9, contact Danielle at folkshop@campmcdowell.com or the camp office at 205/387-1806, or visit www.campmcdowell.com/folkshop.

**August 10–12** “Rooted: Theology Conference for Student Ministry” sponsored by the Advent in Birmingham. For more information please see the description on page 14, visit www.rooteconfereence.com, or call 205/443-8500.

**October 8** Black Sand, an ASL Film, at 7 p.m. at St. John’s Church for the Deaf in Birmingham; movie showing sponsored by Alabama Deaf Seniors. For more information please see the description on page 14 or contact Joan Jordan at Jordan54@charter.net or Randy Vines at randyvines@gmail.com.

**September 24–25** Lecture series featuring the Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor sponsored by SPAFER, a non-profit all-volunteer forum for exploring religion, at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham. For more information please contact SPAFER at 205/252-9573 or visit www.spafes.org.

**November 9–24** “The Palestine of Jesus” Course led by the faculty and staff of St. George’s College in Jerusalem, part of a trip sponsored by St. Mary’s-on-the-Highlands and St. Luke’s in Birmingham along with Christ Church in Tuscaloosa. For more information please see the description on page 14 or contact Melodie Elam, Executive Assistant-Communications at St. Mary’s, at 205/933-1140 ext. 114 or melodie@stmarysoth.org.

**December 1–9** Pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by the Rev. Ray Waldon, priest in charge of St. Peter’s in Talladega. For more information please see the description on page 14, call St. Peter’s at 256/362-2505, or e-mail Father Waldon at raywaldon@gmail.com.

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**Bishops’ Visitation Schedule**

**June 6, Sunday**

10 a.m.  Bishop Sloan, St. Barnabas’, Huntsville
10:30 a.m.  Bishop Parsley, St. Columba, Huntsville

**June 13, Sunday**

10 a.m.  Bishop Parsley, St. Peter’s, Talladega

**June 20, Sunday**

10:30 a.m.  Bishop Parsley, St. Joseph’s, Mentone

**June 27, Sunday**

11 a.m.  Bishop Parsley, St. John’s Deaf, Birmingham
11 a.m.  Bishop Sloan, St. Mark’s, Boligee
Providing Much-Needed Help for Christ Church and Albertville

Parishes have stepped in to assist the people of Albertville following a tornado that swept through the area on Saturday evening, April 24. The severe weather damaged many structures including Christ Church.

“I live about a mile from the Albertville church and knew they would need help,” says the Rev. Jennifer Riddle, associate rector of Epiphany in nearby Guntersville. “We need to help our sister church,” she told her parishioners on Sunday morning, and several people volunteered to go to Albertville the following morning to clear trees and shore up portions of the church structure on hard-hit East Main Street. In addition to Jennifer, the team included Ashleigh Brown, John Gartrell, Jody Chorba, and Jason Moore.

Jody and Jason, who are president and vice president (respectively) of Chorba Contracting, arranged for a backhoe and additional volunteers.

The Epiphany crew arrived at Christ Church about 9 a.m. and by noon had cleared away the trees that were blocking access to the front of the property. Later a crew from St. Thomas’ in Huntsville arrived with tarps and covered the church pews, which were exposed to the elements, to prevent further damage from rain.

Bishop Parsley and Bishop Sloan also visited the parish with members of our diocesan staff. They delivered relief funds contributed by parishioners from across our diocese. They also provided $5,000 from our Diocesan Disaster Relief Fund to help the parish assist the community of Albertville, another $5,000 to help the congregation make arrangements to safeguard its property and prepare the parish hall as a temporary worship space, and a contribution from the Easter Fund to help the rector of Christ Church, the Rev. David Kendrick, and his family, whose home sustained significant damage and is uninhabitable.

In the past few weeks, workers have removed and saved many of the church’s treasures, including the stained-glass windows, the handmade altar rail, and the pews. As the parish reaches out to help others in the Albertville area, David Kendrick is serving as the vice president of the Long-Term Tornado Recovery Committee, which includes representatives of a number of organizations and agencies. The committee is helping coordinate available recovery resources.

For more about the tornado that hit Albertville and damaged Christ Church, please see “Giving Thanks—and Taking Care of Each Other” on page 5, and visit our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org.