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"Celebrating Our New Ministry"
Our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention

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Our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention, February 17-18

Compiled from Reports by the Rev. Michael Rich; Photos by Gail Perna

In his first convention address as the 11th Bishop of Alabama, the Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan encouraged the 500 delegates and visitors from 90 congregations gathered at Huntsville's Von Braun Civic Center to strike out in new directions while holding onto the best of the past. Bishop Sloan admitted that change doesn't come easily to the Church, but he emphasized that new approaches always are needed when "fishing for people," and he related a story from his youth to illustrate. He told about a time when he was fishing with his father, who was catching many fish and who couldn't understand young Kee's

The Nativity, Holy Cross-St. Christopher's, St. Columba in the Cove, St. Stephen's, and St. Thomas', all in Huntsville, and St. Matthew's, in Madison, hosted the two-day convention.

dedication to a flashy lure that wouldn't attract any bites. "Kee, do you want to catch fish, or do you just want to play with your bait?" his father had asked him in exasperation.

"We are called to fish for people, not to play with the bait," Bishop Sloan explained. "We're grateful for our heritage, as we should surely be, but we can't allow ourselves to be trapped by our traditions."

Bishop Sloan's call for change included proposals for Camp McDowell and in how clergy begin and continue their education. Specifically, he asked delegates to support Bethany Village, a proposed expansion of Camp McDowell that would increase environmental education opportunities and also make our diocesan camp and retreat center more accessible to mobility-challenged campers.

Bethany Village combines the experience and passions of Bishop Sloan and the Rev. Mark Johnston, executive director and vicar of Camp McDowell. In planning the proposed changes, Bishop Sloan drew on his decades-long experience with Special Session, a gathering of special needs campers, while Mark applied his extensive experience and expertise with environmental education. Bishop Sloan also suggested a new annual gathering at Camp McDowell "just for fun, just to celebrate being Episcopalians in Alabama."

In reference to clergy education, Bishop Sloan offered suggestions about how clergy gatherings are conducted and including more education workshops, how discernment to lay and ordained ministry can become more effective, and how clergy training is conducted and possibly including nonresidential seminary programs.

During the convention's business sessions, the delegates voted on a wide variety of resolutions. They voted to oppose sections of HB56, the Alabama state law on immigration, that "would prevent inhabitants of Alabama without legal status from receiving equal protection under the law and having their basic needs met." The resolution they passed also affirmed the legal complaint concerning the law filed in 2011 by Bishop Henry N. Parsley Jr. and bishops from the Catholic and Methodist Churches in Alabama.

The delegates also voted to consent to the appointment of an assistant bishop, recommend a study considering reorganization of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, support the reauthorization of the 19-year-old Forever Wild state land preservation program, endorse the vision of Bethany Village to expand facilities at Camp McDowell for greater access and environmental education, renew our companion diocese relationship with the Diocese of Haiti, appoint a commission to study and propose revisions of the diocesan canons, and approve new diocesan officers.

For more about our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention, please see pages 3-13 and visit our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org/convention/2012-coverage.html.

During the Festival Eucharist, Bishop Sloan accepted a gift of three juggling pins from Logan Oakes, Ashely Grace Passey, and Sarah Grace Macala, who represented the youth of our diocese In turn, he presented them with a "gift of nine," three groups of three balloons, with the words, "Friends, remind us of joy, give us hope, and help us live in love." The moment came during an exchange of gifts to symbolize the relationship of the people of our diocese with our new bishop.

On The Cover

During the Festival Eucharist, Bishop Sloan sent three juggling pins flying in perfect rhythm. The unusual moment came during the presentation of gifts to symbolize the relationship of the people of our diocese with our new bishop. Representatives of the youth of our diocese, presented a symbolic "gift of three"—three colorful clubs; photo by Gail Perna.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In the Diocese of Alabama
About 34,000 baptized members in 92 parishes and worshiping communities and 8 college campus ministries. Established in 1830.

Bishop
The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan

Carpenter House
521 North 20th Street
Birmingham, AL 35203
205/715-2060

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

Presiding Bishop
The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori

Episcopal Church Center
815 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017
212/867-8400

The Anglican Communion
An 80-million-member worldwide community of 38 provinces.

Archbishop of Canterbury
The Most Rev. Rowan D. Williams

Lambeth Palace, London
England SE17JU

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Bishop Sloan's Address to Diocesan Convention, February 17, 2012

Photos by Tom Lydon and Gail Perna

In the Name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fish for people." Immediately they left their nets and followed him. Matthew 4:18-20

This is my first address to the convention as your diocesan bishop, my first actual bishop's address. I've spoken to the last four conventions, but they were sermons, really, and I kind of know how to do that. The bishop's address is different, and I want to get this right. I've heard a lot of bishop's addresses; some, you have to say, have been better than others. I think this is about my 40th convention—I've been as a student in high school, a student in college, a visitor, a seminarian, a deacon, a curate, a vicar, a college chaplain, a rector, and a bishop suffragan. But this is my first time as diocesan bishop.

I've been thinking about what I want to say in this moment. I want to do this right—people out there are actually paying attention. I've written down what I'm trying to say, which I almost never do—a committee full of people will get copies of this address, and they will be charged to make it make sense.

A month or so ago at the Cathedral Church of the Advent, we had the Investiture of the 11th Bishop of Alabama. It was *the* event of the season. The presiding bishop was there and about 25 other bishops from all over—it was a full-blown pomposity of bishops! A lot of our family was there, our children led the reading of the Psalm, friends from Mississippi and Alabama met and gathered together, the church was beautiful, the music was spectacular—it was a grand, meaningful, wonderful service.

My friend Duncan Gray III, the Bishop of Mississippi, and the son and the grandson of former Bishops of Mississippi, preached the sermon. He said a lot of nice things about me (and didn't tell a few stories that are better left untold), and he remembered in his sermon that a few years ago I told him that I had taken the blessing that I remembered his father and grandfather using and, with nobody's authority but my own, added a little bit to it. The blessing comes from verses from the 12th chapter of the Letter to the Romans and starts with "Go forth into the world in peace, be strong and of good courage. Hold fast to that which is good . . . ."

Actually that verse, verse 9 from the Letter to the Romans, is "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to that which is good," talking about choosing good over evil—and you know it's hard to argue with that. But I told Duncan I'd always thought of that part of the blessing as supporting the Episcopalians' innate desire to keep things the way they've always been—"hold fast to that which is good"—that's the way we've always done it. We might struggle from time to time about choosing good over evil—actually it's not always easy to identify which is which—but keeping things the way we imagine they've always been, holding fast to that which is good . . . we got that, no problem.

The problem is that the way we've always done it isn't always going to be enough. The Church our grandparents were baptized into is not the Church they passed along to us, and the Church we pass on to our children and grandchildren cannot be the Church into which we were baptized. The world changes, as it always has, and we have to choose in every generation: Will we remain in conversation with the world our Lord died to save and calls us to serve, or will we become a museum dedicated to the fond memory of how things used to be? Holding fast to things that are good is a good thing, but it's not enough.

So I added a verse that recurs in the Psalms: "Sing to the Lord a new song." Hold fast to that which is good—sing to the Lord a new song. That, I think, is our challenge and our great opportunity—the tension between those two ideas is the business of our Church in the decade to come: How can we "Hold fast to that which is good" and "Sing to the Lord a new song" at the same time? Either one by itself is insufficient—a museum of days gone by at one extreme and the "Church of What's Happening Now" at the other. But that tension between keeping what is good and true and strong from the goodly heritage of 20 centuries of Christian teaching and worship and finding new ways to proclaim the Good News of the love of God in Jesus Christ that can be inviting and compelling and meaningful to people who desperately need to hear about unconditional love and real hope in the 21st century—that's the work we've been given to do.

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(Some of the clergy have already heard the next part because I told this story at a clergy reflection day. So if you were there and if you remember it, you might want to take the next few minutes off . . . or

maybe it won't hurt you to hear it again.)

One of the great treats of my childhood was to go fishing with my dad. Usually he took my brother and me both, all three of us trying not to hook each other as we sat in a 10-foot aluminum boat, but there were times when he just took just one of us or the other, and that was an extra-special treat.

One hot early summer afternoon when I was 9 or 10 years old, Dad took off from work early, which he almost never did, and took me fishing. My brother had baseball practice or something, and he couldn't go; it was just me and Dad. I don't remember the real name of the lake—my brother and I always called it Stump Lake because of all the dead trees and limbs and stumps in it. We hated all that stuff because it was so easy to hook—Dad loved all that stuff. He called it cover—he said it made the fishing better.

Dad and I paddled out to a fishy-looking spot, and Dad got a rod and reel all ready for me. I picked out my favorite lure, a noisy little red and green gizmo that splashed and went chicka-chicka-chicka as I reeled it back along the surface of the water. Dad assured me that there were times when that was absolutely the best lure in his tackle box and told me about big fish he'd caught with that lure. Mostly I just wanted to be able to see it. I wanted to keep away from hooking a stump or a limb. I loved being out on the water, I loved fishing with Dad, but the most important thing to me was not catching a fish but not hooking a stump. If I caught a stick or a stump, Dad would have to interrupt his fishing, put down his rod and reel, paddle over there to where it was stuck, and try to dislodge it from whatever I'd hooked. I figured it would be more enjoyable for him and me both if I just kept my lure on the surface of the water away from the stumps.

Meanwhile Dad was using a plastic worm, a 6-inch-long fake worm that had the tip of the hook embedded in it. The idea here was to throw the worm out there and let it sink to the bottom, and then reel it in very slowly, keeping the line taut so that when you felt a fish tug on it—*Wham!* you could set the hook and land the fish. Dad was really good at it. He tried several times to teach me how to do this, but I had a hard time distinguishing between the tug of a fish and what it felt like when the worm went over a stump or a stick—so that as I was keeping the line taut and reeling it in very slowly, and I felt something and *Wham!*—most times I would hook a stump or a stick. So I thought it was best to stick to my top-water lure so I could keep that pesky hook in sight.

Dad kept telling me that I needed to switch to a plastic worm. "They're tearing these worms up, Bud!" But I was just as glad not to catch a stump, content to see my little lure skittering across the surface unaffected by stump or fish, chicka-chicka-chicka.

That afternoon Dad caught a really nice one, the biggest fish of the day, and as he was working to get the hook back out, he was telling me that I needed to switch to plastic worms—and I was trying to convince him that I was okay with things just the way they are. He stopped what he was doing and looked at me funny and said, "Kee, do you want to catch fish, or are you just playing with the bait?" I thought the answer was obvious.

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If we're going to answer Jesus' call to fish for people, if we're going to take seriously our call to share the Gospel of Christ, if we're not just playing with the bait—we need to take seriously what bait we are using and pay attention to what's going to work and what's not. We can choose to hold fast to that which has been good in the past and keep using the same bait even though today it might not be working so well—it's safe that way, it's familiar, and we like it. That way we won't catch any stumps—but we might not catch any fish either.

Singing a new song will not be so easy, not be so comfortable, not be so safe. We might hook a stump or two, and we'll have to paddle over and make it right. But maybe that wouldn't be such a terrible thing. And maybe we'll catch the biggest fish of the day.

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In 1968, a priest in the Diocese of Mississippi worked with a man in the mental-health field to bring people with mental and physical disabilities together for a session of summer camp. They set it up so that all the campers would be assigned to activity groups, and they made an elaborate schedule so that every day each camper would go to the activities on their schedule in the order that it was written on the newsprint—the same schedule every day so that the campers wouldn't be confused.

In 1971 when I was 15, I went to that camp to be a counselor for a cabin full of boys who'd just finished the 3rd and 4th grades, and at the end of that session a college girl in a blue bathing suit came and asked me if I would come back and be a counselor for Special Session. (Strange, the things that will change your life!) It was an amazing week, and I learned a lot, most importantly

that the children of God come in all shapes and sizes and colors. I still have my nametag from that week: "Mr. Kee" written in big red letters on a 3 by 5 piece of thin plywood. My camper's nametag said "Neal."

I worked at that session through high school and college, and when I came back from seminary in 1981, I was on the adult staff of the Special Session. It was no surprise that everything was just the same as it had been 10 years ago—it was the way it was supposed to be.

In 1983, I was asked to direct that session, and I wanted to do it right. Before the campers came, we got it all set up, made sure the activity groups had equal numbers of campers arranged by their abilities and disabilities, made an elaborate schedule for activity groups, and made nametags for everybody the way it had always been done: "Mr. Bob," "Miss Kathy" for staff; "Susan," "Kevin" for campers. I wanted to carry on the great traditions, keep everything just the way it had always been—I wanted to do it right.

The week went well, as far as I remember—it's hard to stop those people from having a good time. As the campers and counselors were leaving at the end of the week, my friend Harry came and talked to me. He had been in college the first time I was a counselor and had talked me into staying my first Special Session in 1971 when I was scared. I was excited that he had agreed to be on my adult staff.

I asked him how he thought it had gone and was surprised when he told me that he was very disappointed. He asked me if I was serious about treating people with dignity and respect, or was that something Church people just say. I asked him what he was talking about, and he told me that if we were going to treat people with dignity, we would ask them what they want to do instead of scheduling all those decisions for them. I said, "But what if all they want to do is swim in the pool every time they can?" And he looked at me like I were a fool and said, *"THEN LET THEM!"* I told him it would be chaos, that it's not the way we've always done it, that it would confuse the campers. He told me we were more interested in maintaining control over people than treating them with respect. And while I was still working out some way to defend myself and the camp and the Church from this unfair, unwarranted attack, he poked my chest with his finger right there where it said "Mr." and asked me why the staff was "Mr." and "Miss" and the campers were not. I started to tell him what I had been told when I was 15, that it was so that there wouldn't be any confusion about who was a camper and who was on staff, but before it got from my brain to my mouth I realized that was just stupid—it's not really hard to tell who's a camper and who's on staff. Then it occurred to me that that's exactly the wrong direction—we ought to be intentionally confusing about who's a staff person and who's a camper. If we are all going to be children of God together, those distinctions should be done away with.

Still I had to defend myself, and so I fell back on the tried and true Episcopal bureaucratic position and mumbled something about "tradition." Harry poked me in the chest one more time and said, "You are trapped by your traditions." And he was right, and it was time to change.

So the next year I told the staff that we were going to try something different. I called it "Plan B" and assured them that we were going to give this a try, but if we didn't like it we'd go back to "Plan A," the way we'd always done it. I told them that I wanted all the nametags to just use just first names—no "Mr." no "Miss"—and during the activity periods I wanted the campers to choose what they wanted to do and go where they wanted to go. The staff, especially those who had been there before, rose up in unison and told me that it was going to be chaos, it would be confusing, that's not the way we've done it, it went against our tradition, I was going to ruin Special Session. One of the know-it-all counselors (that means they'd been there twice) asked me what was going to happen if they wanted to go to the pool every time the pool opened, and I smiled because I had the answer. "Then let them! It's their week—if they want to swim every time the pool's open, that's great!"

The Camp McDowell staff and extended family had a quilt made for Bishop Sloan from old Camp McDowell/ Special Session T-shirts. The Rev. Stephen Hood and Danielle Dunbar presented it to him at the worship service on Saturday morning.

I directed 10 more Special Sessions in Mississippi; we never did go back to Plan A. In 1993 we moved to Alabama; in 1998 we had the first Special Session at Camp McDowell, where nobody even knew what Plan A was. A new song—a song of dignity and respect.

I fell back on the tried and true Episcopal bureaucratic position and mumbled something about "tradition." Harry poked me in the chest one more time and said, "You are trapped by your traditions." And he was right, and it was time to change. . . . I directed 10 more Special Sessions in Mississippi; we never did go back to Plan A. In 1993 we moved to Alabama; in 1998 we had the first Special Session at Camp McDowell, where nobody even knew what Plan A was. A new song—a song of dignity and respect.

We have so many things to be proud of in the Diocese of Alabama, so many good things are going on to proclaim the love of God in Jesus Christ. Some of those programs and ministries we'll hear about while we're here, some programs we share as a diocese, some are from individual parishes or individual people. We give thanks for a thousand different ways the Light of Christ is shared and for those who give their time, talent, and treasure to let it shine. We are building on foundations others have laid, and there are many, many good things to which we need to hold fast.

But what more could we be doing? How can we sing to the Lord a *new* song? What are we supposed to do? How can we offer the Good News of the love of God in Jesus Christ to the world today so that is inviting, meaningful, and compelling? How can we become better fishers of people, better disciples of Jesus Christ called to love God and the people of God? What is my vision for the Diocese of Alabama?

If I were somebody else, I'd have it all figured out by now. I'd have five new programs to unveil with the strategies, goals, and objectives on a color-coded PowerPoint presentation with projected costs and schedules in bar graphs and pie charts. I might be wrong, in fact I would almost surely be wrong, but I would be certain—and we like that. I'd have a vision and we'd have a plan, and some would say that's good leadership. And if you were somebody else, you'd go along with it, and we could all pretend that I'm the only one among us qualified to have an idea.

Happily I'm not somebody else, and neither are you. I do have some ideas—you have some ideas. I want to share my thoughts with you, and I also want to invite you to share your vision with the rest of our diocesan family and with me. We are celebrating new ministry in this convention—not my new ministry, *our* new ministry.

Today after lunch, we'll have some time to sit at tables and share ideas, and thoughts, and dreams, and concerns. Each table will be invited to appoint somebody to record the conversation, and the notes they take and what you write and are willing to share will be put together with other conversations, looking for themes and common threads. I think a big part of the job of leader in the Church is to encourage ideas, to create an atmosphere for people to be creative, and to help people make their ideas bear fruit. I really, *really* want to hear your dreams, your concerns, your suggestions, your thoughts.

So, not to finish the conversation about what we should do as we begin our new ministry together but to start it, bear with me a little longer and let me tell you some of what I have in mind.

More than any other thing, I think we need to relax a little bit, to give up our absurd need to be correct about everything, and to remember that we are called first and best to love. The greatest strength we have as a diocese and the greatest strength each of our parishes has is the love of God that we share in Christ's Name. We don't always

agree—we never have and likely never will. There are liberals who Jesus wants us to love. There are conservatives who Jesus wants us to love. We're not going to agree. Let's disagree when we need to, but in the Name of Christ, let's be done with fighting. Surely in the love of God we can find a way to disagree lovingly and respectfully so that we build each other up and not tear each other down.

We need to laugh together, we need to remember how to laugh at ourselves, we need to reclaim the joy of the Lord, which is our shield and strength. As the Apostle Paul wrote in his Letter to the Philippians: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice." One of the very few things I remember from my early days of going to Sunday school is that Miss Bottom told us all that it is a poor Christian who is not joyful. It is the resurrection of Jesus Christ that we have to celebrate, it is our eternal hope in God that we have to share—for the love of God let's love, let's celebrate, let's live in hope.

I want us to be intentional about loving each other so that we can share the love of God better with the rest of the world. I would like for us to make our annual convention of the diocese not just a business meeting but also a family reunion, a time for us to laugh together, play together, love together, celebrate together, and strengthen each other in joy to do what we're called to do. I want us to have a day at Camp every year to come together, not just clergy and convention delegates but anybody would like to come from all over the diocese, just for fun, just to celebrate being Episcopalians in Alabama.

I want us to make our annual clergy conference a moment to bring us together not just physically but also collegially, in bonds of affection. ***I want us to reinvent clergy reflection days*** to offer a variety of workshops and discussions so that we can share what we know and what we need to know. ***I want us to re-imagine the processes that identify and encourage and discern people called to deeper ministry in the Church*** to enable and empower not just those who go on to be ordained but also those who find their calling as laypeople. ***I want us to be open to rethink how priests are formed and explore what sort of training program we might offer*** as an alternative to traditional residential seminary programs.

One of the resolutions in your packet reflects a dream I've had for several years, a dream I shared with my friend Mark Johnston and wove together with a dream that he'd had. My life has been greatly enriched by working with Special Sessions—I've learned so much from those folks. The camp is for the campers, who are treated with dignity and respect that they don't often receive. But it's also a life-changing week for the staff, especially the high-school kids who give up a week of air-conditioning, Internet connections, and sleeping late to care for one or two or three campers who need some help. It turns their life upside down: instead of being served they serve, instead of being invited and encouraged they invite, include, and cheer for somebody else; they are given a great deal of responsibility and trust, and they almost always live into it. I hope you know a young person who's been to Special Session, and I hope when you listen to the stories they tell you'll hear how deeply they have been touched. It's an incredible week, and I'm grateful to be a part of it.

But as incredible as it is and as wonderful as Camp McDowell is—Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell, it's not built for people with physical problems. Actually, if you're not fairly young and nimble, Camp can be a difficult place. My original dream was to build a new area at Camp for people who are not nimble, who need some help, who have special needs.

So I told my friend Mark Johnston, and he said that he had a dream too. He was thinking how wonderful it would be to expand the Environmental Education program that he and Maggie have developed so successfully, to teach schoolchildren about the production of food—a Farm Education program. And he was also dreaming about what a witness it would be for us to make part of Camp environmentally responsible, to be good stewards of God's Creation, to be an example for those people who visit, to produce some of our own food and some of our own energy.

While Mark and I were thinking and dreaming and blending our ideas together, we started a new emphasis at Camp, a Folk School to build community and offer training in skills that make our lives richer—playing banjoes or dulcimers, making bread, throwing pottery, telling stories, learning to square dance, a hundred other skills that people would enjoy learning about. And as we were thinking that maybe we could weave in that thread as well, we became more and more aware that it would be great to build more facilities at Camp so that we can expand our ministry of hospitality, so that more vestries and church groups and congregations and other groups could come to Camp for a day or a weekend or a week.

Well we've worked at it for a while, and now all of these dreams and ideas have been woven together, and the resulting plan calls for a new area at Camp to be built and called Bethany Village. Bethany, as I'm sure you will remember, is where the friends of Jesus lived—Martha, Mary, and Lazarus, and Lazarus, you remember, had some physical issues.

An early master plan has been presented to the Department of Camp McDowell, and they have enthusiastically embraced this weaving together of dreams. The department received permission from the Diocesan Council to conduct a feasibility study, to explore what sort of support we might expect. That feasibility study is going on now. I am very grateful to Mark Johnston, the Executive Director of Camp McDowell, my friend and fellow dreamer; to Danielle Dunbar, who helped with the Folk School and is now helping with the development of Bethany Village; and to Pam Parker, who is giving generously of her time and talent to conduct the feasibility study.

The resolution on Bethany Village invites you into the dream and asks you to consider endorsing the vision and authorizing the Diocesan Council to proceed with this ambitious project, contingent on the results of the feasibility study. I know that you will consider this carefully, faithfully, and responsibly.

You and I are called to fish for people and not play with the bait. We are grateful for our heritage, as we surely should be, but we can't allow ourselves to be trapped by our traditions. Let's hold fast to that which is good—there is so much for which we give thanks . . . and at the same time let us find more and more new ways to sing to the Lord a new song, a song that invites others to sing along, especially those who are not already in our choir—for those who live in despair, a song of hope; for those who feel lost, a song of belonging, for a world that is broken and hurting, a song of joy and love.

I'm almost done—I'm on the last page, thank goodness—I'm getting tired of hearing myself talk. But before I stop, I want to thank you for being here—thank you for taking your place in the life and governance of this part of Christ's Church. You are here because you love our Lord and because you love the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama. I want to thank you for that love, for your commitment, for all that you have done in the past and for all that we will do together in the future, and for your willingness to start a new ministry here at the beginning of a new chapter in our story. I pledge you my best efforts, my love and support—and I ask for yours as well.

Despite what you might read or hear, I am very optimistic about the future of the Episcopal Church. The world continues to change, and it seems now that there might be an increasing need for a Church that appreciates complexity and offers intelligent, reasonable, compassionate faith; authentic, welcoming community; and honest, meaningful, beautiful worship. I believe our time is almost here. I believe we are just about ready to paddle out to a fishy-looking spot.

You and I are called to fish for people and not play with the bait. We are grateful for our heritage, as we surely should be, but we can't allow ourselves to be trapped by our traditions. Let's hold fast to that which is good—there is so much for which we give thanks . . . and at the same time let us find more and more new ways to sing to the Lord a new song, a song that invites others to sing along, especially those who are not already in our choir—for those who live in despair, a song of hope; for those who feel lost, a song of belonging, for a world that is broken and hurting, a song of joy and love.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

+ KEE

The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan
11th Bishop of Alabama

New Clergy Introduced at Convention

Photos by Gail Perna

During our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention, Bishop Sloan and the deans of our convocations introduced 25 members of the clergy, including newly ordained priests and deacons as well as priests called within the past year from other parts of the Church to serve in our diocese.

Bishop Sloan introduced clergy from within our diocese who accepted a call to a new parish during the last year. They include the Rev. Evan Garner, Rector of St. John's in Decatur; the Rev. Anna Russell Friedman, Associate Rector of All Saints' in Birmingham; the Rev. Maurice "Rusty" Goldsmith, Interim Rector of Holy Apostles' in Birmingham; the Rev. Deacon Preston Colangelo, who is serving at St. John's Deaf Church in Birmingham; the Rev. Louis Skipper, Rector of STEM Ministries in Sylacauga, Childersburg, and Alpine; the Rev. Ben Turnage, Interim Rector of St. Peter's in Talladega; the Rev. Rob Iler, Rector of St. James' in Alexander City; and the Rev. Matthew Grunfeld, Priest-in-Charge of All Saints' in Montgomery.

The Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry, Dean of the Birmingham Convocation, introduced the Rev. Andrew Pearson, a Canon at the Cathedral Church of the Advent; the Rev. Ed Hunt, Rector of St. Andrew's; the Rev. Deacon Marti Holmes, who is serving at Grace Church; the Rev. Derrick Hill, Assistant Rector of St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands; the Rev. Deacon Judy Lee, who is serving at St. Francis' in Indian Springs; and the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, who is serving at St. Andrew's in Montevallo.

The Rev. David Meginniss, Dean of the Black Belt Convocation, introduced the Rev. Josiah Rengers, Rector of St. Stephen's in Eutaw; the Rev. Katie Nakamura Rengers, Rector of St. Michael's in Fayette; the Rev. Deacon Kelley Hudlow, who is serving at St. Michael's in Fayette; and the Rev Deacon Cindy Roff, who is serving at Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa.

The Rev. Lee Shafer, Dean of the Cheaha Convocation, introduced the Rev. Deacon David Whetstone, who is serving at Grace Church in Anniston; and the Rev. Hugh Jones, Interim Rector of St Michael and All Angels' in Anniston.

The Rev. John Fritschner, Dean of the East Alabama Convocation, introduced the Rev. Deacon Norbert Wilson, who is serving at St. Dunstan's in Auburn; and the Rev. Donna Gafford, Priest-in-Charge of St. Matthew's in Seale.

The Rev. Robert Wisnewski, Dean of the Montgomery Convocation, introduced the Rev. Deacon C. J. Van Slyke, who is serving at Trinity Church in Clanton; the Rev. David Perkins, Interim Rector of Holy Comforter in Montgomery; and the Rev. Bob Henderson, Priest-in-Charge of Trinity Church in Wetumpka.

The Rev. Bill Winters, Dean of the Mountain Convocation, introduced the Rev. Deacon Kimberly Beckett, who is serving at the Resurrection in Gadsden; and the Rev. Deacon David Barfield, who is serving at Holy Comforter in Gadsden.

The Rev. Susan Sloan, Dean of the Tennessee Valley Convocation, introduced the Rev. Deacon Jerry Jacob, who is serving at Grace Church in Cullman; the Rev. David Dill, the Rector of Good Shepherd in Decatur; the Rev. Callie Plunket-Brewton, the Chaplain to the University of North Alabama in Florence; the Rev. Basye Holland-Shuey, the Priest-in-Charge of Holy Cross-St. Christopher's in Huntsville; the Rev. Deacon Marla Asson, who is serving at Holy Cross-St. Christopher's in Huntsville; and the Rev. Deacon Jeannie Robison, who is serving at the Nativity in Huntsville.

The Rev. David Dill, the Rev. Deacon Marla Asson, the Rev. Callie Plunket-Brewton, the Rev. Deacon Jeannie Robison, the Rev. Susan Sloan (Dean of the Tennessee Valley Convocation), the Rev. Basye Holland-Shuey, and the Rev. Deacon Jerry Jacob

The Rev. Deacon Kimberly Beckett, the Rev. Bill Winters (Dean of the Mountain Convocation), and the Rev. Deacon David Barfield

The Rev. Deacon David Whetstone, the Rev. Lee Shafer (Dean of the Cheaha Convocation), and the Rev. Hugh Jones

The Rev. Derrick Hill, the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, the Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry (Dean of the Birmingham Convocation), the Rev. Deacon Judy Lee, the Rev. Andrew Pearson, the Rev. Deacon Marti Holmes, and the Rev. Ed Hunt

The Rev. Josiah Rengers, the Rev. Katie Nakamura Rengers, the Rev. John Fritschner (Dean of the East Alabama Convocation), the Rev. Deacon Kelley Hudlow, the Rev. Bob Henderson, the Rev. Deacon Cindy Roff, the Rev. Arnold Bush, the Rev. Deacon C. J. Van Slyke, the Rev. David Meginniss (Dean of the Black Belt Convocation), the Rev. Robert Wisnewski (Dean of the Montgomery Convocation), and the Rev. Deacon Norbert Wilson

The Rev. Rob Iler, the Rev. Matthew Grunfeld, the Rev. Evan Garner, the Rev. Anna Russell Friedman, the Rev. Louis Skipper, and the Rev. Ben Turnage

Our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention

Photos by Tom Lydon and Gail Perna

People Elected and Approved To Serve Our Diocese

The lay and clergy delegates elected the following people to serve our diocese.

DIOCESAN COUNCIL

Northern District
The Rev. Lee Shafer (3-year term)

Middle District
The Rev. Chris Girata (3-year term)
Heager Hill (3-year term)

Southern District
The Rev. Matthew Grunfeld (1-year term)
The Rev. David Meginniss (3-year term)

STANDING COMMITTEE

The Rev. Susan Sloan (4-year term, replacing the Rev. Alison Carmody)
Dr. Drew Clark (4-year term, replacing Heager Hill)

DISCIPLINARY BOARD

The Rev. Scott Arnold
Stan Herring

Nominations Ratified

DIOCESAN DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Department of Architecture
Don Cosper

Department of Camp McDowell
The Rev. Stephen Hood

Department of Christian Formation
The Rev. Dr. Margaret Scalise

Diocesan Ecumenical—Interfaith Commission
The Rev. David Kendrick

Department of Ministry and Higher Education
The Rev. Michael Rich

Department of Liturgy and Music
The Rev. Charles Youngson

Department of Mission & Outreach
The Rev. Deacon Judy Quick

Department of Parish Development and Evangelism
The Rev. Bill Winters

Department of Recovery Ministries
Mrs. Kathryn Hollifield

Department of Stewardship
The Rev. Evan Garner

Department of Youth Ministries
Abbey Moore

DIOCESAN COMMISSIONS AND AGENCIES CHAIRS

Commission on Hispanic Ministry
The Rev. Judith Comer

Race Relations Commission
The Rev. Deacon Carolyn Foster
The Rev. Deacon Tom Osborne

Cursillo Secretariat
Keehn Berry

Commission on Spirituality
Lark Howell

Companion Diocese Commission
The Rev. Deacon C. J. Van Slyke

Commission on Sawyerville
Carole Kelley
Evelyn Roberts

Task Force on the Stewardship of Creation
The Rev. Deacon Gerri Aston
Michael Churchman

Resolutions Passed

#1 THE 2012 PROPOSED PROGRAM AND BUDGET

Please see the pie chart at left; also please see the budget summary online at www.dioala.org.

#2 THE PROPOSED CAMP MCDOWELL BUDGET

Please see the budget summary online at www.dioala.org.

#3 AUTHORIZING THE CALLING OF AN ASSISTANT BISHOP

Be it resolved that the 181st Convention of the Diocese of Alabama, at the request of the Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan, in consultation with the Standing Committee, authorizes our Bishop to call an Assistant Bishop; and
Be it further resolved that the selection of the assistant bishop by Bishop Sloan be subject to the approval of the Standing Committee.

#4 CALLING FOR STRUCTURAL REFORM TO THE 77TH GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

***Be it resolved* that the 181st Convention of the Diocese of Alabama, joining with other dioceses, directs that the following resolution be filed with the Secretary of the General Convention for consideration by the 77th General Convention of The Episcopal Church:**

Be it resolved that the House of _____ concurring, there shall be a Special Commission on Missional Structure and Strategy, the composition of which shall be at the discretion of the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies and the members of which shall be appointed jointly thereby not later than thirty days following the adjournment of this 77th General Convention. The Special Commission shall be charged with presenting a plan to the Church for reforming its structures, governance, administration, and staff to facilitate this Church's faithful engagement in Christ's mission to proclaim good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, freedom to the oppressed, and the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18) in a way that maximizes the resources available for that mission at all levels of this Church; and
Be it further resolved that the Special Commission shall endeavor to issue its report and recommendations along with resolutions necessary to implement them, including proposed amendments to the Constitution and Canons of this Church, so that they might be considered by a special General Convention prior to the convening of the 78th General Convention in 2015, but in any event, not later than February 1, 2015; and
Be it further resolved that the General Convention requests the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of $100,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Explanation:

The administrative and governance structures of The Episcopal Church have grown over the years so that they now comprise approximately 47 percent of the church-wide budget and sometimes hinder rather than further this Church's engagement in God's mission. Reform is urgently needed to facilitate this Church's strategic engagement in mission and allow it to more fully live into its identity as the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in a world that has changed dramatically over the years but that also presents extraordinary missional opportunity.

Convention delegates and visitors enjoyed breakfast at the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville prior to the Festival Eucharist.

#5 RESPONSE TO BISHOP'S ADDRESS

Be it resolved that we give thanks for the election and investiture of John McKee Sloan as 11th Bishop of Alabama. In response to our bishop's address and in support of his vision for this diocese to hold fast to that which is good, while singing a new song to the Lord, we affirm our calling to fish for people in the lakes, ponds, and streams of Alabama. We acknowledge that this will not be without risk, that venturing away from the tried and true,

we may hook an occasional stump, but we joyfully commit ourselves to our bishop's challenge to re-imagine, re-invent, and renew our mission and ministries both lay and ordained by prayerful discernment and deliberate action.

#6 REAUTHORIZING FOREVER WILD

Be it resolved that the Diocese of Alabama supports in November 2012 the passage of the constitutional amendment reauthorizing the Forever Wild Program under Constitutional Amendment 543, thereby extending the Forever Wild Program.

Explanation:

At our 2008 diocesan convention, Bishop Parsley invited us all to sign onto the Covenant for Stewardship of Creation, which calls on us to strive to be good stewards of creation.

God's Church and all God's people, are given the gift and responsibility of serving as stewards of creation, and since our diocese is blessed with a rich diversity of plants, forests, rivers and streams, wildlife, aquatic life, and unmatched natural beauty, we recognize that in the past 19 years of its existence, the state of Alabama's Forever Wild Program has preserved and protected special places throughout the Diocese of Alabama, including Monte Sano, Lake Guntersville, Tannehill and the Old Cahawba State Parks, the Walls of Jericho, Little River Canyon, Shoals Creek Nature Preserve, Fort Toulouse, Turkey Creek Nature Preserve, Ruffner Mountain, Sipsey River Swamp, Coldwater Mountain, Cathedral Caverns, State Cattle Ranch, and the Lowndes, Mulberry, Coosa, and Cahaba River Wildlife Management Areas.

More than 220,000 acres of Forever Wild lands are available for the enjoyment of all Alabamians and maintain open space that provides for clean air and water necessary for a healthy environment.

Forever Wild lands connect every generation, young and old, to the outdoors and brings us all closer to God's creation.

The funds supporting land acquisition by the Forever Wild Program are derived from the sale of Alabama's natural gas resources, thereby re-investing one natural resource into another, all without an increase in taxes.

The Diocese of Alabama Task Force for Stewardship of Creation unanimously supports the renewal of the Forever Wild Constitutional Amendment to be voted on by the people of Alabama in November 2012.

#7 BETHANY VILLAGE

Be it resolved that the 181st Convention of the Diocese of Alabama endorses the vision of Bethany Village at Camp McDowell and authorizes the Diocesan Council, contingent on the recommendation of the feasibility study, to make all necessary arrangements for the implementation of the Bethany Village master plan, which includes a major capital campaign for Camp McDowell.

#8 RENEWAL OF OUR COMPANION DIOCESE RELATIONSHIP

Be it resolved that this 181st Convention of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama recognizes the joy in the ongoing life-giving ministry of its parishes and individuals in companionship with the Diocese of Haiti; and
Be it further resolved that the Diocese of Alabama formally offers to the Diocese of Haiti an invitation to join the people of Alabama in formal Companion Relationship for an additional period of three years upon the expiration of its current relationship December 31, 2012, and that the relationship be conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the Episcopal Church concerning such relationships; and
Be it further resolved that the Bishop of Alabama be encouraged to continue to implement the relationship through the Companion Diocese Commission; and
Be it further resolved that the Program and Budget of the Diocese continues to include such funds as deemed necessary for the implementation of this relationship.

The Rev. Deacon C. J. Van Slyke at the Companion Diocese of Haiti table in the exhibit hall during convention.

Explanation:

The Diocese of Alabama passed Resolution #6 at its 174th Convention in 2005 inviting the Diocese of Haiti into a formal Companion Relationship. (Formal relationships must be approved by the conventions of both dioceses and the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, and normally last three years with an option to extend for another three years by mutual consent.) Although the Dioceses of Haiti and Alabama began an informal relationship in 2006, severe political unrest in Haiti prevented the Diocese of Haiti and the Executive Council from formalizing the relationship until late 2009. The first formal three-year companion relationship ends December 31, 2012.

Strong bonds of mutual affection have been established between the good and faithful people of the Diocese of Haiti and the Diocese of Alabama. Over the course of the relationship, Haiti has been beset by hurricanes and floods, a deadly earthquake, and a cholera epidemic that continue to have a devastating effect on the people of that country. The people of both dioceses have worshiped and worked together to share the love of Christ and shine His light in difficult and dark places. Over the past five years, the Diocese of Alabama in partnership with the Diocese of Haiti has helped build, repair, and furnish churches and schools; plant community gardens; provide clean, safe drinking water, medical care for the underserved, hot meals for schoolchildren, care for malnourished children, education scholarships, AIDS education and prevention programs, and significant hurricane and earthquake relief and recovery. Continuing the relationship for an additional three years will enable the dioceses to work together in continued shared ministry and to move toward completion ongoing projects.

#9 FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMANDMENT THROUGH THE FREE EXERCISE OF OUR FAITH

Be it resolved that the 181st Convention of the Diocese of Alabama reaffirms the separation of Church and state and the Church's right under the United States Constitution to the free exercise of religion, that it affirms the Legal Complaint filed by Bishop Henry N. Parsley Jr. and other bishops in regard to HB56, and that it further affirms the mandate of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that the Church be no respecter of persons but serve all our neighbors whoever they are and wherever we find them; and
Be it further resolved that this Convention, while recognizing the need for meaningful immigration reform, urges all members of the diocese to oppose any portions of this law that would prevent inhabitants of Alabama without legal status from receiving equal protection under the law and having their basic needs met.

Explanation:

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution provides for the free exercise of religion, and Section One of the Fourteenth Amendment provides for equal protection under the law for all within its jurisdiction.

On June 9, 2011, the Alabama Legislature passed HB 56, an immigration bill intended to deal with illegal immigration within the State of Alabama. Section 13 of this law makes it unlawful for any person to conceal, harbor, or shield an alien, or attempt or conspire to do so, in this state, in any building, or by any means of

transportation, if the person knows that the alien is in this country illegally, makes it unlawful to transport or attempt or conspire to transport such a person knowingly; makes it a Class A misdemeanor for each illegal person whose presence one facilitates and a Class C felony when the violation involves 10 or more aliens, and provides that any conveyance used in violating this section of the law is subject to civil forfeiture.

This section of the law, effectively criminalizes many humanitarian efforts by churches to assist undocumented immigrants in the state and could be used to restrict or curtail such ministries as daycare, health clinics, feeding programs such as Community Kitchens and Beans and Rice ministries, hospitality networks, transportation to and from hospitals and medical centers, interpreting and translating services, even worship and sacramental ministries, and potentially our youth ministry at Camp McDowell.

We believe the Church has a moral obligation, intrinsic to the living out of our faith, to care for and provide hospitality to the sojourner and stranger in our midst (Leviticus 19: 33-34), and to be Christ-like to everyone (Matthew 25, Mark 12: 30-31, Luke 10: 29-37), and not to be able to do so would restrict the free exercise of our religion as provided by the Constitution of the United States in the First Amendment.

A legal Complaint was filed in this regard ecumenically by Bishop William H. Willimon of the United Methodist Church; Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi of the Catholic Archdiocese of Mobile; the Most Reverend Robert J. Baker, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham; and by the Rt. Rev. Henry N. Parsley Jr., the 10th Bishop of Alabama, and this action was supported by our Diocesan Council. This matter has yet to be settled in the courts and is still pending final resolution.

#12 CALLING FOR THE REVISION OF THE CANONS OF THE DIOCESE

Be it resolved that the Convention requests the Bishop, with the consent of the Diocesan Council, to appoint a commission to study the whole of the Canons of the Diocese of Alabama and to submit a proposal for a revision of the Canons as a whole.

#13 TO SEND OUR LOVE TO BECKY AND HENRY PARSLEY

Be it resolved that the 181st Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama extends our love to Becky and Henry Parsley, and it is our hope that Henry is becoming a fisher of fish as well as a fisher of people.

#14 EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO THE HOSTS OF THE 181ST ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

Whereas the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville, Holy Cross-St. Christopher in Huntsville, St. Columba in the Cove in Huntsville, St. Stephen's in Huntsville, St. Thomas' in Huntsville, and St. Mathew's in Madison County have been a most gracious host for the 181st Convention of the Diocese of Alabama,
Therefore be it resolved that the 181st Annual Convention of the Diocese of Alabama expresses deep gratitude for gracious, Southern hospitality in the Northern Kingdom with a standing ovation.

#15 EXTENDING HEARTFELT THANKS TO DREW CLARK, CHAIR OF THE BISHOP'S SEARCH COMMITTEE, AND HIS COMMITTEE

Whereas Drew Clark and his committee conducted a complete and thorough search and presented the diocese with a most outstanding slate of candidates;
Therefore be it resolved that we thank them a lot.

#16 EXTENDING THANKS TO ALLEEN CATER, TRANSITION COMMITTEE CHAIR, AND HER COMMITTEE

Whereas Alleen Cater and her committee facilitated a smooth and well-organized Walk About, election, and investiture of our diocesan bishop;
Therefore be it resolved that we thank them a lot, as well.

#17 EXTENDING AN INVITATION TO THE 182ND ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF ALABAMA

Be it resolved that St. John's in Montgomery extends a warm welcome to the diocese and an invitation to the convention in the year 2013. We look forward to seeing you on February 22nd and 23rd at St. John's Episcopal Church in Montgomery.

#18 HONORING JOE MAYS, ESQ., RETIRING CHANCELLOR OF THE DIOCESE

Whereas the Office of the Chancellor is a position that is high and lofty in the Diocese of Alabama, filled with great import and gravity, heavy-laden with responsibility and sober judgment, and we have noticed that Joseph B. Mays can sometimes appear to be high, and on occasion even lofty, and we have had occasion to wonder what he might be full or, and we have rejoiced from time to time to see him cast off the heavy burdens of being particularly responsible or overly sober; and
Whereas the Office of the Chancellor can be boring and monotonous for stretches of time, with nothing much to do—whereupon our Chancellor has done nothing with the best of them—and busy and complicated at other times, such as when the diocese acquires a chapel on a closing military base with a disputed deed, or a yacht, or when a bishop sues the State of Alabama—whereupon our Chancellor has offered brilliant legal advice and an uncommon level of common sense; and
Whereas the part of Joe Mays that rides the legal tides of argument, legal opinions, briefs, and decisions seems on the whole to blend or cooperate with another part of him that would rather be riding his Harley-Davidson, helping him to live in the joy of life in such a way that even in moments that are tense and potentially difficult, we have noticed, and given thanks for Joe's wit and good humor;
Therefore be it resolved that the 181st Convention of the Diocese of Alabama offers thanksgiving to our heavenly Father for giving us every good gift, and to our brother Joe who has received and developed his gifts and put them to good use in serving the Diocese of Alabama for the last three years as Chancellor, guide, and friend.

Reports Presented at Convention

DIOCESAN COMMISSION ON RACE RELATIONS

Commission members for 2011 included the Rev. Dave Basinger, Freddy Reyes, the Rev. Deacon Jeannie Robison, Margaret Warren, Adele Culp, Claire Milligan, Kathryn Dailey, Charles Hart, Adrienne Lee, Vickie Shanks, Patricia Pinchback, the Rev. James Muriuki, and cochairs the Rev. Deacon Carolyn Foster and the Rev. Deacon Tom Osborne

This was a very active year for the Commission on Race Relations in the Church. The commission has met five times since the convention of February 2011. It sponsored one Anti-Racism Training weekend at Trinity

in Clanton.

The parish historians met twice and supplied the Commission with more stories and anecdotes in response to the call from the 2010 convention to collect such materials as part of a project called "Past Imperfect, Present Hope." It solicited contributions and engaged in archival research preparatory to the development of resources for parish and diocesan use, curriculum, and display materials to be made available in the near future. Especially striking as the "first fruits" of this effort is the large timeline graphically displaying the history of race relations in the Diocese of Alabama, which was updated with significant additions during the year and has been displayed at several venues already.

But the climax of this year's activities was undoubtedly the moving service of "Remembrance, Repentance, and Reconciliation" held in August as part of the annual Jonathan Daniels pilgrimage in Hayneville, using a liturgy developed by the Commission in collaboration with Bishop Parsley. In this moving Eucharist, all who were present experienced the sure and certain hope that we shall overcome!

The Rev. Andy Anderson, rector of the Navitiy in Huntsville, with members of the kitchen staff preparing breakfast for convention delegates and visitors

DEPARTMENT OF LITURGY AND MUSIC

Department members for 2011 included the Rev. Charles Youngson (Chair) of St. Thomas' in Birmingham, Jason Beasley of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa, Melanie Couch of All Saints' in Birmingham, Martha Noble of St. Stephen's in Birmingham, Suzanne Purtee of Nativity in Huntsville, Sundra Smith of St. Mark's in Birmingham, and Becky Taylor of the Ascension in Montgomery

The Department of Liturgy and Music is served by laypersons and clergy who meet several times each year to carry out the task of strengthening the worship life of congregations around the Diocese of Alabama. Our recent work has included hosting an annual reception for parish musicians and providing opportunities for music education and enrichment.

Musicians Reception

For the past several years, the Department has sponsored a reception to thank our diocesan music leaders and give them an opportunity to network and share music resources. In 2011 we hosted two such events, the first at All Saints' in Birmingham on Sunday, January 16, and the second on Sunday, July 24, at St. Thomas' in Birmingham. We plan to host a reception in July 2012 in the Huntsville area to better reach musicians from the northern part of the diocese.

Music Conference for Children

On January 28, 2012, the Department is sponsoring a workshop for children's choirs and children's music directors at the Nativity in Huntsville. Suzanne Purtee has organized the event with help from other music directors from Episcopal and Lutheran congregations in Huntsville. Activities will include learning the African gospel anthem "Siyahamba," playing various instruments, and worshiping together.

Family Music Camp

We continue to plan for a future weekend opportunity for diocesan families to come together at Camp McDowell for worship and fellowship with a particular emphasis on the ministry of music. The goal of the weekend would be to strengthen the worship life of the diocese by instilling in children the love of music and equipping families with ideas they could bring back to their home parishes.

A Resource to the Diocese

On several occasions Department members were called upon as a resource to congregations within the diocese seeking assistance in the areas of music and liturgy.

DEPARTMENT OF MISSION AND OUTREACH

Submitted by the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, Chair of the Department

The mission of the Department of Mission and Outreach is **to support outreach ministries that do God's work in the world, at home, and abroad.**

The Department of Mission and Outreach sponsored a workshop at the April 2011 PLTE on financing outreach ministries ("Money for Ministry: Funding Your Outreach Activities").

At its first meeting, March 1, 2011, the Department reviewed the 2011 budget with the goal of understanding each line item. A brainstorming/discussion session examined new projects and possible new directions for the Department, including capturing the names and contact information for the Parish Outreach Chairs throughout the diocese to facilitate idea exchanges and capture more stories to inspire parish outreach activities. The Parish Outreach Grant Application deadline was set for May 9.

At the May 24 meeting, the Department reviewed the grant applications for the Parish Outreach Grants and allocated funds. The Department recommended improvements in the grant application process. The Department reviewed no proposals for the Domestic/Local Mission Grant or for the Global Mission Grants to Individuals. At the August 25 meeting, the Department recommended the Global Mission Grants to Individuals to one person with the upper limit of $2000 for a Spanish immersion program to enhance Hispanic ministry, but the application has not been received.

For the Parish Outreach Grants, the Department reviewed 15 proposals totaling $26,905 from 14 parishes. The nine approved grants totaled $16,150. The Department allocated the budgeted $14,800 and also redirected $1,350 from the Domestic/Local Mission Grants to Individuals to support a variety of food ministries, clothing ministries, and resources for infants. Since the due date of May 9 was during the tornado response time, the Department extended the deadline until October 3 and reviewed six proposals after the May deadline. Parish Outreach Grant recipients included Christ Church in Albertville, St. Catherine's in Chelsea, the Nativity in Huntsville, St. John's in Decatur, Grace Church in Woodlawn (Birmingham), St. Michael's in Fayette, Holy Comforter in Gadsden, St. Peter's in Talladega, and Resurrection in Rainbow City.

The August 25 meeting focused on brainstorming and organizing the keynote speaker and workshops for the 2012 Outreach Summit on January 28, 2012. The October 18 meeting confirmed additional details for the 2012 Outreach Summit to be held at St. Stephen's in Birmingham. Mrs. Eleana Mayorquin, of the Diocese of Honduras, is to be the keynote speaker. The morning workshops for small, medium, and large parishes will focus on the theme of "Financing Your Outreach Ministries." The afternoon workshops will include:

1. Disaster Preparedness and Response
2. Community Transformation through Outreach
3. Hispanic Mission Outreach
4. Global Short-Term Mission (Best Practices, Parish Relationships, Lessons Learned)
5. Youth Domestic Mission
6. Kairos Ministry
7. The Spirituality of Outreach
8. Public Policy to Address the Needs of the Poor

Network Web site (www.episcopalchurch.org or www.gemn.org)
Articles from the Department of Mission and Outreach for *The Alabama Episcopalian* were submitted with the following topics: Call to Submit for Parish Outreach/Domestic/Local/Global Mission Grants, Parish Outreach Grant Awards, and Everyone/Everywhere Mission Conference.
Additional communication for grants and stories were/are on the Diocesan Web site.

COMPANION DIOCESE COMMISSION

After more than five years, the people and parishes of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama continue their journey as companions in Christ with the people of the Diocese of Haiti. Throughout 2011, in ministry with Father Fritz Valdema and his wife, Carmel, and the people of St. Simeon Parish, the diocese reached out in faith and love with

offerings of prayer, resources, time, and talent.

During the past year, the diocese fielded five missions to Haiti—three medical missions, a mission to build school desks, and a mission to finish and plant a community garden.

In January, a medical team from the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville, with members from St. Thomas' in Huntsville, worked with their brothers and sisters to conduct four mobile medical clinics during the first anniversary of the 2010 Haiti earthquake. During four clinics, the team saw patients in Gorman, Thomazeau, Crochu, and Croix des Bouquets. In worship and celebration, the team shared the sorrows and the hopes of earthquake survivors as they marked the anniversary.

During February a medical team with members from St. Francis of Assisi in Indian Springs, St. Andrew's in Birmingham, Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa, and All Saints' in Homewood conducted a weeklong medical mission . . . spending two nights and three days in the mountain area of Crochu. They were able to sleep and hold three clinics in the new building built by Krik Krak funds to support the feeding program at St. Alban's School. This was followed by a daylong clinic in Trou Caimen.

In May a team led by St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands with members from St. Paul's in Murphreesboro, Tennessee, joined with Haitian coworkers to till the soil and install an irrigation system for a community garden. The garden, which produced its first crop this summer, supports a nutrition education and treatment program.

In June a diocesan team conducted medical clinics and laid the groundwork for a community garden to be created by the young adults of the Nativity in Huntsville at St. Michel's Church and School in Thomazeau. The team included members from the Ascension in Birmingham, St. Thomas' and the Nativity in Huntsville, and diocesan staff. The team provided medical care in the villages of Trou Caiman and Bois Dume and also staffed the Lespwa Timoun Nutrition and Medical Clinic in Croix des Bouquets.

Another St. Thomas' of Huntsville team worked with Haitian carpenters to build 50 student desk/benches for three Episcopal schools—St. Simeon in Croix des Bouquets, St. Marc's in Lilavois, and St. Michel's in Thomazeau in September. The desks at St. Simeon allowed the school to accommodate ninth-grade students for the first time this year.

Each team carried with it several hundred pounds of medicine and supplies not available, or prohibitively expensive, in Haiti. During the medical clinics, nonmedical members of these teams conducted clinics to fit reading glasses, gave powdered milk to mothers with children, and provided activities for the children while they waited. In all teams delivered more than two tons of supplies in 2011 and saw more than 1,500 patients.

Funding from the diocese helped support the Lespwa Timoun Clinic, which following the 2010 earthquake has become a five-day-a-week medical clinic. The clinic, which continues to operate at its temporary location (while a permanent facility is constructed), sees more than 60 medical patients a day thanks to continued employment of a second physician, nurse, and laboratory technician funded by the Diocese of Alabama. Contributions also provided lifesaving nutrition supplements and care to critically malnourished children.

The diocese also helped combat the ongoing cholera epidemic through support of an education and prevention program. Although cholera is an ever-present threat, this program contributed to a marked decline in the number of cases being reported.

Meanwhile, in partnership with parishes in other parts of the country, the diocese continued to help fund construction of Lespwa Timoun's permanent facility.

Construction of St. Alban's church and school in Crochu is closer to completion thanks to continued administration of a UTO Grant and other resources from the diocese and our partners elsewhere in the Episcopal Church. St. Alban's Church was leveled by the hurricanes of 2008. The schoolchildren at St. Michel's School in Thomazeau now have their own well, and preparation of the soil for a community garden at the school is under way.

The clergy spouses' Krik? Krak! program continued to feed children at St. Alban's school two hot meals a week during the school year, and planning is under way for Phase II of the project to help provide improved sanitation and income-producing business in the community. Schoolchildren at St. Alban's enjoyed their first-ever Christmas party complete with Christmas presents in 2011 thanks to contributions from the diocese.

In 2011, the diocese also supported the Diocese of Haiti's Rebuild Our Church Campaign to rebuild the Diocese of Haiti's Cathedral Complex in downtown Port-au-Prince, which was destroyed by the earthquake; contributed to reconstruction of Foyer Notre Dame, a home for indigent elderly run by the Sisters of St. Margaret; and donated a part of the offering at the Eucharist during the election of the 11th Bishop of Alabama, which was designated to help defray the cost of Haiti's bishop suffragan election.

Our 2012 Standing Committee Makes Historic Break with the Past

Our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention began with a call for change from Bishop Sloan, "a stepping out in new directions while holding on to the best of the past." After the convention adjourned and the clerical and lay delegates from 90 congregations began departing from Von Braun Civic Center in Huntsville, the members of our diocesan Standing Committee met, as required by the Canons of the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama, to elect its president and other officers.

During that routine meeting, the members of our Standing Committee, unknown to them at the time, made a historic break with the past. The Rev. Jack Alvey, the Rev. Bill Blackerby, the Rev. Susan P. Sloan, Dianne Moyer, Larry Meyer, James H. McLemore, and Dr. Drew Clark voted to elect the Rev. Liston A. Garfield, rector of St. Andrew's in Tuskegee, as president of the committee. What none of the committee members realized until after the meeting ended was that no African American clergy or layperson has ever served as president of the Standing Committee since the organization of our diocese in 1830. This unplanned "stepping out in a new direction" is seen as an indication of growth in our diocese and also the confidence that we will continue to make progress with God's guidance.

Convention Recognizes Parishes for Stewardship

By Diocesan Staff

Thirty-one parishes were recognized during our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention for their stewardship of diocesan ministries, with 14 parishes receiving certificates for 2012 pledges that met or exceeded our diocesan guidelines, and 17 parishes receiving certificates for increasing their proportional pledges toward meeting the covenant guidelines.

Bishop Sloan thanked the parishes for their stewardship and also thanked parishes for their gifts to the life of the diocese through many ministries.

Parishes that increased their proportional pledge in 2012:

Grace Church in Anniston
St. Timothy's in Athens
Holy Trinity in Auburn
All Saints' in Birmingham
Ascension in Birmingham
St. Catherine's in Chelsea
Grace Church in Cullman
St. John's in Decatur
Nativity in Huntsville
St. Stephen's in Huntsville
St. Wilfrid's in Marion
St. Mark's in Prattville
St. Peter's in Talladega
Christ Church in Tuscaloosa
St. Matthias' in Tuscaloosa
St. Andrew's in Tuskegee
Trinity in Wetumpka

Parishes that met the diocesan guidelines in 2012:

St. John's Deaf Church in Birmingham
St. Mary's in Childersburg
Trinity in Demopolis
St. Philip's in Fort Payne
St. Mary's in Jasper
St. Joseph's in Mentone
St. Michael and All Angels' in Millbrook
All Saints' in Montgomery
Calvary in Oneonta
St. Stephen's in Smith Station
St. Barnabas' in Roanoke
St. Paul's in Selma
Epiphany in Tallassee
St. Thomas' in Huntsville
St. Bartholomew's in Florence

For and About Youth

Youth Department Inspired To Fish for People

Each year the Youth Department elects two of its members to represent the youth of the diocese as delegates to the annual diocesan convention. Here is what this year's delegates, Ashely Grace Passey and Logan Oakes, have to say in reflection of their participation.

What a great experience for us to be able to serve as delegates representing the Youth Department. As youth in this diocese, we find it so meaningful that the leaders of our diocese not only include the youth at diocesan convention, but also allow us to have voice and vote on all elections and issues. By these actions, our diocese is including us as leaders of the Church, and it's incredible that our diocese makes youth representation such a priority. The importance of our involvement and leadership was also reflected by Bishop Sloan asking us to lead noonday prayers on the first day of convention.

Being able to attend diocesan convention was a big learning experience for us also. It was great for us to see how the "Big People" convention operates and how our youth convention is connected to how diocesan convention works. We especially enjoyed Bishop Sloan's address about fishing for people. We made the connection that fishing for people is also a responsibility of the youth. We are called to reach out to others in our peer ministry. It brings to question what bait we are using, where we are fishing, as well as whom we are fishing for.

Not only are we the future of the Church, but our diocese also holds us as part of the Church of today!

Youth Department delegates Ashely Grace Passey and Logan Oakes with Sarah Grace Macala

Youth Department Annual Report

Presented at Our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention by Susan Oakes, Interim Youth Ministries Coordinator

In the spring of 2011, the Youth Department hosted Spring Break Conference at Camp McDowell for approximately 60 senior-high youth from across our diocese. The theme was "Hit Replay" and focused on how to restart different aspects of your life. The Youth Department also hosted the annual EYC Convention at St. John's in Montgomery for about the same number of senior highs. During this event, the new representatives for the coming year's Youth Department were elected and commissioned. In the spring of 2012, the Youth Department will be combining these two events into one really amazing event, called Rites of Spring, and it will be hosted at Camp McDowell on March 23-25. Plans are currently in the making for this new and different event, and we can't wait to see everyone at Camp again!

During August 12-14, an overnight planning retreat was hosted for the newly elected Youth Department to plan the coming events for the new school year. They participated in some group-building activities and worked hard throughout the weekend learning how Youth Department fits into the grand scheme of the Church and how they will fulfill their roles as representatives of this peer-leadership ministry. The current Youth Department members include Abbey Moore (chair), Ann Kathryn Parrish, Maddie Webb, Meredith Byars, Logan Oakes, Ashely Grace Passey, Hannah LaRue, Aidan White, Sam Spearman, Sabol Rodgers, and Taylor Lollar. Our advisors are Worth Stuart, Katherine Cole, Corey Jones, and Joel Blackstock, with the Rev. Thomas Joynor as our chaplain and Susan Oakes as our staff member. We meet monthly to plan and prepare for the events we are hosting, as well as other involvement around the diocese.

October 30 was District Day around the diocese. The Youth Department members from each district hosted their own afternoon event to promote our activities and events for the year. We played games and got to know each other, especially welcoming new people to join us and always sharing food and worship together. Each district was blessed with beautiful weather and a great turnout from their local parishes.

Our year got off to a great start and quickly picked up steam as we prepared for hosting Christmas Conference at Camp McDowell on December 28-30. It was a sold-out event and the "best ever"! The amazing and talented Fran McKendree was our music leader, and Katie and Josiah Rengers led our program and worship incorporating our theme of "All God's People." Youth Department members put together a variety of games and activities throughout the event, including open-mic night and capture the flag with a Harry Potter twist, called "Capture the Horcruxes." Shall we say that you never know what will be on your supplies list when you're working with youth…150 turkey basters were required for this game! A beautiful Taizé service on our last night was another highlight of the event that completed our theme perfectly!

We also accompanied two of our Youth Department representatives to Memphis for the Province IV leadership meeting in November. The two young ladies who represented the Diocese of Alabama not only did a great job of networking and sharing our successes, but they also got to learn some great ideas from others to bring back. They also gained the insight of realizing how the youth of this diocese are so well supported by having seat, voice, and vote in Diocesan Council, as well as diocesan convention.

The first class of Lay Certification Program graduates received their certificates at convention: (front row) Kathy Graham from St. Stephen's in Birmingham; Caitlin Gilliam from Holy Trinity in Auburn; Susan Oakes, our diocesan interim youth coordinator and the Christian education director of St. Thomas' in Birmingham; Ashlee Hooper from St. John's in Montgomery; (back row) Worth Stuart from St. John's in Montgomery; Brooks Boylan formerly from St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands in Birmingham and now in seminary; Lauren Wainwright formerly from the Epiphany in Guntersville and now from St. Theresa's in Acworth, Georgia; Leslie Manning, our former diocesan youth coordinator; Ebba Robb from Christ Church in Tuscaloosa; and Lars Porter from St. Luke's in Birmingham

Be a Part of Sawyerville Day Camp!

By Leslie B. Manning, Sawyerville Day Camp Coordinator and Director

Preparations for the 2012 Sawyerville Day Camp sessions are well under way. We invite EVERYONE to be a part of this wonderful ministry.

Participate in Our Sponsorship Program

The coordinator's stipend is provided for through our diocesan budget (a new initiative!), but the rest of the money for Sawyerville Day Camp comes from fundraisers and donations from parishes, individuals, and foundations. Our goal is to raise $90,000 to cover two free sessions of camp.

We invite you to:
Support a camper's week at the pool—$10
Help offset a staff member's meals—$45
Pay for 3 campers' lunches for the entire day camp—$75
Sponsor a camper for one week—$110
Send 10 campers on the annual field trip—$200
Sponsor a 2-day HIV/AIDS Awareness workshop for staff and campers—$500
Sponsor a Drumming Workshop—$850
Sponsor the Carnival—$2,000

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please send your check (payable to Sawyerville Day Camp) to Sawyerville Day Camp, Carpenter House, 521 20th Street North, Birmingham AL 35203. You can also make a donation online at www.sawyervilleworkproject.org. ***For more information please contact Leslie Manning at lmanning@dioala.org.***

New This Summer—Middler Camp!

We are adding Middler Camp so ***we will have Lower Camp (6, 7, and 8-year-olds), Middler Camp (9, 10, and 11-year-olds), and Upper Camp (12, 13, and 14-year-olds) this summer!*** This will lend itself to more age-appropriate programming, smaller staff groups, and the ability to invite a few more campers. It also will help us be more efficient and at our best when we go to three sessions in 2013!

Goggles, Towels, Snacks—Oh My!

As we prepare for this summer's sessions, in addition to fundraising to pay for buses, field trips, meals, and more, we are also collecting items for the campers and staff. ***Please contact Memily Colvin, our supply-drives coordinator, at memily.colvin@gmail.com or 205/715-2060 ext. 341,*** to find out what items are needed. Items will be due in Birmingham by May 31. Many thanks to Memily for coordinating the supplies!

Meals and Prayers

Another incredible way to serve this summer is by offering prayers for the staff members. If you volunteer to be a prayer partner, you will be asked to pray for your assigned staff member by name before and during the camp and send five letters of encouragement to our Prayer Partner coordinator by early summer. The staff closes each day by reading these letters. ***If you're interested in being part of this support ministry and/or recruiting some prayer partners, please contact Linda Kennedy at lindakennedy17@gmail.com.***

We are also in need of families or churches to sponsor staff meals. You can send meals ahead of time, or you can come down and help serve the meal, see the camp, and spend some time with the staff! Places for you and your group to stay the night can be arranged if you'd like. ***If you are interested in providing dinner for the staff (about 100 people), please contact Evelyn Pritchard at esp0921@aol.com. Special thanks to Evelyn and Linda for coordinating these efforts!***

Tornado Relief Update

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to rebuilding Pastor Kervin's home. Pastor Kervin gave a heartfelt and warm thank you to everyone present at diocesan convention. We will give you a more complete update soon, but for now—many thanks! Although all of the fundraising is complete, we still need volunteers (both skilled and unskilled construction workers) to help with the building. ***If you are interested in helping us complete rebuilding Pastor Kervin's home this spring, please e-mail me at lmanning@dioala.org.***

Episcopal Church Women

Compiled by Anne Couch Burke, Publicity Chair

Episcopal Church Women Annual Report

Presented at Our 181st Annual Diocesan Convention by Fiona Watts, ECW Diocesan President

The Lord be with you.

Almighty God, we pray that You will bless our work in mission and ministry in the world. Help us to pray fervently, labor diligently, and give liberally to make known the power of your love through your Son Jesus Christ. Let us not forget the lessons from the past nor fear the challenges of the future. Anoint us with your grace and shine in our hearts as we reflect your light throughout the world.
Amen

Good afternoon. I bring you greetings from the Episcopal Church Women of Alabama. Bishop Sloan, congratulations on your election and investiture as the 11th Bishop of Alabama. Bishop Parsley, thank you for your support of the ECW and good luck in your retirement.

A few weeks ago Bishop Sloan joined the ECW Board at our annual retreat. He talked to us about his mother and how she was always off doing something with the ECW but somehow he never really knew what it was that she was doing. I think we women probably like that. It adds a touch of mystery to our activities so let me tell you what we are doing . . . without revealing too much.

Making welcome baskets
Making baby baskets
Hosting bazaars
Making cheese balls
Having rummage sales
Selling soup
Preparing Lenten lunches
Taking tea, afternoon and Christmas
Writing cookbooks
Making pancakes for pancake suppers
Hosting lunches
And joining together as the Bishop's Guild to serve the diocese at ordinations and the investiture.

Many of these events generated funds that were distributed to many wonderful outreach projects—Sawyerville, Krik? Krak! and NetsforLife being amongst them.

In 2011 we finally completed our pledge to the ACTS 2 campaign. This was used to build the sacristy at the Chapel of St. Francis at Camp Mc Dowell.

The ECW hosted a round table discussion at Parish Leadership Training Event titled "Not Your Mother's ECW." There was very lively discussion about the need to try to get younger women involved and the ways we might do that.

Our Fall Conference was held at the beautiful St. John's Church in Montgomery. The Rev. Elizabeth Wheatley Jones spoke to us on our theme for the year, "He's got the whole world in his hands, our mission and ministry in the world."

ECW Scholarships totaling $12,450 were awarded to 21 deserving applicants.

Now I would like to talk in a little more detail about two ministries that the ECW leads. The United Thank Offering and the Christian Periodical Club.

First the United Thank Offering (UTO). This discipline of daily prayer and thanksgiving has quite a history in our diocese. We have received several grants from the UTO, the latest was in 2010 and was used to build a handicapped-accessible playground at St. Peter's in Talladega. That year our companion diocese of Haiti was also given a grant of $40,000 to rebuild the school in Crochu following the earthquake.

Last year we collected $41, 856 for UTO. This was the fourth highest amount in the Episcopal Church, a real achievement. Sadly, however, not one single grant request was submitted to the committee for consideration. I know that you have many projects and ideas so please consider submitting one this year. Linda Kennedy is the UTO representative to the ECW board. You can find her contact information at www.alabamaecw.org.

Secondly I want to mention the Christian Periodical Club, CPC as it is better known. CPC was founded in 1888 to provide free reading material to those in need. In our diocese we distribute these funds to our seminarians; they certainly fit the criteria of those in need. You will see the red cups on your tables--these are our CPC collection boxes. Please think about dropping a little pocket change into them. This year we will have 17 seminarians, and so we need to try to increase our annual CPC collection to help them out.

This has been a brief overview of the activities of the Episcopal Church Women in 2011. We appreciate all your support.

And now, *May God be within us to refresh us; around us to protect us; before us to guide us; above us to hold us up. Who lives and reigns, One God, world without end.*
Amen

Altar Guild Festival

Dianne Walters

St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands in Birmingham, hosted the 2012 diocesan Altar Guild Festival in January. The participants enjoyed fellowship, lunch, and two delightful programs.

Floral designer Benny Campbell, from Gadsden, entertained the group with humor as he skillfully put together many unique arrangements using both native and "homegrown" materials (willow, quince, and forsythia) as well as purchased flowers (orchids, lilies, roses, and others). He stressed the importance of color and texture in design to give depth and interest to the arrangements.

"Are you prepared to lose it all?" was the question Dianne Walters, a National Altar Guild Association Board member from Enterprise, asked members to ponder during the day's second program. This most informative presentation stressed the importance of having an up-to-date and complete inventory for insurance purposes. Dianne explained in detail what was needed for a full inventory and how to go about producing one. She emphasized that pictures and a full description, including any characteristics of the piece, are helpful if replacement becomes necessary and that knowing where and for how much an item was purchased is also very helpful.

Lynn Hendricks and Martha Noble displayed the completed quilt banner that will be dedicated and given to St. Francis Chapel at Camp McDowell as a gift from our diocesan altar guild.

Benny Campbell

Lynn Hendricks, who is also a member of the National Altar Guild Association Board, joined Dianne in encouraging members of our diocesan altar guild to join and become involved with the Province IV and National Altar Guild Associations.

Outreach Summit Speaker Addresses the Transformative Power of Mission

By the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, Chair of Our Department of Mission and Outreach

"Mission enriches the people served as well as deepening the faith of those serving," Eleana Mayorquin emphasized when she addressed the 125 participants attending the 2012 Diocesan Outreach Summit at St. Stephen's in Birmingham on January 28. Eleana, who is the Coordinator for Short-Term Missions for the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras, shared her experiences with mission groups in Honduras. Her sincere and warm demeanor exhibited the deep love she feels for each person she meets, and she affirms that mission is relationship, mission is partnership, and missioners and the community they serve become friends forever through the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Sloan

Bishop Sloan spoke about "the touch." He explained that he believes "the touch is the heart and soul of outreach mission work—touching the people of God and letting them touch us."

Eleana's and Bishop Sloan's words inspired the summit participants as they gathered in community and discussed how Christ's love can transform lives with their own outreach ministries, and the participants found the sharing of ideas in these groups especially meaningful. The morning small, medium, and large parish workshops explored the various opportunities to fund their outreach ministries including silent auctions, Lobsterfest, partnering with local merchants for food donations, and community suppers. Who knew that the Christian Biker's Association was eager to provide funding for a church's outreach! Grants are also available from the Episcopal Church Women, Jubilee Ministries, and our diocesan Department of Mission and Outreach ***(the department's Parish Outreach Grant deadline for 2012 is May 7; please visit our diocesan Web site, dioala.org, for application forms)***.

The afternoon workshops examined a variety of ministries including Disaster Preparedness and Response, Community Transformation through Outreach, Hispanic Mission Outreach, Global Short-Term Mission, Youth Domestic/Global Mission, Kairos Prison Ministry, Spirituality of Outreach, and Public Policy to Address the Needs of the Poor. Here's a sampling of the content of the workshops along with comments from people who participated in them.

Disaster Preparedness and Response led by Katie Mears, manager of Episcopal Relief and Development US Disaster Program: Katie outlined the disaster life cycle and emphasized the importance of preplanning. She explained that when a disaster strikes, the first steps to be taken include rescue, checking on others, letting others know you are okay. *"Excellent workshop"*

Community Transformation through Outreach led by the Rev. Gates Shaw, rector of Christ Church in Fairfield: Gates discussed the importance of engaging other churches in the community and other organizations to develop and implement the plan to get to know the neighborhood and meet needs on many levels, such as hunger, homelessness, prison re-entry, education, employment, and senior services. *"Excellent! Loved it!" "Thought-provoking, inspiring." "Can he come to our church?"*

Hispanic Mission Outreach led by the Rev. Judith Comer, rector of St. Philip's in Fort Payne and chair of our diocesan Hispanic Commission, and Dr. Pamela Long of the Ascension in Montgomery and a professor at Auburn University in Montgomery: Pamela discussed the Hispanic involvement in parish worship and other activities at the Ascension in Montgomery. She also discussed the social services that she provides for the Hispanic community, such as translation for medical visits and dealing with immigration issues. Judith showed how the Hispanic-Latino parishioners have been incorporated into the fabric of the congregation of St. Philip's. The Rev. Deacon Marti Holmes, one of the workshop's participants, shared the evolution of the Hispanic-Latino community at Grace Church in Woodlawn, and the group discussed tools to engage the Hispanic-Latino community, such as materials in Spanish, identifying Spanish speakers in your parish, and offering social services. *"Inspiring stories/good ideas for inviting Hispanics/Latinos into the parish."*

Global Short-Term Mission led by Eleana Mayorquin of the Episcopal Diocese of Honduras, McKee Sloan of St. Thomas' in Huntsville and missioner to Honduras, and the Rev. Deacon C. J. Van Slyke of Trinity in Clanton and chair of our Companion Diocese Commission for Haiti: The leaders shared some practical tips for preparing and conducting a short-term mission, and the group discussed their own experiences in short-term mission. *"Learned a lot. Great discussion and sharing." "We are ready to go."*

Eleana Mayorquin

Youth Domestic/Global Mission led by Susan Oakes, our Interim Diocesan Youth Ministries Coordinator; Caitlin Gilliam, Youth Director of Holy Trinity in Auburn; Worth Stuart, Youth Director of St. John's in Montgomery, Allison Kendrick, Youth Director of St. Francis of Assisi in Indian Springs and advocate for Invisible Children in Uganda; and Lars Porter, Youth Director of St. Luke's in Birmingham: The leaders offered a variety of opportunities to engage in mission including Sawyerville, Special Session at Camp McDowell, short-term global mission, and Invisible Children. *"I learned about new ministries."*

Kairos Prison Ministry led by the Rev. Steve Gruman, rector of St. Matthew's in Madison; the Rev. Deacon Clyde Pearce of St. Catherine's in Chelsea; and Ahmad Blakemore: Steve and Clyde discussed the mission of Kairos to bring Christ's love and forgiveness to all incarcerated individuals, their families, and those who work with them and to assist them in becoming a productive citizen. The ministry accomplishes these goals through the impact of small share/prayer groups of residents in the institution; these groups meet weekly and provide the inmates opportunities to share their lives on a very deep spiritual level and pray for one another as well as the residents and the staff. Ahmad gave his testimony on how Kairos transformed his life from a doubting, incarcerated felon to a small business owner. *"A wonderful introduction to Kairos." "Moving and powerful. Tears began to stream down my cheeks as I listed to Ahmad's story."*

Spirituality of Outreach led by the Rev. John Wesley, rector of St. Andrew's in Montevallo: John offered the scriptural foundation for outreach and reminded participants of the importance of prayer and spiritual guidance for our outreach. *"Good scriptural background and presentation by leader." "Well organized, good presentation." "Wonderful to remind us through prayer, our prayer and direction comes from God."*

Public Policy To Address the Needs of the Poor led by Kimble Forrister, executive director of Alabama Arise: Kimble framed the discussion with the message of Shalom, the welfare of all. The group discussed policy issues including the Housing Trust Fund, Untax Groceries, Health Care, and Immigration. Kimble encouraged the participants to become more informed and engage others in the discussion and advocacy with the Alabama Legislature. *"Excellent info."*

In summary, some participants learned about new ministries, other participants gained practical knowledge to pursue their ministry interests, and all of the participants found the exchange of ideas useful. One participant noted discovering that the need to develop outreach was bigger than ever imagined. Eleana noted this as well—"there is no end to the need." Another participant commented on the importance of prayer and that our power and direction to serve comes from God. Participants left with new relationships and a renewed spirit for outreach and mission.

The Presiding Bishop asserts that mission is the heartbeat of the Church. Mission is who we are. Let us remember who we are. Let us go and serve. We may be amazed at the transformative power of mission in the lives we touch and in our own lives as we are touched by the people of God.

Apply Now for ECW Scholarships

The deadline for applications for ECW college scholarships is April 30!

Last year our ECW Scholarship Committee awarded 20 college scholarships ranging from $575 to $1,000; over the last decade, the ECW has awarded more than $120,000 in college scholarships. Applicants must be a communicant member in good standing with the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Alabama, have been accepted or are enrolled in an academic institution of college rank, be pursuing professional certification or a degree from an accredited institution, be able to show financial need, and be a recipient of no more than one previous ECW scholarship. The completed application form must be accompanied by a transcript, a photograph, and a short essay, along with a church involvement survey completed by the applicant's parish priest (senior warden, if there is a vacancy) or college chaplain.

The college scholarship application form and church involvement survey, along with instructions for completing the application process, are available on our ECW Web site (www.alabamaecw.org) or by request from Scholarship Committee Chair Adelaide Cherry at addiecherry@yahoo.com or 334/624-0466.

Bethany Village— The Dream Grows Closer To Becoming a Reality

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

Lives are changed at Camp McDowell's Special Session—the lives of those with disabilities as well as the lives of 80 high-school students. At Special Session, each high-school student is paired with a camper who has a disability or special needs. As their "counselor," these young adults are plunged into relationships that result in them looking at the world through the eyes of their camper, it's ***a way the world could be.***

At Bethany Village we want to have more Special Sessions—for people with disabilities *and* for people like me whose disabilities are not as apparent. We also want to hire more people who have disabilities or special needs to work at Camp McDowell. ***By doing this we will change the way people look at the world and help them see the world the way it could be, the world God is calling us to live in.***

A major emphasis of Bishop Sloan's convention address was Bethany Village, and the primary theme of his address was "sing to the Lord a new song." The address articulated to me that Bishop Sloan has a sense of hope and expectancy that our diocesan family will strive to be bold and creative in our efforts to make disciples and carry the message of the Gospel to the world. He said that Bethany Village is such an effort, and he asked us, as a diocesan family, to contribute to the dream and support the vision. I thought he did an excellent job of describing the vision in his address.

One of the resolutions presented to the convention endorsed the Bethany Village vision and authorized the Diocesan Council, contingent on the feasibility study, to make all necessary arrangements for the implementation of the Bethany Village master plan, which includes a major capital campaign for Camp McDowell. It passed through committee and came to the floor of the convention with no verbal opposition. Thanks to the Rev. Stephen Hood for writing the resolution and being a

spokesperson and leader for it at convention. *(Please see resolution #7 Bethany Village on page 10.)*

A steady stream of people came up to me during the convention to share their enthusiasm for Bethany Village—it was very affirming. On Saturday I started asking each person which part of the vision interested/excited them the most, and the responses were very interesting because they varied greatly and embraced every aspect of the project. One person was excited because he has a grandchild with special needs, another because of the farm education, another thought the lake would be a great addition, another because his parish could have their annual retreat at another time of the year, another that we were going to be planning conferences that would give him more opportunities to come to camp, and another about our production farm. The last person who came to me as I was walking out of the convention center wanted to tell me that they were most excited about having a camp store. Amazing! We have talked about a possible strength of the Bethany Village vision being that "there is something for everyone." My discussions seemed to indicate that.

A couple of people at convention shared concern that this might not be a good time to have a capital campaign because of the economy, and of course our response was, "We are doing a feasibility study to help answer that question." Others were interested if we will do construction in phases, and if so what those phases would be—this is a question we need to answer. I feel certain that we will have to build in phases, and priorities/phases will be the decisions of the Department of Camp McDowell, Bishop Sloan, and Diocesan Council.

We are right on schedule in regard to the timeline of our strategic plan for the expansion and enhancement of our ministries at Camp McDowell. There will be both good news and tough news as we move ahead—there will be wonderful surprises and tough decisions. Finally, I anticipate the near future when we will have the facilities at Camp McDowell to host our annual diocesan convention.

For up-to-date information about Camp McDowell and Bethany Village, please e-mail me at mark@campmcdowell.com and visit our Web site, www.campmcdowell.com, often.

'Tis the Gift To Be Simple

By Danielle Dunbar

Note: Danielle Dunbar, former Director of the Alabama Folk School, became the Development Director of Camp McDowell in February. Sarah Mills Nee is serving as the new Director of the Folk School (please see the story on page 19).

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free,
'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,
And when we find ourselves in the place just right,
'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.
—*18th-century Shaker song*

As I took a restful, leisurely, and much-needed vacation over the Christmas holidays, life became much simpler. I don't really know why I make it more complicated while I am working, but I realize it doesn't need to be. I can find contentment in life's basic gifts—a hot cup of coffee, a sunrise or sunset, a good book, live music (better with friends!), and captivating art (it's everywhere!).

I invite and encourage you to relax and enjoy life's basic gifts at the Alabama Folk School by joining us for a simple, unfussy workshop. We will provide the hot coffee, daily sunrises and sunsets (if you want to catch them!), and rich music and art—all you have to do is come to Camp McDowell. I wish you a simpler, more creative, happy 2012!

Alabama Folk School Welcomes New Director

The Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell welcomed Sarah Mills Nee as its new director on February 1. Sarah grew up in Birmingham and attended St. Luke's Episcopal Church and Indian Springs School before earning her BA in Art History at Sewanee, The University of the South. She recently received her master's in Art History, with a focus on Southeastern folk art, from the University of Denver and has been working at the Birmingham Museum of Art. Sarah and her husband, Jon, live in Jasper, and both have years of experience working at Camp McDowell.

Former Folk School Director Danielle Dunbar has transitioned to her new role as the Development Director for Camp McDowell. Danielle has already begun her work, which includes a feasibility study and fundraising for Bethany Village. She is optimistic about how building a timber-frame dance hall, wet studio (for pottery, mosaics, painting, and more), dry studio (for fiber arts, quilting, drawing, woodworking, and more), a blacksmith studio, a teaching kitchen, and an all-purpose meeting room will help the Folk School grow and teach even more eager students. Danielle will remain on the Alabama Folk School Board of Directors and continue to participate in sessions, as often as she can, in the role of student.

Come Enjoy Bluegrass and Quilting at the Folk School!

Spring is almost here! Just when the flowers start to bloom and the warm weather rolls in, the Alabama Folk School is offering an exciting workshop you don't want to miss! ***From April 16-19, come join us for a week of Bluegrass and Gee's Bend quilting and more:***

Gee's Bend Quilting taught by Mary Ann and China Pettway
Watercolor taught by Ken Austin
Recycled Mosaics (teacher to be announced)
Voice taught by Claire Lynch
Bass taught by Mark Schatz
Guitar taught by Stephen Mougin
Mandolin I taught by Jason Bailey
Mandolin II taught by Roland White
Banjo I taught by Herb Trotman
Banjo II taught by Ned Luberecki

To sign up for this not-to-be-missed workshop or learn more about the Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell, please visit www.alfolkschool.com.

For more information about any of our upcoming classes, please contact Sarah Mills Nee at folkschool@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806. If you'd like to receive updated information from the Alabama Folk School, please send Sarah your e-mail address, mailing address, or join us on Facebook—Alabama Folkschool.

Claire Lynch

Mountains to the Gulf: Helping Teachers Make Connections—June 18-26

By Maggie Wade Johnston, Director of the McDowell Environmental Center

Last year's Mountains to the Gulf expedition was amazing! We traveled from the mountains and canyons of north Alabama to the Gulf of Mexico at Dauphin Island—we paddled the Coosa River, hiked at Cheaha Mountain, visited natural wonders like Little River Canyon, and found sharks teeth fossils along streambeds. We learned from master teachers Dr. Jim Lacefield, Dr. Bill Deutsch, and Dr. George Cline about the geology, waters, and ecology of our great state.

Well . . . thanks to funding provided by Legacy, Partners in Environmental Education . . . we are doing it again this year! For more information please contact me at maggie@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806. ***The application deadline is April 29.***

Grace Church in Mt. Meigs Honors Sandra Allen

The Rev. David H. Peeples, Sandra Allen, Molly Martin, and William Martin

January 6, 2012, marked 35 years of Sandra Allen's faithful service as the organist at Grace Church in Mt. Meigs. A native of Alexander City, Sandra was raised in the Baptist church and began playing piano/organ in church and teaching piano at age 14.

As a student at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Sandra studied under Dr. Harald Rohlig, the longtime organist at St. John's in Montgomery. Not too long after the retirement of Grace's organist of nearly 40 years, Grace Church was searching for a full-time organist. William Martin, a member of the vestry, asked his wife, Molly, who was a music major at Huntingdon, if she knew anyone who might be willing to play the small electric organ then in service at Grace Church. Molly's quick reply was, "My friend Sandra Allen would be a great match for Grace." So she was—and so she remains.

When Sandra began at Grace Church in 1977, she was also the organist at Woodland United Methodist Church a few miles away, playing at 9 a.m. (then the only Sunday service) at Grace Church and the 10:30 a.m. service at Woodland. The mother of a young son and a full-time music teacher in the Montgomery public school system, Sandra was then and remains a busy musician.

Very few current members of Grace Church have ever known a time when Sandra was not their organist. She now plays at approximately 60 services each year, directs the adult choir, accompanies the children's choir, and gives private piano lessons, having retired in 2004 from her full-time teaching position.

The afternoon of Sunday, January 8, William and Molly hosted a reception in their home in honor of Sandra. Many current and former members of Grace Church and other friends joined Sandra and her son, James, to express their love for her and their appreciation of her devotion to the parish. As soon as the reception ended, Sandra had to dash off to play at that evening's evensong/Taizé service.

The Lord has blessed Grace Church by giving us a talented musician who is also such a wonderful and caring person. The congregation hopes that these 35 years have also been a blessing to Sandra and that they are merely a precursor to her continued service at the parish. A 40th anniversary of her service is just around the corner, and then the 45th or even 50th anniversaries will arrive after not much more than the blink of an eye.

St. Alban's Hosts "Alternative Valentine's Day Cards" Event

By the Rev. Dr. J. Barry Vaughn, Rector

Instead of spending ridiculous amounts for Valentine cards, the members of St. Alban's in Birmingham invited everyone to make alternative Valentine's Day cards on Sunday, February 12. The "admission charge" for the event was a nonfood item (hand soap, laundry detergent, toothbrush, toothpaste, dishwashing detergent, toilet paper, paper towels, Band-Aids, etc.) for the Green Springs' Ministries' Food Bank. Valentine-making stations held all the glitter and glam for the participants to make very special, one-of-a-kind cards. Lots of people "just showed up" and had lots of fun while helping meet the needs of others in our community!

Holy Cross Show Choir Performs

By Kimberly Ramsey, Director of Public Relations and Marketing

The Show Choir of Holy Cross School in Montgomery gave a special Valentine's Day performance on February 13 for the Episcopal Church Women's luncheon at St. John's. The students opened the meeting with their amazing praise songs and choreography including a "Mighty to Save" medley, "With All My Heart," and "Ride the Sweet Chariot." Soloists included Rhys Holifield, Bradley Westhauser, Karli Day, and Maggie Cooner.

Holy Cross School Lenten Outreach Supports Ministry to the Homeless

By Kimberly Ramsey, Director of Public Relations and Marketing

It all began with an idea of a third grader. Maggie Kinney, who is in Claudia Lowe's third-grade class at Holy Cross School in Montgomery, wanted to do something real to help the homeless in her city—and she wanted her school to help, too!

Outreach is a wonderful part of the Holy Cross education, and each year the school supports a different ministry chosen with the involvement of the students in mind. Thanks to Maggie's suggestion, this year's Holy Cross School's annual Lenten Outreach Project is focusing on the Reality and Truth Ministry, which aids the city's homeless.

The students do not bring money—instead they bring needed items that will directly impact the people the ministry serves. LaDonna Brendle, who leads the Reality and Truth Ministry, will speak to the students during chapel time to help them understand how the organization helps people in need. The first week the students are bringing travel-size toiletries; the second week they will bring towels, washcloths, and men's socks; the third week the students will bring coffee, teabags, creamer, and sugar for the ministry's coffeehouse, which serves the homeless. The final week of the project will focus on toilet paper, personal-size hand sanitizer, and miniature flashlights.

St. Luke's Helps Stop Hunger in Haiti

By the Staff of St. Luke's in Birmingham

During a two-day event in February, hundreds of St. Luke's volunteers had the privilege of packing more than half a million meals for schoolchildren in Haiti. Working alongside participants from four other churches, volunteers participated in the largest ever meal-packing event for Stop Hunger Now.

Last year Canterbury United Methodist packed about 140,000 meals, and this year they wanted to do more, so they invited four over-the-mountain churches to join the effort—St. Luke's Episcopal, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Vestavia Hills United Methodist, and Brookwood Baptist. When the churches set the goal of packing 500,000 meals, they were unaware that no other group had ever packed that many meals during such an effort. Each church committed to providing both monetary and volunteer support.

In December, the children at St. Luke's collected more than $500 in quarters from their "Happy Meal" boxes to begin the seed money for the project; one quarter buys one meal. In January, the adults joined the effort and began placing money in Hunger envelopes on Sunday mornings and writing checks to the St. Luke's Hunger Initiative. So far, close to $20,000 has been raised.

More than 300 volunteers from St. Luke's showed up at Canterbury United Methodist Church to pack meals. It was a fun, high-energy event, offering a job for every person regardless of age or ability. Youth helped lift heavy boxes, senior adults measured rice and sealed bags, young children acted as messengers—everyone had a purpose. A gong sounded each time 1,000 meals had been packed. Each volunteer worked for one to two hours, and in the end a total of 500,126 meals were packed and will be delivered to Haiti!

Stop Hunger Now is a nonprofit organization that shows volunteers how to package dehydrated, high-protein, highly nutritious meals that are used in crisis situations and in school feeding programs for schools and orphanages in developing countries around the world. After volunteers package the meals, Stop Hunger Now delivers them where they are needed.

NetsforLife a Success!

By the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, Our Diocesan Representative

Every 45 seconds, a child dies from malaria. There are an estimated 250 million cases of malaria each year, resulting in nearly one million deaths, the majority of them children younger than five years old. Children are most vulnerable because they have not built up any immunity to the disease. Pregnant women are also at risk. We can help save the health of these children and pregnant women by providing them with simple mosquito nets and essential training for the family and the community.

NetsforLife is a partnership of corporations, foundations, nongovernmental groups, and faith-based organizations working to fight malaria. Episcopal Relief and Development is a major partner working with corporate foundations such as Exxon-Mobil Foundation and Coca-Cola Africa Foundation. The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has also joined the team.

NetsforLife works to instill a "net culture"—a community-wide understanding of the protective value of nets and the right way to use and maintain them. When a net culture is in place, people know how to prevent malaria, when to seek medical treatment, and how to access effective treatment. The good news is that this program now has distributed more than seven million nets, serving more than 24 million people, with more than 71,000 volunteers trained.

Also please remember that the Christian Formation materials such as Rita Mosquito (www.er-d.org/children/#Rita Mosquita) and Act Out: Empowering Youth To Heal a Hurting World (www.er-d.org/Youth) offer wonderful resources for your parish to use to educate young people on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and how the NetsforLife program helps address the Reduction of Childhood Mortality (MDG #4); Maternal Health (MDG #5); Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and other Diseases (MDG #6); and Developing Global Partnerships for Development (MDG #8).

Our diocese is continuing to do its part. Thank you for your individual contributions of nets through the Gifts for Life Catalogs. Thank you for your parish contributions. Thank you, Episcopal Church Women at parishes and the diocesan level, for your contributions to the NetsforLife Program. Thank you Diocese of Alabama for your contributions—***we are well on our way to providing 30,000 nets! But there is still time for you to help!*** World Malaria Day is April 25—let's remember and honor this day with our involvement in the NetsforLife program!

For more information on how to engage your parish in the NetsforLife program, please visit www.er-d.org or www.inspirationfund.org, or contact me at jgquick@bellsouth.net or 205/669-6862.

Upcoming Events, Workshops, and Retreats

SEEING THE FACE OF GOD IN EACH OTHER—ANTI-RACISM WORKSHOP

April 13-14 at Trinity Church in Clanton

Designed for clergy, lay leaders, Christian educators, youth directors, search committees, and anyone interested in working for racial reconciliation, this workshop offers an excellent opportunity to understand the causes and effects of racism and provides practical ways to combat it today. ***For more information please contact the Rev. Deacon Carolyn J. Foster at carolynjfoster@bellsouth.net or 205/434-1442.***

CENTERING PRAYER WORKSHOP

April 21 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Emmanuel Church in Opelika

Diana Tschache, the coordinator for Contemplative Outreach in Alabama, will lead this workshop, which is designed for anyone who is seeking a deeper relationship with our Lord through their prayer life. Centering Prayer is a means to deepen your prayer life by learning to "rest in God." ***For more information or to register, please contact Cynthia Wilson at cynthia6583@att.net or 334/877-3220.***

15TH ANNUAL CRAWFISH & SHRIMP BOIL

April 28 from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Holy Apostles' in Hoover (Birmingham)

Spend time with friends and enjoy great food at this year's annual Crawfish and Shrimp Boil prepared by boilmaster Paul Gilbert. The succulent menu includes boiled crawfish, shrimp, corn, and potatoes as well as char-grilled hotdogs. Children of all ages will have fun bouncing in the Moon Walk and dancing to the swing music of the Hoover Jazz Band The First Edition under the direction of Sallie White. ***For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Bill Davis at 205/616-2622 or billdavis2ii@att.net or visit www.holyapostleshoover.org.***

COOPERATIVE COLLEGE FOR CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

June 24-29 at the Duncan M. Gray Camp and Conference Center in Canton, Mississippi

Clergy and lay leaders of family and pastoral-sized parishes are encouraged to participate in the Cooperative College for Congregational Development, a conference designed to provide a "tool kit" for leaders to develop, foster, and encourage healthy, sustainable congregations grounded in a robust identity that is rooted in an Anglican ethos and spirituality. The conference also strives to develop parish leaders who are both aware of and responsive to the particular challenges and opportunities before them. The two-year program is a blend of theory and practice, reflection and action, group and individual work, all in the context of prayer, conversation, and community. It is sponsored and staffed by leaders from six southern dioceses, including the Diocese of Alabama. Our diocese's Department of Parish Development will help cover the cost of participating in the college. ***For more information please contact the Rev. Pat Wingo at pwingo@dioala.org.***

Celebrating 50 Years of Ordained Ministry

Everyone is cordially invited to join **the Rev. Hoyt Winslett Jr.** in celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood on the Feast of St. Philip and St. James at

7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1, at a Solemn Choral Eucharist at Christ Church in Tuscaloosa. The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan, the 11th Bishop of Alabama, will preach at the service, and a reception will follow in Randall Hall.

Hoyt grew up in the Baptist Church and was confirmed by the Rt. Rev. Charles Colcock Jones Carpenter, the 6th Bishop of Alabama, at Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa in 1953 as a member of the last class presented by the Rev. George M. Murray before his consecration as Bishop Suffragan of Alabama. After graduating from the University of Alabama, Hoyt served two years of active duty in the US Army before attended the General Theological Seminary in New York City. He was ordained a deacon by Bishop Murray at Canterbury Chapel on June 19, 1961, and he served as curate of All Saints' in Mobile under the Rev. Francis B. Wakefield Jr. Together with the Rev. Peter Horn, who at the time was serving as the curate of St. Paul's in Spring Hill, Hoyt was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Carpenter at All Saints' on May 1, 1962. The Rev. Joseph Horn, Peter's oldest brother, preached at that service.

Hoyt has served as rector of Epiphany in Guntersville, associate rector of Nativity in Huntsville, administrator of the Diocese of Georgia, rector of St. Paul's in Greensboro, and associate rector of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa.

Clergy News

The Rev. Robyn Arnold will begin serving as rector of Grace Church in Birmingham (Woodlawn) in late spring. Robyn, who is originally from our diocese, has spent the last four years working in San Francisco for the Diocese of California.

The Rev. Eric Liles will begin serving as rector of St. Paul's in Ivy, Virginia, on Palm Sunday; Eric previously served as associate rector of St. John's in Decatur. **The Rev. Allison Sandlin Liles** resigned her position as associate rector of St. Thomas' in Huntsville effective March 11; Allison is planning to spend time at home taking care of the couple's two young children while they get settled in Virginia.

The Rev. Robert "Bob" Lockard died on February 22. Bob, who was ordained a deacon in our diocese in 1955 and a priest in 1956, served as rector of the Ascension in Vestavia Hills (Birmingham) from 1972 to 2000.

The Rev. Rafael Ortiz, a bivocational noncanonical priest in our diocese, has accepted a position as a deputy regional director of the US Department of Labor. He and his wife, **the Rev. Deacon Patricia Ortiz,** moved to Chicago in March.

Bishop Sloan's Visitation Schedule

April 7, Saturday (Easter Eve)
7 p.m. St. Andrew's, Birmingham

April 8, Sunday, Easter Day
10 a.m. St. Paul's, Selma

April 11, Wednesday
6:15 p.m. St. Michael and All Angels', Millbrook

April 15, Sunday
10:30 a.m. St. Luke's, Birmingham

April 18, Wednesday
6 p.m. St. Andrew's, Tuskegee

April 22, Sunday
10 a.m. Holy Trinity, Auburn
6 p.m. St. Dunstan's, Auburn

April 29, Sunday
9 a.m. Christ Church, Tuscaloosa

May 2, Wednesday
6 p.m. Trinity, Demopolis

May 6, Sunday
9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Advent, Birmingham

May 9, Wednesday
5 p.m. St. James', Livingston

May 13, Sunday
10 a.m. St. Mary's-on-the-Highlands, Birmingham

May 16, Wednesday, Eve of the Ascension
6 p.m. St. Paul's, Prairieville

May 20, Sunday
10:30 a.m. St. John's, Montgomery

May 23, Wednesday
6:30 p.m. St. Mark's, Prattville

May 27, Sunday
10:15 a.m. Ascension, Montgomery

May 30, Wednesday
7 p.m. St. Michael's, Faunsdale, and Holy Cross, Uniontown

June 3, Sunday
8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m. All Saints', Birmingham

June 10, Sunday
10 a.m. Nativity, Huntsville

June 13, Wednesday
6 p.m. Resurrection, Rainbow City

June 17, Sunday
10:30 a.m. St. John's, Decatur

July 1, Sunday
11 a.m. St. Mark's, Boligee

What's New/Noteworthy at the Episcopal Book Store

The guest preachers for the Lenten Luncheon series at the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham provided a list of recommended readings, including the books listed below.

***The Land Between: Finding God in Difficult Transitions* by Jeff Manion**

The Land Between provides fresh biblical insight for people traveling through unwanted transitions—foreclosure, unemployment, parents in declining health, post-graduate uncertainty, business failure—who are looking for hope, guidance, and encouragement. Jeff Manion uses the biblical story of the journey of the Israelites through the Sinai desert as a metaphor for being in an undesired, transitional space. He explores the ways in which their reactions provide guidance on how to respond to God during your own transitions in the modern world. What if life's transitions are there to remind us that God is present before, during, and after these periods?

***The Defense Never Rests: A Lawyer's Quest for the Gospel* by Craig Parton**

Craig Parton offers this penetrating, personal critique of American Christianity. His spiritual journey led him from unbelief into an important leadership position with a well-known ministry, where he became deeply involved in modern American Evangelicalism. He was dismayed to discover that much of modern American Evangelicalism is about personal self-improvement, striving to fulfill laws and rules, and a roller-coaster ride from one spiritual high to the next, always seeking but never fully satisfied. He tells how he discovered the radically liberating message of authentic Reformation spirituality and why he has never turned back. He beautifully describes the joy of a Christ-centered approach to Christianity and explains the importance of explaining and defending the faith delivered to the saints.

***Evidence for the Resurrection* by J. N. D. Anderson**

The little booklet gives a big punch as J. N. D. "Norman" Anderson examines the validity of the events surrounding Jesus' resurrection. Either the resurrection is infinitely more than a beautiful story or else it is infinitely less. If it is true, then it is the supreme fact of history; and to fail to adjust one's life to its implication means irreparable loss. If it is not true, if Christ has not risen, then Christianity is all a fraud foisted on the world by consummate liars—or, at best, deluded simpletons.

***Silence* by Shasaku Endo**

This novel of historical fiction tells the story of a Jesuit missionary who was sent to 17th-century Japan and endured the persecution that followed the defeat of the Shimbara Rebellion. This is not a feel-good book by any stretch. Instead it deals with failure, defeat, abandonment, pain, and the "silence" of God through it all. At the same time, however, it opens the window wide on what the Man of Sorrows went through on our behalf and on how we need God's grace not because of our strength but because of our weakness.

***Children of the Living God: Delighting in the Father's Love* by Sinclair B. Ferguson**

Jesus Christ taught his disciples to call God "Our Father" and to live as members of his family. Although simple enough for every Christian to understand, this is also so profound that its implications take a lifetime and more to explore fully. In ***Children of the Living God,*** Sinclair Ferguson shows how the Spirit of "offspring"—Christian freedom, divine discipline, prayer, and the sacraments—all contribute to our experience of the love the Father has for his children.

***The Easterville Miracle* by Melody Carlson**

This whimsically illustrated book reminds us that Easter isn't about bonnets, baskets, eggs, candy, or bunnies, but the story of the Cross. It's a great little story on the real meaning of Easter and how easy it can get out of hand. It's a must-have for families!

The bookstore is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday from 8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. For information about these and other books or to have the staff research and special order a particular book, please contact the Episcopal Book Store, 2015 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203; 205/323-2959; ebsinfo@episcobooks.com; or visit the bookstore online at www.episcobooks.com.

Mark Your Calendar

Diocesan Convention February 22-23 at St. John's in Montgomery
Cursillo Weekends #182 April 12-15, #183 June 7-10, #184 September 6-9, and #185 October 11-14
Sawyerville Day Camps Session I June 22-30, Session II July 6-14

April 13-14 "Seeing the Face of God in Each Other—Anti-Racism Workshop" at Trinity Church in Clanton. *For more information please see the description on page 22 or contact the Rev. Deacon Carolyn J. Foster at carolynjfoster@bellsouth.net or 205/434-1442.*

April 13-15 Mother/Daughter Weekend at Camp McDowell. *For more information please visit Camp McDowell's Web site, www.campmcdowell.com, or contact Susanna Whitsett at susanna@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.*

April 16-19 Bluegrass and Quilting at the Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell. *For more information please see the description on page 19, e-mail folkschool@campmcdowell.com, or call 205/387-1806.*

April 21 Centering Prayer Workshop led by Diana Tschache from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Emmanuel Church in Opelika. *For more information please see the description on page 22 or contact Cynthia Wilson at cynthia6583@att.net or 334/877-3220.*

April 22 Tornado Memorial Service, including the tolling of the church bells for each tornado victim and the dedication of St. Luke's donated tornado-response trailer, at noon in the outdoor pavilion at St. Luke's in Birmingham; local dignitaries and representatives from Habitat for Humanity and United Way will be present. *For more information please contact the parish at info@saintlukes.com or 205/802-6219.*

April 27 Midday Musical Menu—A Broadway Cabaret, the "Dream Out Loud" Showcase starring James Green and Company at 12:30 p.m. at the Advent in Birmingham. *For more information please contact Dr. Charles Kennedy at kennedy@cathedraladvent.com or 205/443-8553.*

April 27-29 Father/Son Weekend at Camp McDowell. *For more information please see the description on page 24; to register please visit Camp McDowell's Web site, www.campmcdowell.com, or contact Susanna Whitsett at susanna@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.*

April 28 15th Annual Crawfish & Shrimp Boil from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Holy Apostles' in Hoover (Birmingham). *For more information please see the description on page 22, contact Bill Davis at billdavis2ii@att.net or 205/616-2622, or visit www.holyapostleshoover.org.*

May 4-6 "Transfiguration of Christ and Creation: A Ministry of Wholeness" Retreat at St. Mary's Sewanee Retreat Center at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. *For more information please e-mail joycewilding@comcast.net or call 615-952-5812.*

May 6 The Cathedral Choir in Concert under the direction of Dr. Stephen G. Schaeffer at 4 p.m. at the Advent in Birmingham. *For more information please contact Dr. Charles Kennedy at kennedy@cathedraladvent.com or 205/443-8553.*

June 23 Gumbo Gala to benefit Episcopal Place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham. *For more information please contact Kris Mueller at kmueller@episcopalplace.org. or 205/939-0085, or visit www.episcopalplace.org or www.gumbogala.com.*

June 24-29 Cooperative College for Congregational Development at the Duncan M. Gray Camp and Conference Center in Canton, Mississippi. *For more information please see the description on page 22 or contact the Rev. Pat Wingo at pwingo@dioala.org.*

July 9-15 The 62nd Sewanee Church Music Conference at the University of the South and the DuBose Conference Center in Monteagle, Tennessee. *For more information please visit www.SewaneeConf.com, or contact Ellen Jones at ellenstpauls@bellsouth.net or 423/887-7594.*

Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell!

By Susanna Whitsett, Summer Camp Coordinator for Camp McDowell

Camp McDowell is offering wonderful opportunities for children of all ages to have fun, relax, worship, learn, and enjoy being with family and friends in "God's Backyard" this spring and summer. ***For more information about the events below and additional activities or to register, please visit Camp McDowell's Web site, www.campmcdowell.com, or contact me at susanna@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.***

It's going to be the BEST SUMMER EVER!

MOTHER/DAUGHTER WEEKEND

April 13-15

Calling all mothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, godmothers, and special friends who are like mothers to

enjoy the annual Mother/Daughter Weekend at Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell! This special springtime retreat is the perfect setting to reconnect, relax, and enjoy the company of your loved ones. Elizabeth Vander Kamp, of All Saints' in Birmingham, will lead a special program, and you will have plenty of time to participate in optional camp activities. Come laugh, learn, and enjoy easy living in the beautiful spring weather at camp! *This event is recommended for ages 5 and up; financial assistance is available.*

FATHER/SON WEEKEND

April 27-29

We encourage all fathers, sons, brothers, nephews, godfathers, and special friends who are like fathers to come to the annual Father/Son Weekend at Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell! You will have fun canoeing, hiking, playing ball, doing the ropes course, singing, and generally just enjoying each other's company. Steve Mistrot, of All Saints' in Birmingham, will lead a special program. *This event is recommended for ages 5 and up; financial assistance is available.*

SUMMER CAMP

Applications for Camp McDowell Summer Camp are now available on Camp McDowell's Web site, www.campmcdowell.com, as well as in parish offices; *financial*

assistance is available. Camp sessions fill up quickly—so be sure to register as soon as possible to avoid being placed on a waiting list. ***Parents and grandparents—***camp sessions and events make wonderful gifts for children and grandchildren!

Parents, please pay close attention to the information on our Web site about Summer Camp. Our "Best Practices" section gives helpful and important information on how to prepare your child for camp and facilitate a happy and healthy experience for them that supports the goals of the camp.

2012 Summer Camp Schedule

May 25-27	Primary I (for entering 1st-3rd graders with one adult) led by the Rev. Rich Webster of St. Luke's in Birmingham
May 29-June 1	Elementary I (for entering 3rd and 4th graders) led by the Rev. Chip Broadfoot of the Ascension in Montgomery
June 4-9	Junior High I (for entering 6th and 7th graders) led by the Rev. Rebecca DeBow of St. Luke's in Birmingham
June 12-21	Senior High (for entering 10th-12th graders) led by the Rev. Russell Kendrick of St. Stephen's in Birmingham
June 25-30	Led by Bishop Sloan and the Rev. David Meginniss of Christ Church in Tuscaloosa
July 1-5	Elementary II (for entering 4th and 5th graders) led by the Rev. Jack Alvey of All Saints' in Birmingham
July 8-15	Sophomore (for entering 8th and 9th graders) led by the Rev. Thomas Joyner of Holy Trinity in Auburn
July 18-23	Middler (for entering 5th and 6th graders) led by Andy Keyse of Trinity in Florence
July 26-August 1	Junior High II (for entering 7th and 8th graders) led by the Rev. Katie Nakamura-Rengers of St. Michael's in Fayette
August 3-5	Primary II (for entering 1st-3rd graders with one adult) led by the Rev. Tim Murphy of St. Mary's in Jasper

The Alabama Episcopalian

The Alabama Episcopalian is published six times a year (January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October, and November/December). For the most current news about recent and upcoming events, please visit our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org.

Please send stories and photographs (color, if available) to Editor Norma McKittrick at apostledit@aol.com or 2156 Kent Way, Birmingham, AL 35226; the submission deadline for each issue is the 1st of the month prior to publication. **Postmaster, parishes, and individuals, please send all address changes or additions** to Circulation Secretary Denise Servant at dservant@dioala.org or Carpenter House, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203–2682.

Keep up with the latest news from around our diocese between issues of *The Alabama Episcopalian* on our diocesan Web site, www.dioala.org. **If you are not already receiving our "Web Site Update,"** you can sign up to receive a weekly e-mail containing headlines with links to the latest news, photos, and videos about and from around our diocese. Simply send an e-mail with your name and e-mail address to ddrachlis@dioala.org and put "Headlines" on the subject line. You can "opt out" anytime.