Bringing Hope and Meeting Needs—Continuing To Work With Our Sisters and Brothers in Haiti
Reaching Out to Tornado Victims
Needs Include Prayers and Financial Support

By Diocesan Staff and Information from the Episcopal News Service

“May the spirit of God hover over the broken, lost, and grieving, and may they meet the love of God in their neighbors’ responses.”

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop

Our diocese is reaching out to aid the victims of the recent tornadoes including the one that swept across Oklahoma on May 20 creating widespread devastation, loss of life, injuries, and great suffering. Bishop Sloan invites us to hold our brothers and sisters affected by the recent tornadoes in our prayers. “I have been in touch with Bishop Ed Konicek, of the Diocese of Oklahoma, and have offered our prayers and support. We are in the process of sending initial emergency relief funds to the diocese,” he notes. “Our diocesan disaster coordinator, the Rev. Deacon David Whetstone, will remain in contact with the Diocese of Oklahoma to determine how we can further assist our brothers and sisters there as the long recovery process gets under way. While they are not yet ready to receive recovery teams, their greatest need now is for prayer and relief funds.”

On May 30, the Rev. Canon José McLoughlin, canon to the ordinary at the Diocese of Oklahoma, reported that the cleanup and recovery efforts are still very much in initial stages and financial contributions, prayers, and other assistance is welcomed. “A large part of what we are doing is sharing information and continuing to provide resources for short-term needs, for people who need clothes, gift cards, and assistance for housing,” he explained.

Canon McLoughlin continues to consult with Episcop al Relief and Development and others as the relief and recovery efforts continue to unfold. “Money is still the best thing to give at this point,” he emphasizes. “We are being contacted by people from out of state who want to come in and help, and we’re making sure we coordinate with them.” He points out that the need will continue for a long time, especially once the media spotlight is gone.

“We want to do things smartly and not duplicate efforts and make sure people know they are not being forgotten, both in the short term and the long term. We want to be part of the solution, whoever is doing the necessary work of recovery. Once people get a better idea of what their insurance companies are going to do, we will know better where gaps in services and housing are, and we’ll be able to assist with those.”

Individuals and parishes desiring to contribute to the tornado relief and recovery efforts are invited to make donations to the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama’s Disaster Relief Fund or the Episcopal Relief and Development’s Disaster Response Fund. Contributions to the Diocese of Alabama’s Disaster Relief Fund should be made payable to the Diocese of Alabama with Tornado Relief in the memo line and mailed to Carpenter House, 521 30th Street North, Birmingham, AL 35203; online contributions can be made by clicking the “Make an Electronic Contribution or Payment” button in the right column of our diocesan Web site (www.dioala.org), selecting the “Give Now” button, and then selecting “Easter Fund” from the drop-down menu. Check contributions to Episcopal Relief and Development should be made payable to the organization and mailed to Episcopal Relief and Development, P.O. Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058; online contributions can be made through their Web site, www.episcopalrelief.org.

Our diocese is also continuing to meet the needs of children and families in Alabama’s Black Belt region through our Sawyerville Day Camp ministry, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Over the years, the ministry has grown from one to two and now three sessions. Again, thanks to the gracious generosity of parishes, organizations, and individuals across our diocese, this life-changing ministry will serve close to 700 campers this year! For more about “Growing Together—Sawyerville Day Camp 2013,” please see page 14.

Plans to expand the mission and ministry of Camp McDowell, by adding 10 camp cabins and 6 conference lodges that are universally accessible and on flat terrain in a new area called Bethany, are becoming a reality. Dr. John and Joan Lane have been contacted by people from out of state who want to do something in this area. However, they are not looking for financial help. “They want help in any way we can assist them,” he said. “We are looking at the possibility of building a conference lodge in that area.”

Through the Krik? Krak! ministry initiated by our diocesan clergy spouses, medical and construction missions, and the gracious generosity of parishes, organizations, and individuals, our diocese is continuing to bring hope to and help meet the needs of our sisters and brothers in Haiti. “The underlying mission of the Krik? Krak! ministry is to empower the local people of Crochu,” Maggie Wade Johnston emphasizes. “We are working with them—we do not decide what they should do to meet their needs, rather we provide training, manpower (or womanpower), and support for the projects they deem most important.” For more about our ongoing Companion Diocese relationship with the Diocese of Haiti, please see pages 10-11.

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Please see “Diggin’ Bethany” on pages 6-7.
real thinking about what a profound idea that is. We say the same things over and over for years and years, but every once in a while something just breaks through the routine and demands that you pay attention.

Some months ago I was visiting one of our parishes and had such a moment. We had all survived the sermon and enjoyed the confirmations, and as the Eucharistic Prayer began I heard myself saying what I know I’ve said thousands of times before: “The Lord be with you.” So you said “And also with you.” And then I said “Lift up your hearts.” And then you said your next line—it’s in the book, after all: “We lift them to the Lord.”

What an extraordinary concept: “Lift up your hearts.” Lift your hearts up out of the world that so preoccupies our thoughts and actions into the presence of God. Lift yourself up, at least for a little bit, out of the cares and concerns that so weigh us down, miring us in the immediate—lift yourself out of the nagging reality of sore feet, bills to pay, and can you believe she wore that to church (bless her heart) and into a glimpse of the heavenly banquet that calls us out of the everyday mundane and into the eternal infinite wonder of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Hello, friends,

I love The Book of Common Prayer (BCP). With its rich, balanced theology and variety of services for many occasions and congregations, the BCP and the Bible are the books that shape us as Episcopalians. It has been and still is a great comfort to know what page we’re on, to know what the shape of the service is, to know what’s coming next. I know that almost every congregation in the Episcopal Church is using some option contained in this same book we have in common, whether they’re Low Church or High Church, a large congregation or small, formal or informal, Rite I or Rite II, guitar or organ—they use the Book of Common Prayer. Each congregation does the service a little bit differently, but everybody does it just right for their situation. And we tend to stay with what works for us—no need to tamper with it after we’re comfortable with it. It helps support the illusion that we’re in charge, an illusion that many of us seem to enjoy or need.

The potential drawback, of course, is that sometimes we tend to stretch being comfortable into being comfortable, and then before long we’re saying a bunch of stuff without paying much attention to what we’re saying. I know I do. I’ve been ordained now for 32 years this month, and I have to wonder how many times I’ve said “The peace of the Lord be always with you” without thinking about what a profound idea that is. We say the same things over and over for years and years, but every once in a while something just breaks through the routine and demands that you pay attention.

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The Redemptive Church

The redemptive society begins its work of healing when it is able to listen to and give people the opportunity to hear themselves or see themselves as they are without condemnation. We talk, teach, admonish, preach, and pour a lot into our encounter with others. What opportunity do we give others to hear themselves? In fact, we are more prone to prevent what is inside from coming up. That is, we feel that we are threatened by someone else’s inner pain and conflict and hence we must protect ourselves—we need a defense.

For the fellowship of the Church to be truly redemptive, people among us must be allowed to express their feelings without feeling threatened or condemned. They must be allowed to give off the steam gently and fluently. In this way they can feel the freedom and acceptance that allows them to be themselves by realizing that no one Christian or human being is superior to any other person—everyone basically has the same emotions, desires, and drives. Out of this knowledge people grow in two ways: They come to know, with the help of others, what behaviors affect them adversely and seek to find their own solution to the problems, and they develop the self-confidence that helps them initiate their own emotional and spiritual growth, i.e., taking ownership of the next phase of their interior development. In this Christian environment, people learn to accept themselves, and because they can accept themselves, they can accept others, too.

I once read the story of a father who wanted to chastise his son. The son was reluctant and came with dragging steps to his father, sometimes bending here and there, trying to get time in his favor or procrastinate in order to avoid punishment. But the father saw himself in the son—he remembered how he did the same things and how the description of his own father concerning himself resembled his son coming to him. He hugged his son and spoke lovingly to him. You can imagine his son’s relief—he was pleasantly surprised by his father’s acceptance of him. The point is not simply that the father hugged him or that the son escaped being punished, but that when the father saw himself, he could accept himself, he could love himself.

I feel sure that in such an atmosphere the son would be more willing to view himself objectively and so derive new insights into himself in order to fashion his own growth. Many people, when they see themselves reflected in other people, reject them by being hard, austere, and critical in their judgments upon them—so that in most cases what they are speaking to is not the other persons’ weaknesses and faults, but they are speaking to their own weaknesses and faults. So much of our harshness to other people would end if only we could just come to love ourselves.

Is our Church ready to accept people without the slightest criticism? Or does it constantly reject itself and deny its weaknesses in its condemnation of people? Can the fellowship of the Church liberate instead of oppress? I cannot overstate how important it is for groups within the Church and for worshipping congregations to become aware of the fact that those who come among us may come seeking the release of love and fellowship that they cannot get at their work or at home.

The term “redemption” is widely referred to in Christian theology as “the act of restoring someone from their former state of enslavement to freedom, a release from bondage, in this instance “sin,” to freedom. There is generally a price involved in this process. In the wider scheme of Christian belief and praxis, that price is called “Grace,” the free gift of God in Jesus Christ without any “strings” attached.

There are several terms in Greek that speak to this act of redemption. The one I prefer is, exagorazo—it gives a sense of movement, that is from one state to another, always from a sense of brokenness to wholeness. Christ becomes the freeing agent, the liberator, the redeemer, leading from bondage of the law to freedom in him. In this understanding, we proclaim “hope” in the midst of sheer hopelessness, and the former always takes premium place. Love overcomes hatred, light overcomes darkness, tolerance overcomes intolerance, and acceptance overcomes prejudice; likewise one is able to see the face of Jesus in all persons.

Equally so, redemption makes “holy space” for everyone, including the least of us. I have always interpreted my conversion and call to the Christian life and ministry as an act of God’s redemptive love, a love that even after 32 years in ordained ministry and 40 years since my conversion still amazes me and constrains me to my knees in the posture of humble adoration. I’m acutely aware that the space I occupy in the grand landscape of God amounts to a generous and unconditional gift, and how thankful I’m every day for his kindness and sustains the “redemptive church.”

My Christian virtue lies in my loving “my neighbor as myself,” and this is the overriding motivation that guides and sustains the “redemptive church.”

The Rt. Rev. Santosh K. Marray
Assistant Bishop of Alabama

From Bishop Marray
Four Parishes Participate in Small Church Leadership Gathering

By Diocesan Staff

Thirty-five members of four small parishes assembled in Smith Station for a Department of Parish Development and Evangelism Small Parish Leadership gathering on May 11. The participants represented St. Stephen’s in Smith Station, Emmanuel in Opelika, St. Andrew’s in Tuskegee, and St. Matthew’s in Seale. Bishop Marray led the workshop; the Rev. Donna Gafford, priest in charge of St. Matthew’s, and the Rev. John Klein, priest in charge of St. Stephen’s, also participated.

“It was an exciting experience of training and information sharing for participants and leaders,” Bishop Marray notes. “Participation was very high, which accounts for the level of enthusiasm and energy that was shown. It certainly indicated how deeply committed members are to their Church and how anxious they are about its capacity to fulfill God’s mission in their community.”

The workshop conversation generated much discussion about how these small parishes can remain viable, evangelism in small church settings, and ways small churches can collaborate to share resources and engage in mission and ministry together. Bishop Marray helped the parishes identify their unique challenges and pointed to ways to address them that can sustain life and vitality in their particular context and mission field. The four churches agreed to work more closely and collaborate in training and leadership, strengthening fellowship, and engaging programs that can be transformative and mission centered. Our Department of Parish Development and Evangelism is working to replicate this training across our diocese, particularly among small churches and churches in rural Alabama.

A task force, consisting of two representatives from each congregation, was organized to develop a strategy to implement this new initiative called “The Four Small Parishes Initiative.” Beginning this fall, Bishop Marray plans to meet with each congregation individually to do additional training in their local parish context.

“The day was a wonderful testimony of fellowship, building new friendships and new community, and drawing strength and inspiration from other congregations with similar challenges and opportunities,” he says. “The day was rooted in prayer as we participated in the Service of the Celebration of New Ministry for St. Stephen’s Church and John Klein, its new priest in charge. We concluded the day in worship led by Father Klein.”

Individual Mission Grants Awarded

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

Our diocesan Department of Mission and Outreach awarded several Individual Mission Grants in 2012 for both domestic and global missions.

The Rev. Deacon Jerry Jacob, of Grace Church in Cullman, used the grant he received as start-up funds to provide needed services to the elderly in his community. Russ and Lili Henderson, members of Christ Church in Albertville, used their grant to fund their medical mission to Kenya. Russ, who serves on the vestry of the parish, says, “We are grateful for your support. Praise His name!”

The Rev. Deacon Jerry Jacob in Myanmar with friends in the Anglican Internally Displaced Persons Camp in Myitkyina, where they sought refuge from the conflict between their ethnic minority group and government forces in Kachin State

Jonathan Chesney, a seminarian at Virginia Theological Seminary and former youth director of the Ascension in Montgomery, used his grant to fund a monthlong visit with missionaries in Myanmar to understand more deeply the call of proclaiming the Gospel in a predominantly non-Christian environment. “I believe my trip to Myanmar will be critical in my continuing formation as a church leader. The church in Myanmar taught me much about being a missional church; every parish, diocesan center, and bishop had a missional aspect to their ministry and Christian identity. One bishop even had written on the entrance and exit to his diocesan home: ‘Life is Mission.’ It was also important simply to continue to build a relationship with part of our Church so far from our shores. We follow an Incarnate God, and so our spiritual relationships must also have flesh on them, especially for places like Myanmar, where our brothers and sisters are emerging from imposed isolation and are hungry for contact with the larger Church and world. It was a blessing to travel among, visit, and get to experience some of life of the Anglican Province of Myanmar.”

Elisabeth Elliott, a member of the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, joined a team of missionaries Mike and Lauren Deibert in Nicaragua. The Advent supports these ministries financially and through prayer. Working through Missionary Ventures, an interdenominational national mission organization that seeks to show the love of Christ to all nations, Elisabeth is teaching in a small village in Nicaragua. “As a Missionary Ventures Field Specialist, I will be a full-time missionary serving as a part of a team in Nicaragua. I will specifically be working as a teacher at Nicaragua Christian Academy in Matagalpa. I feel very blessed to be joining an international organization and a team in Nicaragua through whom the Lord has been working for quite some time.”

Individual Mission Grants are available for individuals of any age connected with our diocese who are directly involved in sharing Christ’s love with people in need domestically or outside the United States. Requests for a grant may be submitted at any time throughout the year by completing an Individual Mission Grant application, which is available on our diocesan Web site, http://dioala.org/ministries/mission_outreach.html. For more information, please contact me at jgquick@bellsouth.net or 205/669-6862 or Sarah Sartain, our diocesan Staff Officer for Ministry Development, at ssartain@dioala.org or Carpenter House, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203.
“Full” is a word that gets used often at Camp McDowell. Reservations Manager Paula Byrd can be overheard telling many interested groups, “I’m sorry, we’re full on that date.” Kids participating in the McDowell Environmental Center joyfully complain, “I’m so full!” after eating a camp meal. If we are full, there’s no room for more. This is fine when we’re talking about cinnamon rolls, but it can be a problem when we’re talking about people who want to experience Camp McDowell.

You may know about the plans to expand the mission and ministry of Camp McDowell in a new area called Bethany. It is named for the place where Jesus’ friends lived. In order to alleviate this pressing problem of needing more room at camp, we will add 10 camp cabins and 6 conference lodges. This expansion will almost double the number of beds on our property.

Expanding our facilities will also allow us to expand our ministries. More parishes will be able to have a retreat and grow in Christian community. More Special Sessions can be hosted—now on flat terrain and in universally accessible structures. More youth can learn to serve and grow in Christ as they care for more special campers. More students can attend an environmental camp—this time in the form of farm education—and more adults can participate in our growing Alabama Folk School. Essentially, more people can come to camp and hear who God is calling us to be.

Of course doubling our facilities will take a lot of effort and monetary commitment. We are grateful to have an exceptional campaign cabinet of 18 people to lead us on our journey. The Rev. Rich Webster and Ricky Bromberg are our campaign cochairs, Phyllis Hall is leading the major gifts effort, and the Rev. David Meginnis is our parish point person. If you have any questions, please contact Development Director Danielle Dunbar at danielle@campmcdowell.com or the Rev. Mark Johnston at mark@campmcdowell.com.

The first donors to the Bethany Campaign were Dr. John and Joan Lane of Trinity in Florence. They have chosen a cabin to be named “James Lane.” Read Dr. Lane’s letter (at right) to learn why this project is so important to them.
Just to give you a little background, I grew up a Methodist and Joan a Catholic. I guess you could say we came to the Episcopal Church as a compromise. As a child I went to church regularly but never really felt like God was speaking to me directly. I ventured away from regular attendance as an adult, but I felt like I was shirking my duties as a husband and father about 13 years ago. So I decided to get back to church and chose Trinity Episcopal in Florence. To be honest I really went to get my ticket punched so when I called my mom on Sunday afternoon and she asked the question I knew she would ask, I could truthfully say, “Yes, I went to church.”

At my initial visit to Trinity, I felt the Holy Spirit for the first time in my life. It happened with music. During the service, we sang what the Order of Service called the Kneeling Hymn, “Give Thanks.” It really choked me up. The lyrics just spoke to me. When I heard “and now let the weak say I am strong,” I just lost it. There I was, crying uncontrollably, among a group of people I did not really know well. Even the ones on my pew who knew me the best couldn’t wrap their mind around their husband and father crying like that in public. I am not talking a few tears running down my cheeks. I am talking about my whole body shaking as I knelt and cried. As odd as it was for me, it was really comfortable to feel what I would describe as the warm embrace of the Holy Spirit. Spiritually, I was beginning to feel like I was home for the first time.

What struck a chord with me from the lyrics of that song related to our son James. He had been born with Cerebral Palsy [CP] and was physically challenged in many ways. For a couple of years after finding out about James’s diagnosis, I had struggled with the old question of why bad things happened to good people, or in James’s situation to an innocent child. My first visit to Trinity did not supply the answer, but when I heard “let the weak say I am strong,” I knew it was a message from God that James would be fine.

James was a triplet. We had gone six years without being able to have a second child. I had prayed and prayed that we would receive that blessing, to no avail. Then I prayed that if God had a child with special needs, he should send it to the Lanes. Well . . . He did. He answered our prayer.

When we first found out about having triplets I was beyond overjoyed. When we had complications during the deliveries, I was blind to the risks but made a deal with God that day: If he would keep our triplets healthy and well, I would give up cussing. There were not many things I was really good at, but I held a PhD in cussing. Well, I quit, but shortly after, we found out James had CP. Why didn’t God keep His end of the deal? It made me angry about a lot of things, but mostly I was angry with God. Wait a minute . . . hadn’t I prayed for that very thing—a special needs child! But why were bad things happening to an innocent child?

In spite of the anger and confusion, I continued to search for the answer to my question. The spirit I felt through Praise music was my tonic. It is one of the main reasons I loved Cursillo and Camp McDowell so much. I learned that these songs were largely based on scripture. When I found a song I liked, I would search the Bible for the source of the lyrics. One of my favorites became “Refiner’s Fire.” I found the title referenced to 1 Peter 1:6-7: “So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as a refiner’s fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.”

We were blessed to have James for almost four years. This March marked the 11th anniversary of James stepping into eternity as he was made strong. As the funeral plans were being made, Father Tim Murphy asked if we wanted to utilize the traditional readings suggested for the burial rite in the Book of Common Prayer. We chose to substitute the epistle reading in favor of 1 Peter 1:6-7. Through it I realized God had kept his end of the deal after all. He had indeed made sure that the triplets were safe; James more so in His arms now than he had ever been in mine. As my best friend from Cursillo shared with me, God knew exactly what Joan and I were going through in losing a son. I learned Jesus did not promise an easy path for the faithful. Rather, He knew it would be a more difficult path to follow Him. As Peter wrote to the exiles scattered to the four winds of the Earth, faith in Jesus is a refiner’s fire.

I hope you can see how special needs issues and Camp McDowell are very important to me. My wife and I first heard Mark Johnston speak of Bethany Village during a Lenten luncheon in 2011. We were so excited to hear the new camp would not only be accessible but offer employment opportunities to those with special needs, and we wondered how we could be a part of it. The thought of naming a cabin in James’s honor so those with special needs will have a place to enjoy Camp McDowell for generations to come has created emotions that have been difficult to contain. Joan and I have been humbled to have this opportunity.

While all of this has been fantastic news, there has never been a more wrong time for our family to make a financial commitment at this level. It is a grade of magnitude larger than any donation we have ever given. We are in the midst of the college tuition years and will be for another 10 years. We would like to replace our aging secondhand cars and would love to travel or renovate the house. All of that has taken a backseat to Bethany. Our entire family has never been more certain that this is the right time from a spiritual standpoint to make a major pledge to help Bethany Village become a reality.”

God’s Peace,
Dr. John Lane
Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell

Summer Camp Is Filling Up Fast—Sign Up NOW!

By Susanna Whitsett, Camp McDowell Staff

Some of our sessions are already full, but we still have space for campers who are entering 9th grade and younger. We especially would love to have more of you wild and wonderful 6th, 7th, and 8th-graders attend camp this summer!

ATTENTION MIDDLE SCHOOL and JUNIOR-HIGH CAMPERS: We want to see YOU at camp this summer! Invite a friend, and come to camp. We have loads of fun, learning, laughing, praying, and playing just waiting for you!

ATTENTION “BIG CAMPERS” (moms, dads, grandparents, etc.): We know you don’t want to let the kids have all the fun. We have space for you and your “little camper” too! Our unique Primary Session (August 2-4) is specially designed for all rising 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-graders and one adult (“big”) camper to attend together. Talk about quality time! Our enthusiastic and creative staff attend to all the details so all the “big campers” really have to do is HAVE FUN with their little camper. How’s that for a summer vacation!

BISHOP MARRAY WILL DIRECT PRIMARY SESSION 2! Have you ever been canoeing with a bishop? Here is your chance! Assistant Bishop Santosh Marray will serve as the director for the Primary Session 2 on August 2-4. We are so excited to welcome him as a very special “Big Camper”! Please join us for Bishop Marray’s debut as a session director.

Pratt and Allison Paterson with their twins McKee and Edie

Mothers and Daughters Make Wonderful Memories Together!

By Susanna Whitsett, Camp McDowell Staff

The Mother/Daughter Retreat on April 5-7 brought 115 mothers and daughters to a beautiful spring weekend at Camp McDowell, where they enjoyed hiking, playing, praying, canoeing, arts and crafts, mother/daughter yoga, centering prayer, and singing. Erin Hollifield of All Saints’ in Birmingham, assisted by her daughters Emma Kate Hollifield and Cate, Madelyn, and Grace Mehrer, led the program. The Rev. Deacon Katy Smith of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham served as chaplain for the event, with assistance from volunteer Summer Staff members Maddie Webb, Heather Whaley, and Maggie Paul as well as mother/daughter pair Kim and Erin McAdams of St. Stephen’s. Deanna Hughes and Melissa Mistrot offered a special Liturgy of the Light celebration from the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program to the younger daughters, and Marcy Miller of All Saints’ in Birmingham led mothers in Centering Prayer.

Camp McDowell’s Environmental Center staff added even more fun to the weekend with a Native American-focus hike led by “Big Dave” Holloway, storytelling and team-building led by Zechariah Hook, and high ropes led by Cait Brown and Teasha Omeis. Of course, no weekend at Camp McDowell would be complete without a Pasture Party and hayride—the group was happy to have the Rev. Mark Johnston and Danny Whitsett facilitating those activities!

As you can see from our photos, we just loved being at Camp McDowell and being together! Mark your calendar to register next January for the 2014 Mother/Daughter Retreat Weekend!
Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell

By Sarah Mills Nee, Alabama Folk School Director

Come to Camp McDowell on July 29-30 not only for a chance to visit magical Camp McDowell for a couple days, but also to be trained to teach four environmental education programs: Project Wet, Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, and Project Flying Wild. Usually you would have to go to four different workshops to get this much training—but experts Doyle Keasal, Helena Uber-Wamble, and I will train you to teach all four project-based curricula in just two days!

EEAA (Environmental Education Association of Alabama), McDowell Environmental Center, Birmingham Audubon Society, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Outdoor Alabama, and Alabama Wildlife Federation are sponsoring Project Blitz. EEAA is covering the cost of meals and materials for the two-day training—participants pay a $15 deposit to cover their membership in EEAA; everyone who already is an EEAA member will be refunded the $15 later. Participants who want to spend the night at Camp McDowell will cover the cost of their lodging.

Registration is limited so register now . . . don’t miss out on this amazing opportunity! For more information please contact me at maggie@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.

The Alabama Folk School at Camp McDowell hosted its annual Bluegrass and Gee’s Bend Workshop in April. More than 50 participants took eight music and crafts classes—it was a big success, and a great time was had by all!

Once again Mary Ann and China Pettway of Gee’s Bend, Alabama, taught a room full of eager students how to create beautiful quilts, taking breaks to sing hymns and tell stories. June Mays of Birmingham helped four women design a landscape plan for their yards in her Garden Design class, which included a field trip into Jasper and a slide presentation. The bluegrass music classes also were well attended, with many students returning from last year. One of the music instructors, Ross Martin, traveled all the way from Brooklyn, New York, to teach mandolin.

The highlight of the workshop was the instructor concert on the last night. Many of our talented instructors, including the Gee’s Bend quilters, performed, sang, and played their instruments for the students.

We cordially invite everyone to our Jam Camp Weekend, Acoustic Guitar and Crafts Weekend, and Old-Time Music and Crafts Week—we promise you’ll have a great time!

Come Have a GREAT Time!

By Sarah Mills Nee, Alabama Folk School Director

of jamming, take a hike to a swimming hole, go canoeing, or just relax! For more information please contact me at 205/387-1806 or folkschool@campmcdowell.com, or visit www.alfolkschool.com.

Acoustic Guitar and Crafts Weekend
September 20-22
Our 2nd annual Acoustic Guitar workshop will feature three acoustic guitar classes that will suit any level learner. Herb Trotman will teach Introduction to Acoustic Guitar, and Jim Ohlschmidt will teach Acoustic Finger Style Guitar. We will also offer a class in Advanced Acoustic Guitar. Plus we’ve got crafts classes—and with cooler weather and beautiful changing leaves, it’s a great time to be at Camp McDowell! For more information please contact me at 205/387-1806 or folkschool@campmcdowell.com, or visit www.alfolkschool.com.

Old-Time Music and Crafts Week
October 31-November 3
Come join us for our annual four-day Old-Time Week! Our top-notch musical and artistic teachers include Suzy Thompson and Jimmy Traplett (fiddle), Bill Mansfield and Adam Hurt (banjo), Tim Avalon and Eric Thompson (mandolin), and Susie Coleman and Jim Holland (guitar). For more information please contact me at 205/387-1806 or folkschool@campmcdowell.com, or visit www.alfolkschool.com.
Working With Our Sisters and Brothers in Haiti

The Krik? Krak! Ministry in Haiti Continues To Grow

By Margaret Wade Johnston

The clergy spouses of our diocese started the Krik? Krak! ministry three years ago as a way to feed 250 children at St. Alban’s School in Crochu, Haiti. Thanks to the generosity of parishes, organizations, and individuals across our diocese, not only are we still providing nutritious hot lunches for the students, but the Krik? Krak! ministry is continuing to grow by leaps and bounds!

In May 2012, the second phase of the ministry funded a team of eight folks who put their muscles and brains to work on some manual labor projects in the Crochu area. We turned a barren, hard, rocky piece of land adjacent to St. Alban’s School into a small garden that is now providing peppers, eggplant, okra, beans, and other fresh produce. We also planted vetiver grass on a mountainside to help slow the erosion in a clear-cut area.

Probably the most important thing we did on that mission trip, though, was create a cultural exchange between the Americans and the local people of Crochu. Zech, one of our Krik? Krak! volunteers, is a theater major who teaches at McDowell Environmental Center. One day when we were in Crochu, Zech broke into a re-creation of a Charlie Chaplin skit. By the end of his impromptu performance, he was being followed by a laughing, cheering throng of more than a hundred people...no words were needed to transcend the language barrier!

The Krik? Krak! ministry has accomplished many tangible goals as well as at least one very significant intangible one—creating rapport and trust among the people of Crochu, the Rev. Fritz and Carmel Valdema (our host priest and his wife), and our Krik? Krak! team. Andrew Shea, our Krik? Krak! “Boots on the Ground” staff member, has been a leading force in this, opening many doors we previously thought were locked forever. Andrew, who works in Haiti on a regular basis—coming and going at least once a month, refers to himself as the McDowell Peace and Justice Corps staff person.

This past year Krik? Krak! built latrines for 10 families in the Crochu area, where there are almost no latrines and sanitation is a major health concern. This year we will build more latrines and also start a small farm on a piece of land owned by St. Alban’s Church just down the mountain from the school. A local family will live on the property and serve as the caretakers—a portion of the farm’s produce will help feed the family, and a portion will benefit St. Alban’s school. The people of Crochu also have asked for our help in getting a grinder for their grain, and Andrew has been researching various types of grinders that do not require electricity and can run on solar power.

Krik? Krak! is also building cisterns to catch rainwater, which could save the people who live in Crochu many long trips to the spring, which currently is their only source of water. Beth Keyes is a Girl Scout leader in Florence, Alabama, and the girls in her troop donated $1,000 from their cookie sales to build a cistern for one family. It is amazing what one small group of young girls can do to make life better for other people!

This year our Krik? Krak! ministry will provide small micro-finance grants to assist people in Crochu, particularly ladies, in starting their own small businesses. In addition, we will help local young people get vocational training by connecting them with local masons, builders, chair makers, and others who can teach them trades they can use whether they choose to stay near their home or move to another community. All of these projects are made possible by a generous grant from the Tinker Murdock Family Fund. Thank you, Mike and Anne Murdock!

The underlying mission of the Krik? Krak! ministry is to empower the local people of Crochu. We are working with them—we do not decide what they should do to meet their needs, rather we provide training, manpower (or womanpower), and support for the projects they deem most important.

For more information about the expanding Krik? Krak! ministry and ways you can help, please contact Andrew Shea at 256/308-5073 or shea003@hotmail.com, or visit “Like” our Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/krikkrak.org.
Eight Members of Our Diocese Participate in Haiti Connection Conference

By Diocesan Staff

Eight representatives from our diocese attended the Haiti Connection meeting held at the rebuilt Montana Hotel in Petionville near Port-au-Prince on April 10-12.

More than 200 people from 25 states and Canada attended the meeting at the hotel, which was destroyed in the 2010 Haiti earthquake. The Alabama contingent included the Rev. Deacon Gerri Aston of St. Andrew’s in Birmingham; Laura Grill of Holy Trinity in Auburn and her niece Emily Duke, who is a UAB nursing student; Maggie Johnston, Director of McDowell Environmental Center and cochair of our diocesan clergy spouses’ Krik? Krak! ministry; Anne Kimzey of the Ascension in Montgomery; the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick of St. Andrew’s in Montevallo; Andrew Shea, a Krik? Krak! ministry staff member; and the Rev. Deacon CJ Van Slyke of Trinity Church in Clanton and coordinator of our Companion Diocese Commission.

“From Wednesday evening until the final Eucharist on Friday at noon, we had the opportunity to meet all those who are in some way connected to the Diocese of Haiti in their ministry, hear about new visions, and share ideas and resources,” reports CJ. “Some had been working in Haiti for more than 30 years. Other Haiti partnerships include the Presbyterian Church USA.”

The Rt. Rev. Jean Zache Duracin, Bishop of the Diocese of Haiti, spoke about the One Body of Christ. He said that when one suffers, we all suffer. The suffering that occurred as a result of the earthquake is not Haiti’s alone, and in the healing process of the One Body, there is one language—the language of love.

Bishop Duracin and diocesan Chief Executive Officer Sikhumbuzo Vundla spoke about the new vision for the Diocese of Haiti, which calls for a second diocese to be created in the northern part of Haiti. They emphasized that partnerships are about building relationships and coordination, and the new vision calls for the creation of a partnership commission to work more closely with ministry partners.

“We were also introduced to the wonderful work being done at St. Vincent’s Centre for Handicapped Children, which the Diocese of Haiti established in 1945,” CJ adds. Children who are deaf, blind, or developmentally challenged have the opportunity to learn skills and receive an education, and the facility also provides a residential home for many of the children. Destroyed by the earthquake, St. Vincent’s has been rebuilding slowly, and it is scheduled to receive new programs in occupational and physical therapy beginning this year. Some of the children sang and played bells during the conference. “It was very beautiful and emotionally moving,” CJ recalls. “It is in these moments that economic and social distinctions become blurred, and we become the recipients of God’s love through the children.”

The Alabamians learned about many other organizations working in Haiti in various areas of healthcare, education, and sustainability projects. “Our very own University of the South–Sewanee was there to share their efforts concerning forestry projects and cross-cultural exchange at the university level,” CJ notes. “Please continue to pray for all those who are called to work and serve in Haiti. We give thanks to God for our Alabama partnership, which has a strong presence in the everyday lives of our brothers and sisters in Haiti and has truly made a difference.”

Seminarians Visit Haiti To Develop Effective Communication Tools

By Mary Balfour Van Zandt, MDiv Middler, Seminary of the Southwest

In October 2012, my classmate and I received grants from the Evangelical Education Society of the Episcopal Church (EES) and the Seminary Consultation on Mission (SCOM) to travel to Haiti. Our vision for our trip was to communicate the stories of the Episcopal Church in Haiti in a manner that magnifies the mission of the Church in Haiti and inspires people to view the Church in Haiti in a new light. Part of our vision was to use multiple media to express these stories in a way that reaches people who are interested in social justice, the arts, and social media but who may not know about the Episcopal Church and the stories that make up the Episcopal experience.

Our desire was to spend three weeks in Haiti working alongside, listening to, and forming relationships with Episcopal Haitians. During that time, we used social media to communicate our experiences in real time.

When we returned to the Seminary of the Southwest, we engaged in a reflective process that allowed for maturation of the stories entrusted to us.

The fruit of that reflective process was tangible communication tools we can use to share the good news of Episcopal Haitians with the Church in Haiti and the wider community. We believe that the communication tools we have developed can be put to use both by the Church in Haiti and by churches and ministries in the United States.

We believe effective evangelism often means sharing the stories that matter to us in a manner that encourages all people to view their own stories as part of the story of salvation.

We are blessed to have had the opportunity to spend three weeks with our brothers and sisters in this amazing country. The Episcopal Church in Haiti is diverse, strong, working hard for the poor, and most importantly focused on Christ and being the hands and feet of Jesus. It is our hope that our communication efforts have shown the Church in Haiti in a true and good light.

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Remembering and Welcoming

Submitted by Susan Oakes, Youth Ministries Coordinator

he was to us for welcoming him like an old friend when we only just met him and how much he appreciated our hard work and how he couldn’t wait to attend another Youth Department event. This struck me deeply, and I became so flustered that all I could do was give him an awkward hug. Suddenly I remembered my first Youth Department experience and how it changed my life and made me want to run for Youth Department. In that moment I knew that I had achieved everything I had wanted to achieve when I was first elected to serve our Episcopal diocese, that I wasn’t only having fun and playing at Camp McDowell, but that what we did was meaningful to at least one person.

We had not been doing our work, but God’s work. I realized then that it was our time to move on and let another group of 11 awkward kids become a family and share their love with the world, even if it means something to only one person—that’s enough.

Margaret Blackerby, Middle District Representative:

Serving on the Youth Department has been an experience I will never forget. I have learned so much about myself and made lifelong friends. I am so impressed by the power of peer ministry in our diocese and look forward to seeing what exciting things the amazing youth of our diocese will do in the years to come.

Jess Lingle, At-Large Representative:

Youth Department, as cheesy as it sounds, has changed my life. I’ve found myself incredibly in tune with my spiritual life and seeing more and more of those “God is right here, right now I can feel it” moments. I was lucky enough to be able to be in charge of music this year—working with Fran and Corey was such a blessing, and I learned so much from both of them too!

But my favorite part of Youth Department was absolutely the community. I not only felt more unified within our diocese but also with my fellow Youth Department members. We truly have become a family this year, and they have all taught me so much, I think without even realizing it. I got the chance to work with some of the most amazing people I’ve ever met, and I honestly don’t know what I’m going to do without them next year. Thank you to everyone for making this such a tremendous experience—I cannot wait to see what next year holds!

Sarah Tillman Reeves, Southern District Representative:

Serving on Youth Department this past year has been such an eye-opening experience for me. It is safe to say that in the past I underestimated the strength of our diocese’s youth. Never in my life did I see myself reading aloud The Prayers of The People in front of 500 adults at diocesan convention. Nor did I expect to start a flash mob with the bishops in the middle of the next day’s agenda. I have come to realize that the Diocese of Alabama expects so much of its youth. My greatest realization, however, is that the youth of our diocese are more than ready to step up to the challenge.

Personally my experience on Youth Department has helped hone my leadership skills. With the help of my peers and adult mentors, I was able to identify my own talents and strengths and learn how to use them in a way to help lead others. My hope for the future Youth Department members is that they will see this experience as an opportunity to step up to the challenge set before them by our diocese and also take the time to learn a little about themselves along the way.

Katherine McCown, At-Large Representative:

This year serving on Youth Department has by far been the most memorable of my life. The relationships I’ve made through this ministry will last the rest of my life. Youth Department has also given me the ability to be a leader among my peers, and I’ve found a voice for myself in our diocese. I’m surprised by how much I’ve grown and how much more comfortable I am now with myself. I will take the leadership skills I’ve learned this year into every aspect of my future.

All I can say to the new Youth Department is to enjoy every moment of this upcoming year because it’ll be over before you’re ready!

Parker Turner, Southern District Representative:

Having the opportunity to serve on the Youth Department this year has meant the world to me. Getting to work with so many amazing youth and adults in this ministry that puts so much emphasis on servant leadership helped me reshape my life to be the person I truly want to be. I’ve met people this year I am proud to call my best friends, and I’ve created relationships I hope to carry with me for the rest of my life.

So to anybody out there thinking about running for Youth Department, do it! The commitment is 115 percent worth it.

Logan Oakes, Youth Department Chair:

Being a member of the Youth Department is often how I identify myself. The experience and responsibility has shaped who I am and changed my life in the best way possible. I’ve matured and grown in so many different ways, and I’ve built some friendships and memories that are a permanent part of my life. This peer ministry has been the foundation of my spirituality during the most formational time of my life. It has taught me what it means to be a servant leader, the rewards of working together, and the vital joy of fellowship.

The thing that first got me hooked on our Episcopal diocese was a community that genuinely welcomed me and appreciated me as who I am. During my time on the Youth Department, my top priority has always been to foster the same environment that invites people to be themselves—the person God made them to be. I am proud of the work we have done. Amen.

Eva Marie Faison, Northern District Representative:

There is an old, somewhat cliche saying that declares, “Home is where the heart is.” In serving on the Youth Department this past year, I have never felt a truer sentiment. By working, playing, and praying together with these 10 other members, I have learned the truest and most profound sense of home and what it means to live through love. The Youth Department is my family, and this has been the most wonderful experience of my life.

I learned exactly how special the Youth Department is relatively recently. On the last morning of Rites of Spring, all 11 of us decided to ignore the “no clumping” rule and all sit together at breakfast to share our final meal together. As we were finishing up eating, a camper approached our table and sat there silently for a few moments to gain our attention. Then he proceeded to tell us how thankful

This past year’s Youth Department members preparing “words of wisdom” to share with the incoming members

On April 6, adult and youth members of the former and current Youth Department gathered for a transition meeting.

Kristen Hamon, Youth Director at St. John’s in Dothan, and Caitlin Gillham, Youth Director at Holy Trinity in Auburn—these are the kind of adults who volunteer to serve with our youth!
Two of the participants in Happening #62 held at Grace Church in Anniston reflect on their experience.

**Jason Whatley, Youth Leader at Holy Apostles’ in Hoover:**

WOW! What an absolutely incredible and humbling event. I was fortunate enough to have been asked to attend Happening #62 as an “adult Happener,” and let me tell you, it was an absolutely amazing experience. I will forever treasure and never forget the energy (greatly aided by the LARGE number of pixie sticks consumed over the weekend), passion, and openness of the entire Happening event. The incredible amount of behind-the-scenes planning and preparation was very evident, and as the weekend progressed, it just kept getting better and better.

I will strongly encourage all of our youth at Holy Apostles’ to attend Happening, and I will highly recommend that any and all other youth and youth directors do the same. One thing about Happening that is absolutely true is—“The Best Is Yet To Come!”

**Sam Cochran, Observing Shepherd:**

Happening #62 was a huge success! I feel that all of the Happeners got the full experience, which is awesome. The staff did a great job spreading the love to the Happeners, and the Happeners themselves were willing to open up, which allowed the weekend to function to its full potential.

As well as being a reviving spiritual experience, this weekend was also just plain fun. The success of Happening #62 has granted me high hopes for Happening #63 and all other future Happenings in the Diocese of Alabama.

**Holly Bauer, Southern District Advisor:**

Working with the Youth Department is a nice, refreshing change of pace from my day-to-day parish ministry. These young people offer a level of honest spirituality, courageous vulnerability, and genuine encouragement that I rarely see. They have caused me to grow in ways I wasn’t expecting, and they have required a level of humor that I sometimes forget to allow.

These teens have left a mark on me and youth ministry in the Diocese of Alabama that will never go away. I am so proud of them and all that they have accomplished over this past year, and I will miss each of them sorely. I know that wherever they go, they will take with them the love, friendship, and support we fostered among us, and they will likely change the world, as I know they have already begun to do.

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**Reflections on Happening #62**

We had a joyful group of teenagers, an incredible program, and some terrific spring weather for Rites of Spring. It was the perfect backdrop for our EYC Convention and elections of our new Youth Department members, saying good-bye to the seniors, and preparing for the new leaders to step into place.
IT’S ALL FOR THE KIDS!

By Leslie Manning, Sawyerville Coordinator and Camp Director

Our theme for this summer is “Growing Together,” and we cannot wait to celebrate our growth during the 20th summer of Sawyerville Day Camp!

We have Bible verses assigned to each day that fall under this broader theme, and we cannot wait to let our roots grow even deeper in Hale County and in the hearts of the children and young people! As you probably know by now we are GROWING once again and will host a third session this summer. This year’s camp dates for the staff are June 21-29, July 5-13, and July 19-27. Each session will include new campers and for the most part new staff members. We will have around 300 staff volunteers spread out over the three sessions and serve close to 700 campers! Thanks to your generosity and support, all of these people will attend camp for free.

We have so many churches and countless individual volunteers throughout our diocese and on the local level involved in Sawyerville Day Camp. Special thanks to Memily Colvin, coordinator of all the Supply Drives; Evelyn Fritchard, Meals Coordinator; and Linda Kennedy, Prayer Partner Coordinator; as well as all our coordinators who have worked so hard in advance of the camp to get things ready. We have almost 60 specific coordinators who are all working on pieces of the camp beforehand from staff to music and worship to housing. Many thanks!

In addition to all the growth we are experiencing, we are also working to enrich our soil. We continue to pray and discern better ways to teach and form our young campers and staff members. This year children’s ministry experts Kathy Graham, Leslie Dunlap, Leslie Lynch, the Rev. Lynette Lamphere, Betsy Fetner, and Ann House came together and wrote our wonderful program curriculum for the Lower Camp (6 to 8-year-olds). Each session will use this Christ-centered program outline—everything from the daily journal time and activities to arts and crafts. The young people follow a workshop model and travel in small groups to each of these activity areas, which will teach and reinforce our theme and daily teachings. We are also exploring science and nature with this young age group! These talented experts put their heads together and wrote something that could be used again in coming years. Each session’s specific coordinators are invited to bring their own “flavor” to the program, but we’ve given them an incredible starting point—making it easier on the volunteers, easier on the budget to procure one set of supplies for all three sessions, and easier for the staff to follow and implement.

Our oldest age group will enjoy a program designed by William Blackerby, Kristin Hanson, and Jermaine Cole. These fantastic young adults and longtime Sawyerville staff members are integrating the best of what’s worked for program before and inviting new ideas. We look to invite local faith leaders to speak to this older group as well as hosting our annual AIDS/HIV/STD prevention workshops. We are using members of the local health department, AIDS Alabama educators, and other faithful Episcopalians to remind the young people that they are made in the image of God, and it’s from this place that we care for our bodies and one another.

Fran McKendree is even working on a camp theme song that we will sing each day! We cannot wait to deepen our relationships and experience Christ, the Sower and Giver of all Life, this summer in Hale County. We cannot wait to share videos of this exciting theme and all the activities that go along with it. Another incredible way we are nurturing our soil and growing deeper together in Christ is by hosting breakfast this summer for all the campers! We are excited to incorporate this into the camp day and add another meal for the campers. Alabama has the second highest rate of hunger in the country, according to the Alabama Poverty Project. The staff and campers will share breakfast together, enjoying time for nourishment and fellowship. We hope that by making sure everyone is fed, we will enjoy a smoother camp day and be able to feed everyone in body, mind, and soul. Special thanks to the Cathedral Church of the Advent’s Lenten Lunch program for making this possible.

If you still want to be involved in this year’s camp sessions or visit for a day, please contact me at lmanning@dioala.org or 205/470-9482. To read along about the camp during the sessions, please follow our blog (http://sawyervilledaycamp.wordpress.com), which will be updated daily with stories, photos, and videos. We would love to bring you into the Sawyerville Day Camp family! Our family tree is colorful, vast, and much larger than you could even imagine!
CPC Gives $7,386.68 to 14 Alabama Seminarians in 2012

Marilyn Atkins, ECW Church Periodical Club Diocesan Coordinator

The board of our diocesan Episcopal Church Women has initiated its 2013 campaign to raise funds for the Alabama Church Periodical Club (CPC), whose sole mission is to assist our Alabama seminarians in purchasing their textbooks. Each spring the ECW board reminds parishes and groups that CPC Ingathering(s) can take place any time during the year and in a variety of ways, including taking a special offering to fund seminarians book purchases. Each fall, we divide all of the contributions made to CPC among our diocesan seminarians. Last year CPC contributions provided each of 14 seminarians almost $530. Our seminarians expressed their gratitude for this gift generously donated by Episcopalians throughout our diocese. Here are just a few of the thoughts expressed in the thank-you notes we received.

"Thank you for helping me achieve my dream of serving God’s people as a priest.” —Mary Balfour Van Zandt

"Thank you for your ministry and for using it to demonstrate you care for seminarians.” —Sarah Miller

"This year I will be purchasing vestments along with the usual book supplies, and your faithful support is very helpful.” —Mary Bea Sullivan

I am writing you this note in utter amazement of your thoughtfulness and God's grace. We are so grateful for this generous gift that the ECW has blessed us with so mightily. Our financial situation is much tighter than last year, and this gift is timely and immeasurable. Please know that because of affirmations like this, we are encouraged and ever greater resolved to continue our pursuit of God's wonderful/scary calling for our lives.” —Chris Hartley

"Leslie and I cannot thank you enough for this unexpected gift. We are continually grateful for the support we have received through the ECW while in school.” —Bentley Manning

We appreciate the work of the ECW and the Church Periodical Club—you are truly angels to us.”—Bess and John Jenkins

You can make a contribution to CPC by sending a check payable to “ECW, Diocese of Alabama” with “For: CPC” in the memo line to ECW, Carpenter House, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203.

Exhibit Features Members of the Ascension in Montgomery

Enrique Gómez-Jiménez, Octavio Gómez-Jiménez, and José Luis Gómez-Díaz, members of the Ascension in Montgomery, were featured in a documentary video and still photographs produced by Auburn University at Montgomery professor Dr. Silvia Giagnoni in an exhibit titled “Before We Were Us, We Were Them: Immigration and Alabama.” This student-curated exhibit presented a visual history of immigration in Alabama and featured contemporary photographs and interviews, as well as historical photographs and documents borrowed from the Library of Congress, the Alabama Department of Archives and History, and Cullman County Museum.

Dr. Pamela Long, associate professor and Director of World Languages and Cultures at the university and a member of the Ascension, was guest speaker at the exhibit, which opened on April 22 in the university’s Goodwyn Gallery. The Ascension members featured in the exhibit and members of their family were special guests at the exhibit opening.

A Prayer for Our Alabama Seminarians

Lord Jesus, we ask your special blessing on the seminarians of the Diocese of Alabama as they prepare for ordained ministry. We pray they will grow in faith, hope, and charity. May the gifts of the Church Periodical Club aid them in their studies so that they will be formed for ministry with a compassionate heart, a hunger for understanding and wisdom, and a desire to inspire others in answer to your call. When they are lonely or discouraged, fill them with your peace and the knowledge of our care for them. May your spirit be known by them and through them, for your glory and honor and the furtherance of your kingdom. AMEN.

14th Annual Parish Leadership Training Event

More than 120 diocesan lay leaders and clergy gathered at St. Luke’s in Birmingham on April 20 for the 14th annual Parish Leadership Training Event (PLTE), which is designed to challenge and educate our parish leaders, both lay and ordained, and equip them with new tools, techniques, and ideas to take back to their parish.

Keynote speaker Mary Parmer, a congregational development consultant from Austin, Texas, shared her expertise on newcomer ministries, parish assessment, core value discernment, and visioning. She gave a presentation on her Newcomer Ministry Project, which features creative ideas and resources to bring new energy and spirit to congregations and encourage growth in membership. She also offered a workshop on Newcomer Ministry Congregational Assessment with checklists, ideas, and resources under the headings of Invitation, Welcome, and Connection. To see her keynote address and all of her resources, please visit www.epicenter.org/newcomer.

PLTE was also fortunate to have Natalie Aho lead a workshop on Digital Ministry: New Ways to Stay Connected. She addressed the foundational shift in the way we communicate and form relationships in the digital age and how we can view the Internet as an additional opportunity to reach people in new ways. Participants walked away with an understanding of how effective online communication will help clergy and parishes in this digital age.

New vestry members and wardens had an opportunity to meet with Bishop Sloan and Bishop Murray, and the parish treasurers discussed basic business affairs of a congregation with the Rev. Rob Morpeth, diocesan Staff Officer for Finance and Administration. The Rev. John Mark Ford, rector of St. Catherine’s in Chelsea, and Sarah Sartain, diocesan Staff Officer for Congregation Development and Clergy Transitions, facilitated a workshop on Parish Development and ways our diocese can support parishes as they grow. A variety of other workshops on all aspects of parish life included Faith Formation in the Home presented by our diocesan Department of Christian Formation (please see the article on page 19 for more information), Pray-Believe-Love-Serve by our diocesan ECW board, Invitation to Connect with Diocesan Youth Ministries, and Are You Prepared to Lose It All by our diocesan Department of Liturgy and Music.
How the Clergy Addressed in the “Letter from Birmingham Jail” Responded

By the Rev. Douglas M. Carpenter; Photos by Fontaine Carpenter Pearson

On April 16, 1963, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. began handwriting the first draft of a letter from his jail cell in Birmingham, where he was held after being arrested for participating in nonviolent demonstrations. He addressed his now-famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail” to eight white clergy who had asked for a delay in the civil rights campaign in Birmingham: the Rt. Rev. Charles Colcock Jones Carpenter (Sixth Bishop of Alabama), the Rt. Rev. George M. Murray (Bishop Coadjutor of Alabama), Rabbi Milton L. Graffman (Temple Emanuel-E), Roman Catholic Bishop Joseph A. Durick, Methodist Bishop Paul Hardin (Alabama-West Florida Conference), Methodist Bishop Nolan B. Hammon (North Alabama Conference), the Rev. Edward V. Ramage (First Presbyterian Church and a Synod of Alabama Moderator), and the Rev. Earl Stallings (First Baptist Church).

Fifty years later, on April 16, 2013, the Rev. Douglas M. Carpenter, one of Bishop Carpenter’s sons, and the Rev. Dr. Bernie King, one of Dr. King’s daughters, had the opportunity to recall events of 1963 and share their personal thoughts at a commemorative breakfast at the Westin Hotel in downtown Birmingham, which was followed by a special noontime event at the site of the old Birmingham jail and an evening panel discussion at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. “We talked of both our fathers, and I told Bernie that I was at her father’s funeral in Atlanta. She was only five years old at the time,” Doug says. “I have given her a copy of the biography of my father that I have just published, and she also has a copy to pass along to the Rev. Andrew Young, who spoke so positively of my father in his sermon at the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Robert Wright, Atlanta’s first black Episcopal bishop.”

Bishop Sloan, who also participated in the panel discussion on April 16, adds, “We give thanks for the ministries of Doug and Bernie, for the ministries of their fathers, and for this moment of reconciliation.”

Since I am a son of one of the eight white clergy addressed in the famous “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” written by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., I am often asked about my father’s response to the letter.

Actually, there never was a letter sent directly to the eight white clergy. They all saw it, as the rest of the nation did, when it came out in newspapers and magazines weeks after it was completed. But that time was seen not as a personal letter but rather as a statement to the nation and to President John F Kennedy, the Rev. Billy Graham, The New York Times, the local Birmingham clergy, some of the successful black businessmen in Birmingham, and others who had urged Dr. King and his supporters to slow down and hold off for a time to see what effects the recent dramatic change from a commission to a mayor/council form of government would have in the city and surrounding area. From every direction, Dr. King and his supporters had been hearing “slow down,” but they chose to go ahead with their plans to use demonstrations and marches in Birmingham to raise awareness about civil rights injustices.

The responses of the eight clergy to this amazing letter, which launched the civil rights movement into a national campaign, were not so much responses to the letter as they were simply responses to the need for civil rights reforms. In an article this brief, I can mention only a few responses, and since I am writing this especially for The Alabama Episcopalian, I’ll mention how my father, the Rev. Charles Colcock Jones Carpenter, responded in particular.

As part of the May 10, 1963, settlement between the civil rights leaders and the prominent business leaders in Birmingham, a biracial “Group Relations Committee” was to be formed for the purpose of continuing improvements in race relations. Bishop Carpenter was chosen (are you surprised?) to be chairman of this 24-member committee, which was composed of about 40 percent blacks and 60 percent whites to correspond with the numbers of each group in the Birmingham population. Two other white clergy addressed in Dr. King’s letter were named to this committee, Roman Catholic Bishop Joseph A. Durick and Rabbi Milton L. Graffman of Temple Emanuel-E. Three leading black clergy also were on the committee, the Rev. J. L. Wave, who served as vice-chairman; the Rev. Edward Gardner; and the Rev. Abraham Woods. All three were Baptists who had been training their congregations for almost a decade in nonviolent events. The Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth was not included on the committee because he had moved his residence to Cincinnati in 1961. The other members of the committee included well-known Birmingham business and professional people and educators.

The committee discussed and acted on a variety of issues, including law enforcement, voter registration, reopening of parks, job training and upgrading jobs for blacks, removal of segregation signs, appointment of blacks to city boards, school desegregation, integration of health facilities, requirement of courts and juries to administer similar sentences to blacks and whites, etc. As you can imagine, all of this came about very slowly, and today you can see the results.

Both bishops of our diocese and other local white clergy also responded to Dr. King’s letter by agreeing to meet with President Kennedy at the White House on June 17, 1963, to talk over the Birmingham situation. These clergy were not caricatures of inept and unconcerned Southern preachers, as many people outside the South thought—they were heavily involved in civil rights efforts. The Rev. Edward Ramage and the Rev. Earl Stallings, the only two of the eight clergy who were pastors of Christian congregations, warmly greeted black visitors on the Easter Sunday that Dr. King was in the Birmingham jail, a brave move that led a majority of the members of their churches to reject them. These two clergy were much more vulnerable than the five bishops and the Jewish rabbi, who had many liberal supporters in his congregation.

Three days after the four young girls were killed in the bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on September 15, 1963, Bishop Carpenter and Bishop Murray and the other six white clergy addressed in Dr. King’s letter attended the funeral of three of the girls at Sixth Avenue Baptist Church (Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was still recovering from the bombing). On September 23 and 30, the Trustees of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church Memorial Fund met with Bishop Carpenter at Carpenter House. As you read various accounts of the events of the 1950s and 1960s in Birmingham, you will learn that Carpenter House was considered a welcoming and safe place for integrated meetings, which at that time put people, especially black people, in harm’s way. One of Bernice King’s aides told me that the people would show up one at a time so no one would suspect that an integrated meeting was taking place.

Yes, our Episcopal bishops made many responses to the
The Rev. Liston Garfield Receives “Making the Difference Award”

On April 30, Tuskegee University honored the Rev. Liston A. Garfield with the “Making the Difference Award” for his “loyal dedication and unwavering commitment to Residence Life and Development and the Students of Tuskegee University.” Liston, who is the rector of St. Andrew’s in Tuskegee, also serves as the Episcopal Chaplain to the university, where he has provided pastoral care and support for 20 years.

Liston’s ministry to the Tuskegee University family began when he became the rector of St. Andrew’s in 1993. Under his leadership, St. Andrew’s expanded its outreach to the university community and made the parish’s facilities available for use by the students for study sessions, meetings, and other activities throughout each academic year. During the holidays, members of the parish provide a pre-Thanksgiving meal for students remaining on campus and Christmas fruit baskets.

St. Andrew’s also offers opportunities for students to experience and learn about the Episcopal faith. The Tuskegee University Golden Voices Choir has participated in the parish’s annual Tuskegee University Sunday services.

bombing a residence was a maximum of $100 and 180 days in jail.

Even after the bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church at 10:22 on Sunday morning, September 15, 1963, our local police claimed there was “not enough evidence” to bring a conviction! Even the FBI, under the direction of J. Edgar Hoover, closed the case with no conviction five years later in spite of the fact that Alabama Attorney General Bill Baxley discovered in 1971 that the FBI had files on four suspects: “Dynamite” Bob Chambliss, Bobby Frank Cherry, Herman Frank Cash, and Thomas E. Blanton Jr.—J. Edgar Hoover had ordered that the FBI files on these men not be revealed to the prosecutors. In 1977, Bob Chambliss was finally convicted of murder and sentenced to several terms of life imprisonment. The case was opened again in 2000, and in April 2001, Thomas Blanton Jr. was convicted and received four life sentences. In May 2002, 39 years after the bombing, Frank Cherry received a similar sentence. In the meantime, Herman Cash died before he was brought to trial.

“Justice delayed is justice denied” took on specific meaning in regard to the four young girls who died at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. That lack of concern for black people not only in Alabama but also in United States government agencies can help people understand what people working for justice were up against. For more information about the difficulty and danger of moving civil rights along in Birmingham in those days, read Douglas A. Blackmon’s Slavery by Another Name—it will take your breath away.

Around Our Diocese

The Rev. Liston Garfield holding a picture taken when he graduated from Tuskegee University in 1974

President of Tuskegee University Dr. Gilbert A. and Mrs. Rochon, the Rev. Liston and Jackie Garfield, Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Cynthia Sellers, and Director of Residence Life and Development Jennifer Burno-Reed

The Rev. Douglas Carpenter and the Rev. Dr. Bernice King sharing personal stories

The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan, the Rev. Douglas Carpenter, and the Rev. Dr. Bernice King at the panel discussion at Sixteenth Street Baptist Church

On April 30, Tuskegee University honored the Rev. Liston A. Garfield with the “Making the Difference Award” for his “loyal dedication and unwavering commitment to Residence Life and Development and the Students of Tuskegee University.” Liston, who is the rector of St. Andrew’s in Tuskegee, also serves as the Episcopal Chaplain to the university, where he has provided pastoral care and support for 20 years.

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sitting in Birmingham in 1963, but the responses were more to the needs of the people of Birmingham than to Dr. King’s letter. The letter was fairly slow in getting the enormous response that it later rightfully received.

And speaking of “slow,” the progress toward social justice continued at what we would consider a slow pace, and to understand the reason for the slowness, people need to know what those of us living in Birmingham were up against at the time. For decades certain white people had bombed and killed black people with impunity and had threatened white people who disagreed with them. As we think of the rapid response to the recent bombing in Boston, it is tragic to remember that of the 40 or 50 bombings of black homes in Birmingham in the late 1940s and 1950s, every police report stated that there was “not enough evidence available” to convict anyone. At the time, the maximum punishment for a person convicted—was anyone ever convicted?—of
NetsforLife® Inspiration Fund Exceeds Goal

Submitted by the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, Diocesan Representative

Thanks to the incredible generosity of supporters from across the Episcopal Church and beyond, the NetsforLife® Inspiration Fund has successfully exceeded its goal of raising $5 million. Between 2010 and 2012, thousands of individuals joined congregations, dioceses, schools, and organizations in this churchwide, grassroots effort to unite Episcopalians in the fight against malaria. Since 2006, Episcopal Relief & Development’s NetsforLife partnership has distributed more than 11 million mosquito nets and reduced malaria-related deaths by 45 percent in participating sub-Saharan African communities. THANK YOU for playing an important role in this success!

“To have raised $5 million, from a grassroots level, by church communities working together is significant,” says Laura Ellen Muglia, cochair of the fund’s national campaign advisory committee. “Even more impactful is knowing that the mosquito nets distributed will mean children, mothers, fathers, grandparents, cousins, and whole communities will have a life without malaria, a new life of many possibilities, a life of hope.”

Working with churches and faith-based groups, NetsforLife has been a leader in malaria prevention, reaching more than 30 million people in remote areas across Africa. In addition to distributing mosquito nets, the fund covers the cost of educating the recipients about the proper use and maintenance of the nets, training 82,000 community malaria agents to deliver the lifesaving nets, and providing ongoing monitoring and evaluation of malaria prevention practices. Of the 17 countries where NetsforLife is active, five (Angola, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Zambia) have adopted aspects of the program’s methodology as part of their national malaria policy, and many others have solicited input for countrywide strategic planning.

At the 2009 General Convention, the Episcopal Church made the NetsforLife Inspiration Fund the centerpiece of its prophetic response to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and pledged 0.7 percent of its budget to this campaign. All Episcopalians were invited to learn more about this disease, how to prevent it, and contribute toward this important undertaking. Led by a Campaign Advisory Committee with four co-chairs and members from across the Church, the campaign exceeded its fundraising goal in early 2013.

Although the campaign is complete, the work of NetsforLife will continue. The gains made in malaria control are fragile and require ongoing investment. The goal for 2013 is to distribute more than 3 million additional nets. 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 jjquick@bellsouth.net or 205/669-6862.

Upcoming Events, Workshops, and Retreats

CAMP MCDOWELL FOLK SCHOOL EVENTS

Jam Camp Weekend
July 5-7
Want to play music but don’t want to take a class? Come in July just to jam. And when you get tired of jamming, take a hike to a swimming hole, go canoeing, or just relax!

Acoustic Guitar And Crafts Weekend
September 20-22
Our 2nd annual Acoustic Guitar workshop will feature 3 acoustic guitar classes that will suit any level learner. Plus we’ve got crafts classes too—and with cooler weather and beautiful changing leaves, it’s a great time to be at Camp McDowell!

Old-Time Music and Crafts Week
October 31-November 3
Come join us for our annual 4-day Old-Time Week! Our top-notch musical and artistic teachers include Suzy Thompson and Jimmy Triplett (fiddle), Bill Mansfield and Adam Hurt (banjo), Tim Avalon and Eric Thompson (mandolin), and Susie Coleman and Jim Holland (guitar).

For more information, please see the descriptions of the workshops on page 9 or contact Kathy Graham, Coordinator of Lifelong Christian Formation, at kgraham@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 9229.

Flying Wild. Registration is limited, so register now . . . don’t miss out on this amazing opportunity! For more information please see the description on page 9 or contact Maggie Wade Johnston at maggie@campmcdowell.com or 205/387-1806.

2013 COMMISSION ON SPIRITUALITY CONFERENCE
October 12 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at St. Andrew’s and the University of Montevallo
Creation invites the people of God to be faithful stewards as we are active beneficiaries of the bounty of God’s providential love. We are to respect its beauty, honor its divine origin and practical purposes, protect its future, preserve its heritage, and ensure its sustainability for the next generations. Our diocesan Commission on Spiritualit y is exploring why God has called Christians in the discipline of our faith formation to be his co-creators. One of our roles as mission-shaped Christians is to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

The commission invites you to explore more closely and intimately this aspect of our missionary life in its annual spirituality conference. Bishop Marray will help us deepen our understanding of the Spirituality of Creation (Genesis 1:31). For more information, please contact Kathy Graham, Coordinator of Lifelong Christian Formation, at kgraham@dioala.org or 205/715-2060 ext. 9229.

Clergy News

The Rev. Mary Catherine Akamatsu began serving as interim rector at Christ Church in Albertville on June 2.

The Rev. Daniel Mark Cenci was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Marray at St. John’s in Montgomery on May 18. He is now serving at the parish.

The Rev. Candice Burk Fraser was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Marray at St. Paul’s in Selma on May 16. She is now serving at St. John’s in Montgomery.

The Rev. Donna J. Gerold was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Sloan at St. Stephen’s in Birmingham on May 19. She is now serving at the parish.

The Rev. Thomas Michael Goldsmith was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Sloan at St. Mary’s in Jasper on May 22. He is now serving at Resurrection in Gadsden.

The Rev. Nancy Turner Jones will begin serving as interim rector of Epiphany in Guntersville on July 15.

The Rev. John Klein, who has been serving as a supply priest at St. Stephen’s in Smith Station, has been named priest in charge of the parish.

The Rev. Malcolm L. Marler was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Marray at Grace Church in Cullman on May 21. He is now serving in pastoral care at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

The Rev. John Seth Olson was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Sloan at St. Andrew’s in Birmingham on May 29. He is now serving at St. John’s in Decatur.

The Rev. Bayse Holland Shuey has resigned as priest in charge of Holy Cross/St. Christopher’s in Huntsville for health reasons.

The Rev. Bill Winters retired as rector of the Epiphany in Guntersville on May 12 and began serving as interim rector of the Ascension in Montgomery on May 15.
Here are some summer reading recommendations:

God's Big Picture by Vaughn Roberts
Showing how the different parts of the Bible fit together under the theme of the Kingdom of God, Vaughn Roberts provides both the encouragement and the tools you need to read the Bible with confidence and understanding.

Cameron Cole, director of youth ministries at the Cathedral Church of the Advent, says that this is an easy read and helps you understand how each book fits into the larger narrative.

Fathered by God by John Eldridge
In this life-changing message from John Eldridge, men will discover a paradigm-shifting path to manhood. The author unveils the six stages many men miss, stages they must complete in order to become the men God designed them to be. This was the book chosen for the Spring Men’s Hike, and the Rev. Joe Gibbes recommends it to provide joyful and helpful insight on what it means to be a Christian man.

East of Eden by John Steinbeck
This sprawling and often brutal novel, set in the rich farmlands of California’s Salinas Valley, follows the intertwined destinies of two families—the Trasks and the Hamptons—whose generations helplessly reenact the fall of Adam and Eve and the poisonous rivalry of Cain and Abel.

Dr. Mark Gignilliat says that this remains one of his favorite novels.

The Power and the Glory by Graham Greene
In a poor, remote section of southern Mexico, the Red Shirts have taken control, God has been outlawed, and the priests have been systematically hunted down and killed. Now the last priest strives to overcome physical and moral cowardice in order to find redemption. Gil Kracke, the director of Covenant Counseling and Education Center, says, “This story of a broken man still compels.”

Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold by C.S. Lewis
The Rev. Canon Deborah Leighton recommends this read. This psychologically complex novel retells the Greek myth of Cupid and Psyche through the eyes of Psyche’s sister, Orual. This profound reflection on relationship with God echoes Job asking, “Where is God in the midst of suffering?”

The Jesus Storybook Bible and Thoughts To Make Your Heart Sing by Sally Lloyd-Jones
Geared toward children but appropriate for all ages, The Jesus Storybook Bible contains one of the most thorough yet accessible expositions of the Good News in both the Old and New Testaments. Thoughts To Make Your Heart Sing, a book of devotions, contains sample and profound meditations for each day that perfectly accompany readings from The Jesus Storybook Bible. The Rev. Canon Deborah Leighton highly recommends reading them together as a family.

A Short Life of Jonathan Edwards by George Marsden
Jonathan Edwards (1703-58), one of the most extraordinary figures in American history, was a theologian, pastor, renowned preacher, missionary to Native Americans, biographer, college president, philosopher, loving husband, and the father of 11 children. Known best for his famous sermon “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” Edwards is often viewed as a proponent of fire, brimstone, and the wrath of God. As George Marsden shows, however, the focus of Edwards’ preaching was not God’s wrath, but rather his overwhelming and all-encompassing love. The author also rescues Edwards from the high realms of intellectual history, revealing him more comprehensively through the lens of his everyday life and interactions. The Very Rev. Frank Limehouse III, dean of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, says this biography of Jonathan Edwards is a well-written, engaging, historical reflection.

Grace in Addiction: The Good News of Alcoholics Anonymous for Everybody by John Z.
John Z. does an excellent job of unpacking the 12 steps of AA for the person who might not be struggling with alcohol addiction, but who knows what it means to struggle with sin. So sinner be encouraged—a book has come along that tells us not only the truth about ourselves, but above all the truth about God and his great love for us in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Gil Kracke, the director of Covenant Counseling and Education Center, agrees that this is a fantastically insightful book, even if you are 100 miles from an addiction. “It’s one of the best books I’ve read in a while.”

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; or visit the bookstore online at www.episcobooks.com.
Prayer Partners Needed!

By Leslie Manning, Sawyerville Coordinator

Please join us in a circle of prayer for our 2013 Sawyerville Staff Members. You simply write or send four notes to a staffer or coordinator for the camp sessions (June 21-29, July 5-13, and July 19-27). After a long day of working with the campers, it means a lot to get a few words of encouragement and support. This summer we have more than 300 staff volunteers who would appreciate your thoughts and prayers!

To volunteer to be a prayer partner or for more information, please contact Linda Kennedy at lindakenney17@gmail.com.

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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.

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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.