Bethany at Camp McDowell

Barn Raising Launches Capital Campaign

See more in this issue and at BethanyAtCamp.com
Camp Day Weekend 2013 included an old-fashioned barn raising that launched the Bethany at Camp capital campaign; please see “Camp Day Weekend 2013” on pages 2-5 and “Bethany at Camp McDowell” on pages 11-14. Photo by the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis.

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The Alabama Episcopalian

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Please send stories and photographs (color, if available) for The Alabama Episcopalian to Editor Norma McKitchick 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.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

In the Province 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
Assistant Bishop
The Rt. Rev. Santosh K. Marray
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. Justin Welby
Lambeth Palace, London
England SE17 1JU

The Alabama Episcopalian

November/December 2013

On the Cover

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Camp Day Weekend 2013
Fun, Relaxation, and a Barn Raising Too!

By Diocesan Staff; Photos by Gene Lawson and the Rev. Deacon Dave Drachlis

More than 175 people from throughout our diocese gathered for fun and relaxation at this year’s Camp Day Weekend on October 25-27. Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell offers one of the best places in Alabama to enjoy the beauty of fall, and Camp Day Weekend provided lots of reasons to be outdoors—horseback riding, hiking, the ropes course, hayrides, picnics, and even an old-fashioned barn raising! The weekend also included games for all ages, live entertainment, a dance, opportunities to watch football and cheer on favorite teams, and lots of time to relax with family and friends. The planned activities began at 5 p.m. Friday evening and ended after Eucharist and lunch on Sunday.

The barn raising on Saturday officially kicked off a $7.5-million capital campaign for Bethany at Camp McDowell. The Rev. Mark Johnston, vicar and director of Camp McDowell, welcomed everyone and thanked the many donors who had contributed to the campaign in the early stages, and Bishop Sloan led a service of blessing for the project. Danielle Dunbar, development director for Camp McDowell, shared how the project began to take shape several years ago in a room of dreamers and thinkers from across our diocese who wondered what camp would be like many years in the future. “They all agreed that camp was too ‘wonderful’ to keep to ourselves,” she explained, “so that day we laid a foundation to build a bigger and more accessible camp. We want more people, parishes, school groups, and individuals with special needs to experience the ministry of hospitality and exceptional programs of Camp McDowell. We don’t want to keep the door closed—we want to open it wide so more people can learn who God is calling them to become.”

Bethany at Camp McDowell will be a state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly, universally accessible addition designed to better serve people from our diocese and beyond regardless of their religious affiliation. In addition to serving as a summer camp, conference center, and spiritual retreat facility for Episcopalians from Montgomery to the Tennessee state line, Camp McDowell conducts a variety of educational and enrichment programs for adults and young people, including public and private schoolchildren and teachers. Bethany “village,” which will effectively double the size of the camp’s existing facilities, will provide additional cabins, lodges, dining and meeting facilities; an additional pool; a 5.2-acre lake; a performance hall; a working farm; and a commercial teaching kitchen.

Construction is expected to take approximately two years. The facilities will be built using environmentally sound construction techniques and materials and will employ a variety of energy-efficient technologies including geothermal heating and cooling, as well as wind and solar energy generation. Bethany will also employ an aggressive recycling and composting program with a goal of zero waste. The orchard and working farm, which will produce fresh fruits and vegetables and raise livestock and poultry, combined with the teaching kitchen will give students farm-to-table learning experiences. The working farm will also produce fresh food for Camp McDowell guests. In addition, Bethany will provide the Alabama Folk School with new studios, workrooms and a state-of-the-art performance/dance hall. For more about Bethany at Camp McDowell, please see pages 11-14 and visit www.BethanyAtCamp.com.
A Season to Celebrate the Gift of “Self”

Now for many Christians, “self” remains a four-letter word. A religion that teaches people to love others can seem at odds with a concern for “self.” You might think that focus on oneself contradicts the attention we should more properly direct toward God and our neighbor. By thinking this way, however, we forget something important about the great commandment You shall love your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12:31).

What we could miss are the words “as yourself,” meaning that the love we direct toward others presupposes self-love, and without self-love we could be hampered from truly loving another.

So, far from promoting selfishness or self-centeredness, the goal of our discussion is love—an activity that is ultimately directed toward another. While we really can’t go out to the other, nor receive love in return, until the self has been healed of things that inhibit relationships, the truth is that our relationship with God, first of all, and then with others, depends on a healthy sense of self.

One quality of soul that enables us to love others is self-esteem, the belief that we are lovable. Now you might be sick of hearing about self-esteem—I sometimes am. It’s become such a buzzword in our talk-show culture. Nevertheless, we owe ourselves respect, we owe ourselves positive regard.

You’d be surprised at the number of people I meet who have self-loathing. I remember one woman who couldn’t stand the sight of herself because she was aging and had lost her youthful looks. Another man hated himself, even though he was terribly sorry, for cheating on his wife. Whenever I meet someone like that, I give them a specific penance. I tell them that every morning on his wife. Whenever I meet someone like that, I give them a specific penance. I tell them that every morning when they’re looking in the mirror, as they wash their face or brush their teeth, to look at their reflection and repeat: “Behold the image of God; see God’s likeness.” That’s the root of self-esteem—knowing that God loves us unconditionally because God sees himself in us. It is God’s own reflection in the mirror, the reflection of Christ, the image of God, for God sees and loves us in what he sees and loves in Christ.

But not everyone, you know, saw God’s image in Christ. There were many things about the Lord which, in someone else, would have been cause for shame. Take, for instance, the circumstances of his birth, which were a potential source of scandal, something people could throw in his face to put him down. Suspicions about his origins dogged him throughout his life. At the height of his controversy with the establishment in Jerusalem, they brought it up to discredit him, sneering at him with the question: Where is your father? (John 8:19).

Then there was his hometown. Galilee was no place to be from if you wanted to be taken seriously. It was a place the elite looked down on because so many foreigners lived there, and it was known derisively as “Galilee of the Gentiles.” On top of that, Galileans spoke with a funny accent. So even one of Jesus’ first disciples, Nathaniel, remarked on hearing of Jesus, Can anything good come from Nazareth? (John 1:46). Or take Jesus’ social standing! We know his parents weren’t well off. When they presented him in the temple as a child, they made the offering of the poor: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons (Luke 2:24).

So when he began to preach the gospel, people couldn’t help wondering how this laborer from Nazareth, Palestine, could have this wisdom, this self-confidence, and this power to heal. They couldn’t help wondering: Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary . . . And they took offense at him (Mark 6:2-3). In all of this, Jesus’ humble origins did not deter his mission.

So every time we allow ourselves to be known through honest speech, every time we get to know another by receiving their word, every time we experience loving union, we are doing something godly. The intimacy between persons that such speaking and listening creates is heavenly. For whoever remains in love remains in God and God is in that one (1 John 4:18). Which is to say: when our own word becomes flesh; when we also risk telling another who we really are, what we truly think and feel, what lives in our hearts, and fuels our hopes; when we too speak the mystery of our own lives and loves; when we do as the Christ has done and come before others naked and weak in the messiness of our own manger, on the cross of our own shame, and from the darkness of our own tomb.

To pierce the cold night with a cry, to breathe forth our spirit and yield it to another, to rise and let another see the glory of God living in us, this is the imitation of Christ, who was born, died, and rose again. When we let our own word become flesh, sharing the grace and truth of the incarnate, crucified, and living Word.

Yet, how many of us are ready to know and be known? To speak our own, and receive another’s word? How many are prepared for the adventure of intimacy? Ready to get close and let others get close? For we avoid such disclosures, don’t we? We prefer the ways of God before the Christ came into the world: when God spoke in partial and various ways . . . through the prophets, but not through a son . . . the very imprint of [God’s] being (cf. Hebrews 1:1-3). In other words, we prefer to speak half-truths, to share ourselves in bits and pieces, to let our word falter and stutter, not really taking flesh, not fully bearing the stamp of who and what we are.

We shy away from self-disclosure because of the risk involved. We’re afraid if we ever let our word be truly spoken, we’ll be misunderstood or worse rejected. After all, look what happened to the Word: He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him—even the members of his own family. Yet, even should we have reason to fear, words can gestate for only so long, like the Word in Mary’s womb, and then our word, like Him, must be born.

So nothing should keep us mute, even if some might not accept our word. Anymore than the Word refrained from speaking; the risk of Bethlehem, apparently worth the rejection of Calvary. Why? Because, as John says, there is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear . . . one who fears is not yet perfect in love (1 John 4:18).

Fear forgets, moreover, how the Christ found acceptance and not only rejection. The same will be true for us. For every Herod who meets your word with suspicion and rage, there’ll be a Mary who treasures it in her heart. For every innkeeper who has no room for your word, there’ll be shepherds who hasten to hear it in her heart. For every scribe or Pharisee who judges your word, there’ll be a John who reclines at a table with you as a bosom companion.

As we move through the seasons of Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas with all the buzz, reflection, and festivities associated with them be mindful of the special “self.” Take time to thank God for “you,” and reach out to others so that they may also feel good about themselves. It’s the season to celebrate all of God’s goodness and blessing—so be grateful. Amen!

The Rt. Rev. Santosh K. Murray
Assistant Bishop of Alabama
The Cathedral Church of the Advent Calls Next Dean

The Cathedral Church of the Advent has called the Rev. Canon Andrew C. Pearson Jr. to succeed the Very Rev. Frank Limehouse III, who plans to retire as dean on January 12. Andrew currently serves as the Canon for Parish Life and Evangelism of the Advent, and he is a member of our Diocesan Council.

The vestry unanimously elected Andrew during a special meeting on November 5 that was called to receive and consider the recommendation of the search committee. The wardens announced the results of the election in a letter sent to the Advent parish family on November 6.

“I celebrate with the Cathedral Church of the Advent and with Andrew on his selection as the next dean,” says Bishop Sloan. “I’ve enjoyed serving with him in his diocesan involvements and at the cathedral, and I look forward to working with him in his new capacity.

“I also want to thank Dean Frank Limehouse for his friendship and his years of good and faithful service to our Church and the Cathedral Church of the Advent,” Bishop Sloan adds. “I wish him and his wife, Jane, all the best in retirement.” Frank has served as dean since 2005.

Andrew graduated from the University of Virginia in 2002 and the University of Oxford, Wycliffe Hall, Divinity, in 2007. Prior to being called to the Advent in 2011, he served as associate rector at the Parish Church of St. Helena in Beaufort, South Carolina. Andrew and his wife, Lauren Sandler Pearson, have three daughters, Lily, Mary Cabell, and Ware.

The Rev. Canon Andrew C. Pearson Jr.

Worth Stuart Joins Diocesan Staff as Lay Missioner for Young Adults

Worth Stuart recently joined our diocesan staff as the Lay Missioner for Young Adults. In this capacity, Worth will reach out to and work with young adults in the Birmingham area who are not active in an Episcopal parish with the goal of helping them develop a “Church Without Walls”—a community that is their own where they can engage in fellowship, conversation, theological reflection, outreach, and worship. “We are very pleased to have Worth join our staff in this new and important ministry,” says Sarah Sartain, our diocesan officer for ministry development and clergy deployment.

Worth grew up attending the Ascension in Montgomery. He completed his bachelor of science degree in psychology at the University of Alabama in 2007. As a college student, he served on the Camp McDowell summer staff, and since his graduation, he has participated in the Sawyerville ministry. Worth served as youth director of Trinity in Florence from 2008 to 2010 and as youth director of St. John’s in Montgomery from 2010 to 2013.

Creating a “Church Without Walls”

By Worth Stuart, Lay Missioner for Young Adults

We all want a place to belong, and for young adults, finding a place to belong can be hard. We’re good at staying busy—we’re starting our careers, we work out to try to stay healthy, some of us have children, and we try to maintain our social lives, but we also need a place to share our beliefs and explore life’s big questions. I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity by our diocese to create a “Church Without Walls” for young adults in the Birmingham area.

What exactly does it mean to be “Church Without Walls”? We will meet in a variety of different ways and in different venues. So far, we have had success with weekly event called “Holy Spirits.” We meet at the Garage Cafe in Birmingham to discuss a vast array of topics such as theology, current events, and social justice, and our conversations have proven lively and thought provoking.

Holy Spirits is just one expression of “Church Without Walls” that will be the basis of my work as Lay Missioner for Young Adults. In the future, young adults will have opportunities to be together through outreach, social gatherings, and unique worship experiences outside the stone walls of a traditional church building.

It’s truly exciting to be a part of this new initiative for our young adults here in Birmingham. I feel blessed to have been given this opportunity to explore what God has planned for this ministry.

If you are a young adult (age 21 and older) in the Birmingham area, please join us for Holy Spirits! We meet every Monday at 5:30 p.m. at the Garage Cafe, 2304 10th Terrace South, in Birmingham. For more information please contact me at wstuart@dioala.org or on Facebook “Worth Stuart.”

Bishops’ Visitation Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Bishop</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Alban’s, Birmingham</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>Holy Spirit, Alabaster</td>
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<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>Grace, Mount Meigs</td>
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<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Luke’s, Birmingham</td>
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<td>6 p.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>La Gracia, Birmingham</td>
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<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Mary’s, Jasper</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>Trinity, Clanton</td>
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<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>Holy Cross–St. Christopher’s, Huntsville</td>
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<td>December 23</td>
<td>5 p.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Mark’s, Boligee</td>
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<td>January 5</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Barnabas’, Roanoke</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>Epiphany, Guntersville</td>
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<td>January 12</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Luke’s, Scottsboro</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>Grace, Anniston</td>
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<td>January 19</td>
<td>10 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. John’s, Deaf, Birmingham</td>
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<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Thomas’, Huntsville</td>
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<td>January 26</td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Columba in the Cove, Huntsville</td>
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<td></td>
<td>10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Bishop Sloan</td>
<td>St. Timothy’s, Athens</td>
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Clergy News

The Rev. Callie Plunkett Brevton began serving as part-time associate rector of Trinity in Florence on November 1. Callie is also serving as part-time chaplain at the University of North Alabama in Florence.

The Rev. Neil Kaminski will begin serving Arkansas on December 1. Neil previously served as rector of St. Francis of Assisi in Indian Springs.

The Rev. Betsy Powell will retire as associate rector of St. Paul’s in Selma on March 1.

The Rev. David Powell will retire as rector of St. Paul’s in Selma on March 1.
Special Thanks for the Bibles!

Special thanks to the Cathedral Church of the Advent and the 5 O’Clock Band for their donation that made it possible for us to provide Bibles for the children at summer camp.

The children were so excited to use their Bibles in journal time each day! It gave them time to explore the Bible in a new environment, and they were so proud that the Bibles were theirs to keep. Many of them promised that they would read their Bible every day. I truly believe that tiny acts of giving such as this can slowly change the world into a happier, more stable place.

—Madeline Mullins, Middler Camp Program Leader

When we passed out the Bibles, the kids lit up at the prospect of calling them their own. The look on their faces when we told them they could keep the Bibles and take them home was heartwarming. Having the chance to take them home to keep, to write their names in, to leaf through pages and discover something new was worth every penny spent. The kids enjoyed the pictures and guides provided in this edition. It gave them a chance to see the Bible not only as a learning tool, but as something exciting and cool too.

One day during journal time, we played the mustard seed game, and the campers raced to find the mustard seed passage in Mark. This served helpful in recognizing that the children struggled with navigating the chapters and books. So the small-group leaders and various other mentors showed them how to find passages using the table of contents. After they became familiar with the location of the books, we played the game again. This time, every child taped the mustard seed to the line about the mustard seed and made a physical connection with the text. From now on, they will associate the message of the mustard seed with their faith growing at Sawyerville Day Camp.

—Andrew Cotten, Journal Room Leader

We have a new documentary coming to a church near you! At least, we would like to bring this incredible new short film into your church. We hope that you will book either Camp Director Leslie Manning or one of our diocesan Sawyerville Commission members to speak to a group at your church or workplace and show our new video. We can tailor the presentation to fit your Lenten program, Advent Sunday school theme, Wednesday night service—whatever would work for you!

We usually involve local staff members when we do a presentation so they can share their own stories. Let us come and say thank-you to our supporters or raise awareness in new places! Even if we have visited recently, we would love to come again with the new video and new stories after adding another session.

The video will also be available online. We cannot wait to show you this new footage! Thank-you to Linn Groff and Allison Kendrick for making this a reality.

For more information or to schedule a showing of our new video, please contact Leslie Manning at 205/470-9482 or lmanning@dioala.org.
The 2013 Sawyerville Christmas Project

Susanna Whitsett and Leslie Manning are coordinating the 2013 “Sawyerville Christmas Project” and hope you will be moved to participate in some way. Please join us again in celebrating and strengthening the gift of the Sawyerville Day Camp, a ministry that has enriched and empowered hundreds upon hundreds of children and youth from across Alabama.

We are delighted to extend this summertime project through recognition and celebration of the Camp and campers at a Christmas gathering on Saturday, December 21, at the Sawyerville Community Center.

* A gathering and meal for Sawyerville Day Campers who live in Sawyerville. This time of fellowship, fun, and celebration will include group games, singing, arts and crafts, and a time of worship.

* School-supply gift bags packed with paper, pencils, and/or crayons and colored pencils to be given to 300 children.

* Family food gift bags filled with beans, rice, and salt to be given to all families in attendance.

* Kleenex and hand sanitizer donations to be given to local schools.

* A gift that matches the cost to help cover the cost of food, arts and crafts, or an inflatable.

* Making a donation to help cover the cost of food, arts and crafts, or an inflatable.

For more information, please e-mail sawyervillechristmasproject@gmail.com.

2014 Sawyerville Day Camp

We are in the process of booking the 2014 Sawyerville Day Camp dates with our diocese and the Hale County Board of Education. We expect to announce the dates soon, and staff applications will be available in January. Camper applications will be available in the spring.

Stay tuned to www.sawyervilledaycamp.org.

Diocesan Youth Ministers Hold Kickoff Meeting

By Susan Oakes, Our Diocesan Youth Ministries Coordinator

Youth in our diocese are vibrant and strong. More than 40 adults serving as youth ministers and advisors (most of them full-time employees and the others part-time employees or volunteers) provide incredible youth programs within their local faith communities.

Not only are the programs at local parishes contributing to the strength of youth ministry, but our diocesan opportunities also enhance the Christian formation of our youth. Many of our youth ministers serving parishes throughout our diocese offer extra time, energy, and talents to our shared diocesan ministry with and for youth.

Our diocese cannot provide such a thriving youth ministry without the dedication of youth ministers, as well as clergy, musicians, and numerous adult volunteers. I thank you for offering your gifts so abundantly.

Youth ministers gather monthly for meetings called DYM (cleverly abbreviated for Diocesan Youth Ministers) where we spend time networking, learning, growing personally in our spirituality and professionally in our work as youth ministers, and always sharing time networking, learning, growing personally in our spirituality and professionally in our work as youth ministers, and always sharing time networking, learning, growing personally in our spirituality and professionally in our work as youth ministers, and always sharing time networking, learning, growing personally in our spirituality and professionally in our work as youth ministers, and always sharing time networking, learning, growing personally in our spirituality and professionally in our work as youth ministers. Our diocese creates a meeting every month for youth ministers, as well as clergy, musicians, and numerous adult volunteers. I thank you for offering your gifts so abundantly.

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The meeting schedule and location information is posted on http://www dioala.org/ministries/youth_ministers.html. All youth workers and volunteers are invited to attend these meetings; for more information please contact me at soakes@ dioala.org.

By Susan Oakes, Our Diocesan Youth Ministries Coordinator

Diocesan Youth Ministers Calendar of Events

Christmas Conference—December 28-30
Winter Weekend—January 17-20
Diocesan Convention/Youth Lock-in—February 21-22
Happening #64—February 28-March 2
Rites of Spring/EYC Convention—March 28-30

For more about age groups, locations, and registration information for these and more diocesan youth events, please visit http://www dioala.org/ministries/youth-about.html or e-mail our diocesan Youth Ministries Coordinator Susan Oakes at soakes@ dioala.org.
It’s Time for QT—Quality Time!

By Susanna Whitsetti, Camp McDowell Staff

As we go deeper into another busy school year, the need for quality time with friends, family, God, and self grows more important. At Camp McDowell, we are excited about all the wonderful events being offered for youth and families that support many opportunities for that all-elusive QT.

We invite you to join us, share this information with others, and hope to see you and yours soon enjoying some wonderful, much-needed quality in “God’s Backyard”!

Christmas Conference—Camp-Style Retreat
December 28-30
9th-12th graders
Senior High youth love this annual fun-filled retreat exploring “Immanuel—God with Us” led by the Rev. Seth Olson, the Rev. Josiah Rengers, musician Fran McKendree, and our diocesan Youth Department. Registration closes December 6 on www.dioala.org; for more information please contact Sarah Oakes at soakes@dioala.org or 205/715-2060.

Winter Weekend—Camp-Style Retreat
January 17-20
7th and 8th graders
Winter Weekend at Camp McDowell is all about having fun in the winter sun! With hot chocolate, bonfires, hiking, the Winter Wonderland Dance, a special program led by the Rev. David Dill, games, worship, singing, and more—this 3-night retreat is a great way to start the new year. Tell a friend, and mark your calendar now for a wonderful, wonderful Winter Weekend at Camp McDowell!! Registration opens November 9 and closes March 14 on www.campmcdowell.com; for more information please contact us at susanna@campmcdowell.com.

Rites of Spring—Camp-Style Retreat
March 28-30
9th-12th graders
All senior-high youth are welcome to attend this important and fun-filled retreat. During this event, the participants will elect the members of the Youth Department for the upcoming year; to learn more about running for election, please visit our diocesan youth website http://www.dioala.org/ministries/youth-department.html or talk with a current Youth Department member. Registration opens January 8 and closes March 14 on www.dioala.org; for more information please contact Susan Oakes at soakes@dioala.org or 205/715-2060.

Father/Son Retreat
February 28-March 2
1st graders and up
The Father/Son Retreat is for ALL combinations of fathers and sons. This weekend is about spending lots of quality time together hiking, canoeing, doing the ropes course, enjoying bonfires, and singing plus a great program and meaningful worship as well. This is the stuff lifelong memories are made of—come join us! Registration opens January 10 and closes February 26 on www.campmcdowell.com; for more information please contact me at susanna@campmcdowell.com.

Mother/Daughter Retreat
April 4-6
1st graders and up
The Mother/Daughter Retreat is for ALL combinations of mothers and daughters. This weekend is about spending lots of quality time together enjoying Camp McDowell in the beautiful springtime, camp activities, singing plus a great program and meaningful worship. You may choose to do as much or as little as you like—“rocking chair therapy” is a favorite at this retreat. Registration opens January 10 and closes April 2 at www.campmcdowell.com; for more information please contact me at susanna@campmcdowell.com.

The Best Summer Ever! Please visit www.campmcdowell.com to see the Summer Camp schedule and information about the sessions. Online registration opens January 7 at noon.

Basic Blacksmithing—Introduction to Forge Work

Come learn how to swing a hammer and move metal at this beginner-level workshop taught by blacksmith Lee McKee. Each participant will complete projects incorporating the seven basic forge techniques—tapering, scrolling, twisting, punching, cutting, upsetting, and forge welding. The participants need to bring with them a great attitude, strong work ethic, willingness to learn something new, and a favorite hammer, if they have one. Please wear leather shoes or boots, jeans, and a 100-percent cotton shirt. Bring eye protection (unless you wear prescription glasses); hearing protection is recommended.

For more information please e-mail Sarah Mills Nee at folkschool@campmcdowell.com or call Camp McDowell at 205/387-1806.

Upcoming Workshops

Blacksmithing Weekend
December 13-15
Back by popular demand, blacksmith Lee McKee will be teaching a blacksmithing course on the different ways to move metal through forging. (Please see story at left.)

From Scratch Weekend
February 21-23
Ever wanted to try your hand at an instrument or craft, but you weren’t sure where to begin? Well, look no more! During our From Scratch Weekend, our instructors will teach you the most basic principles on mandolin, guitar, fiddle, and more!

Bluegrass and Gee’s Bend Week
April 14-17
You don’t want to miss out on this workshop! Choose from 1 of 8 bluegrass music classes or try your hand at quilting with loving guidance from Mary Ann and Chuna Pettway of Gee’s Bend, Alabama, or screen printing from the talented and well-known Amos Kennedy. The beautiful spring weather will be a great addition to this fun week!

Jam Camp
June 20-22
This is Summer Camp for adult music lovers! Come to the Folk School to jam with friends and family in a relaxed setting, while taking breaks to enjoy canoeing, hiking, swimming and more.

Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell

The Alabama Episcopalian • November/December 2013
An old-fashioned barn raising at Camp Day on October 26 marked the official launch of the $7.5-million capital campaign for Bethany at Camp McDowell. The kickoff featured Bishop Sloan blessing the site of Bethany and many volunteers framing the walls and raising the roof of the first structure. The barn has been designed to house goats, horses, and other farm animals, and it will have a generous hay loft that will be used as a teaching space for the Camp McDowell Farm Education program.

Members of the Department of Camp McDowell and the Bethany Campaign Cabinet along with many of the campaign’s generous donors participated in the barn raising, creating a powerful image of how working together as a team can accomplish great tasks. The Rev. Deacon Clyde Pearce once again led us in building another “first” at Camp McDowell.

To date the campaign has raised $4.4 million, with an additional $825,000 in verbal commitments. Bishop Sloan and the Rev. Mark Johnston, vicar and director of Camp McDowell, have been busy meeting with prospective donors and have asked for an additional $2 million in gifts. Now that the capital campaign has been publically launched, we hope even more people in our diocese and beyond will learn about our ambitious project and offer their gifts and talents to help make the dream of Bethany at Camp McDowell a reality.

We are grateful for the early gifts of support for Bethany at Camp McDowell. We are energized to be working with all of these fine individuals, families, foundations, and organizations as we expand the mission and ministries of Camp McDowell.

Please continue to read “Diggin’ Bethany” in future issues of The Alabama Episcopalian and visit www.BethanyAtCamp.com for updates on the capital campaign. For more information, please contact Development Director Danielle Dunbar at 205/358-9234 or danielle@campmcdowell.com.
Offering You an Opportunity

Hello, friends:

A mighty work is taking shape, an ambitious dream is becoming reality, and the Wind of God is blowing in our midst. I’m writing to share my understanding of the vision of Bethany at Camp McDowell and to offer you an opportunity to be a part of it.

Bethany at Camp McDowell is a tool we’re going to use together to bring more and more people into awareness of the Kingdom of God. By one definition, it will be a place, just a set of buildings and structures—a place where programs will be offered, meals served, beds slept in and made up for the next group . . . but by a better definition, we’re growing a place where we are reminded to look up from our daily concerns and seek the presence of God. I think of it as weaving a basket to hold events and gatherings, not only expanding and improving what we’re already doing—environmental education, the Alabama Folk School, Special Sessions, programs and retreats for parishes and our diocese—but also other ideas and programs we have not yet imagined.

We’ll talk a lot about the drawings and plans, building materials and specifics, and the fundraising campaign to make it all possible—and all of that is important. But more important for right now is an understanding that the best part of this is that we’re agreed as a diocese that we all share Camp McDowell, this holy ground that we own together, and that it’s time for us to expand our ability to invite more and more people of all sorts and conditions to share this little bit of God’s holy ground with us, to realize with us that this is a special, blessed place that helps us see and know God’s Kingdom, to look for Christ in all of God’s children.

I hope you’ll take advantage of being part of this in your amazing generosity and give of your time and talent and treasure to help make this dream come true. I believe Bethany at Camp McDowell is something that we are going to be proud of for generations, and surely it will make you extra special proud if you can tell your children and grandchildren that you helped build it.

God’s Peace,

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

The Rev. Doug and Ann Carpenter—the “Dynamite” of Bethany

By Susan Ray

Camp McDowell was started with pennies, literally thousands of them. The Rev. Doug Carpenter, founding rector of St. Stephen’s in Birmingham and longtime Camp McDowell supporter and historian, recalls that his father, the Rt. Rev. Charles Colcock Jones Carpenter (the 6th Bishop of Alabama), sent paper peanut bags to parishes throughout the state so each member could collect pennies for the camp. Bishop Carpenter collected the bags during his parish visits.

“It was just after World War II,” notes Doug, “and because money was hard to come by, even giving pennies was significant. However, it was something everybody could take part in.”

In 1947, 14-year-old Doug spent part of his summer helping the Rev. B. Scott Eppes, who was charged with building the facility on the newly acquired property in Winston County. During following summers, he and other “work boys” laid pipes, took care of cattle, and did just about anything else that was needed, including blasting out stumps with dynamite, which was readily available back then.

“Everyone counts” and “friends working together” have been strong themes of Camp McDowell since the beginning. Several generations have experienced the safe sanctuary of Camp McDowell. Lifelong friends have been made here, and there is always a place for everybody. That’s what Doug’s wife, Ann Piper Carpenter, treasures the most about Camp McDowell. She remembers first going to camp when she was 10 years old and says it was such a great place to try out your wings. It’s also where she met Doug. Camp McDowell is such a special place for them that they spent their honey-moon there.

“When I think of Camp McDowell, I think of two people, Doug Carpenter and Mark Johnston,” says Ann. “That’s why, when Bishop Sloan first approached me about honoring Doug by giving his name to the dining/meeting hall, I was thrilled. I am so fortunate to be married to someone who embodies the characteristics of Camp McDowell, and I want to contribute to something that will be a permanent symbol of what Doug Carpenter stands for.”

The naming of the dining/meeting hall was supposed to be a surprise for Doug. That changed a few weeks ago when Doug’s longtime friend Jamie Care, who came all the way from Connecticut to work with him four summers at Camp McDowell in the 1950s, asked in a phone conversation if he had any influence on the naming of the building. Doug didn’t know what Jamie was talking about, but the next day someone else inadvertently gave him another clue, and he figured out what was going on.

Ann believes that the Bethany project is another example of how Camp McDowell exemplifies innovation and acceptance. It will include facilities that are easily accessible for people with disabilities and also give much more space for people to experience the joys of Camp McDowell with people from all walks of life.

What impresses Ann most about Camp McDowell is that while times and the camp have changed, the leadership, vision, and character remain the same. She thinks it’s amazing to be involved with something that always lives up to the expectations that have lasted for so many years. As a businesswoman she knows it is something rare. She contributes this to the fact that the leadership has actually been developed in the atmosphere of Camp McDowell, and she credits the current director, the Rev. Mark Johnston, for continuing the traditions. She admires the way he directs the facility and his vision of Bethany.

Ann emphasizes that by giving to the Bethany capital campaign you may think you are only doing something to help a worthy cause, but you will actually reap more benefits than the people you are helping.

FROM DIRT AND DREAMS TO REALITY
Inviting Everyone to Help
Make the Dream a Reality

By Dr. Pam Parker; Illustration by Bo Berry

Bishop Sloan had a dream that one day Special Session would be in a place that is welcoming for people of all abilities from all walks of life—a place where everyone is "able bodied." The Rev. Mark Johnston had a dream of expanding all that is good about Camp McDowell, programmatically and spiritually, so more and more children and adults can experience God's love and become the people God is calling them to be. Together they had a dream of adding a "village" of new easily accessible camp facilities for hosting additional summer camp sessions, parish retreats, conferences, and workshops as well as building on the success of the McDowell Environmental Center, the McDowell Farm School, and the Alabama Folk School.

They shared their dreams with other people and invited them to help make these dreams a reality. Bethany at Camp McDowell, reminiscent of the village where Jesus spent time sharing the love of God and relaxing with his friends.

Two years ago, I received the invitation to help with Bethany at Camp McDowell. At the time I really didn't know what that meant, but I soon found out. Over the past months, I have had the pleasure of meeting friends on a regular basis and helping plan for the future of Camp McDowell and the ambitious $10-million expansion project. Other friends who have accepted the invitation to help lead the project include the Rev. Rich Webster of St. Luke's and Ricky Bromberg of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, who are serving as the cochairs of the capital campaign; Phyllis Hall, the campaign's major gifts chair; Danielle Dunbar, Director of Development for Camp McDowell, who is keeping us on track; the Rev. David Meginniss; the Rev. Doug Carpenter; the Rev. Ray Pradt; Bunny Edwards; Roger Holliday; Melinda Sellers; Lee Handley; Tommy Jones; Rip Britton; Felix Drennen; Dr. John Lane; Carla Simmons; and Emily Rodgers.

Since I received my invitation to help with Bethany at Camp McDowell, we have conducted a feasibility study, presented the results to both our Diocesan Council and the Department of Camp McDowell, formed the capital campaign committee, and in less than a year raised $4.4 million toward the campaign goal of $7.5 million in gifts and pledges.

We invite each of you to help make the dream of Bethany at Camp McDowell a reality!

Many Thanks to Our Village of "Saints"

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

The three of us listened to one another intensively as we attempted to determine the most appropriate doors and windows for Bethany at Camp McDowell and the best ways to install them. We are constructing more than 30 new buildings in our expansion of Camp McDowell’s mission and ministry, and a "Village of Saints" is helping make the dreams become reality. One of those saints in this meeting was Cliff Darby, the president of Darby Doors Inc. in Florence. Another was Ingram Thornton, Camp McDowell's construction manager for Bethany.

Cliff and his family are active members of Trinity in Florence, and they also actively participate in summer camp, Cursillo, and parish retreats at Camp McDowell. When Cliff was invited to make a gift to the Bethany at Camp McDowell capital campaign, he responded quickly. Not only has he generously donated all of the doors, windows, and hardware needed for the new buildings, but he is also offering his experience and expertise to make certain that they will meet our needs. "We do not often have the chance to give back," Cliff says, "and I want to do anything I can to help Bethany be a success." Cliff, his family, and his company are making a difference. Their gift is part of more than a million dollars of "in kind" gifts that have been donated to Bethany at Camp McDowell.

Ingram grew up going to summer camp, and he worked on staff at Camp McDowell in the early 1990s. He helped build the Welcome Center when he was one of the "work boys," an experience that helped spark his interest in the construction business. After graduating from the University of Alabama, Ingram started doing residential construction. A few years later, he went back to school and earned a master's degree in building science at Auburn. He was a vice president at Capstone Development when he heard about the dream of building Bethany at Camp McDowell. About the same time, his wife was pregnant with their beautiful third child, and they had just learned that the unborn baby had Down syndrome. Ingram contacted me and said he felt called to leave his job and help build Bethany at Camp McDowell. I encouraged him to think about it for a while and then we would talk again. Six months later, Ingram felt the call stronger than ever, and with the support of his family, he joined the Camp McDowell staff as the Bethany Construction Manager.

We are most blessed to have him.

It takes a village to build Bethany at Camp McDowell, a village of saints like Cliff, Ingram, you, and me!
Thank You!

We thank all of our donors, the ones listed below as well as those who prefer to remain anonymous.

We are most grateful for your generous gifts to help make Bethany at Camp McDowell a reality.

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The Rev. and Mrs. James Woods
Ms. Pamela Wright
Ms. Tammy Yates
The Rev. and Mrs. Charles Youngson
Blessing of the Animals Services

Parishes around our diocese celebrated the Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi by offering services for the blessing of animals. The pictures are worth far more than a thousand words!
Pray~Believe~Love~Serve
The 124th Annual ECW Fall Conference

By Anne Couch Burke, Publicity Chair

“Pray~Believe~Love~Serve” was the mantra of our 2013 ECW Fall Conference held October 10 and 11 in historic Demopolis in Webb’s Bend at the confluence of the Black Warrior and Tombigbee Rivers. For me, the trek to the conference from Birmingham began with a frenzied preparation period consisting of packing and wrapping up work projects, locating my notes for the board meeting, tossing bags into the back of the car, and oh yes . . . the camera, couldn’t forget the camera—after all, it is my official duty to document and report on the conference. Whew! Like all of us, our busy lives so often do not leave us enough time to slow down and actually enjoy the activities that delineate our lives.

Well there I was, in the solitude of my car, driving to the tunes of the Baroque classics blaring through the speakers, finally on the road and able to unwind and start to focus on the mantra that I knew was to define the weekend . . . Pray~Believe~Love~Serve . . . Pray~Believe~Love~Serve. Most of the trip was spent on the highway, the road beneath me echoing the familiar rhythm of the clickity-clack you hear on a long excursion. Soon my exit approached, and then I was catapulted through a series of small quaint towns that harkened me back to another era. Beautiful old homes and plantations that were once the mainstay of this agricultural community now restored to their grand splendor and serving as historical attractions lined the rural roads that led me to my destination.

To my surprise, the two-lane road was suddenly engulfed in fog, which I learned later was a result of the humidity from the rivers. I felt that the atmosphere was all in preparation for the refrain of the weekend—Pray~Believe~Love~Serve . . . Pray~Believe~Love~Serve, and then I arrived at beautiful Trinity Episcopal Church, sitting just beyond the riverbanks in Demopolis, founded in 1833 not long after the state was organized in 1819. The nave was abuzz with the chatter of my fellow board members, most of whom had arrived the night before and commuted together at the board dinner hosted by Trinity and later at the Best Western hotel, which had a sign in front proclaiming the arrival of the Episcopal Women Church, which we are all still chuckling about!

After the business meeting adjourned, the magic began. Our keynote speaker, famed storyteller Dolores Hydock originally from Reading, Pennsylvania, but no stranger to most of us down here in the South, led us through an enchanted morning of stories that came straight from the heart. She had stories for each topic of our theme, Pray~Believe~Love~Serve. Story after story, she charmed us with her wit and sensitivity that left us begging for more. During each story there were such moments of delight and joy and sometimes raw
tenderness that led us to glance over to our neighbor sitting in the next pew. I found myself locking eyes with one woman in particular. She was a complete stranger to me, but every time Dolores made one of those heart-wrenching or hilarious comments, we would connect with each other with a grin on our faces just to share in the glow of the moment. Dolores was the glue that bound us together, allowing us to share moments of pleasure or tenderness with people we had never met before.

After the storytelling, we were treated to a wonderful lunch prepared by the ladies of the Black Belt Convocation in the fellowship hall—or wherever we happened to land. The church was overflowing with wonderful Episcopalians from all over our diocese, and Black Belt Convocation Coordinator Pearl Slay was tireless in her efforts to keep everyone well fed and comfortable.

ECW President Fiona Watts left no time for the weary and kept us women (as well as a couple of men) going at a remarkable pace. We resembled in the nave and had a bit of a history lesson from our own historian Valerie Burns, who is a professor at the University of West Alabama and related to us the remarkable history of the churches in Alabama’s Black Belt. Next we boarded two buses for a guided tour of some of the area’s historic churches.

Later we enjoyed a wine and cheese reception, followed by dinner and more storytelling, on the lovely banks of the Tombigbee in the Demopolis Civic Center. The evening was not only amazing but also profitable—the silent auction yielded $2,080 for the ECW Scholarship Fund, and the offering provided $1,042.85 for Bethany Village. The next day, Bishop Santosh Marray presided at a service of Holy Eucharist, which included inducting the new officers.

This was a truly extraordinary conference that I imagine everyone will long remember. Every Episcopal woman in our diocese is invited to commune with one another at the annual ECW Fall Conference held in October. Please check our Web site, www.alabamaecw.org, for information about next year’s gathering in Alexander City, and consider making your own trek—you will not be disappointed!

FROM FIONA WATTS, ECW DIOCESAN PRESIDENT

Well they say that time flies when you are having fun, and I can honestly say that the last two years have REALLY flown by! It has been a great honor and privilege to have served as your diocesan ECW president, and yes, I can honestly say it has been fun.

I’m sure that by now you are tired of hearing me say that the best part of the job is getting out into the parishes and meeting all of you wonderful women, but that is the truth. My life is so much richer having met you and spent time in your company and at your parishes. I haven’t quite reached my goal of visiting all the churches in our diocese, but I am a little closer after the fabulous church tour that we took during our recent Fall Conference in the Black Belt. For those of us who worship in “Ivory Towers,” it was indeed humbling to visit a beautiful old church that has maybe seven members worshipping at their monthly service. But that doesn’t lessen their enthusiasm for their parish nor dampen their pride in their beautiful places of worship.

I must say a big THANK YOU to the ladies of the Black Belt Convocation led by Pearl Slay. These girls sure know how to put on a great event! We had so much fun in Demopolis. I hope that everyone felt as spiritually renewed and refreshed as I did after listening to our amazing speaker, Dolores Hydock. Her stories were funny and thought provoking, and they often moved us to tears. It was great to see so many of you there, and I hope you are already making plans to join us in Alexander City next October.

This is my last musing as your president. Another saying, “All good things must end,” means that I am handing over the reins to my friend Brenda Mayhall. She is going to be a GREAT president, and I hope you will support her as much as you have supported me.

The energy and love that you give us and the prayers that you say for us really do sustain us and keep us going—so keep it up ladies. I will still be around, after all, I have quite a few churches that I haven’t visited yet! Many blessings to each of you.
Celebrating 20 Years of Campus Ministry in Birmingham

By the Rev. William S. Blackerby Jr., Chaplain of Trinity Commons

For 20 years, Birmingham Episcopal Campus Ministries (BECM) has been a church home for a marvelous array of people moving into and through their twenties. College students, graduate and professional students, and recent graduates starting their first full-time jobs have made up this BECM community along with faculty, staff, and other friends of campus ministry.

Some of us have worshiped together in Birmingham-Southern College’s Yeilding Chapel, in Samford University’s Reid Chapel, in St. Andrew’s in Birmingham, and for the past six years in the chapel at Trinity Commons Episcopal Student Center. Many of us have served together putting on a children’s festival at the UAB International House, tutoring in New Orleans, helping build homes in Hale County and Pratt City, filling Christmas gift bags at Greater Birmingham Ministries, serving lunch at Community Kitchens, participating in CROP Walk, competing in the Gumbo Gala hosted by Episcopal Place, working in the Food Pantry at Grace Church in Woodlawn, and collecting laundry baskets for the Community Furniture Bank. All of us have eaten together lots of times and in lots of places including BECM’s Thursday lunch and Sunday supper following Holy Eucharist. We have laughed, cried, celebrated, mourned, played, eaten, hung out, sung, retreated, talked, planned, and prayed together.

On Sunday, August 4, more than 70 people gathered at Trinity Commons to celebrate these 20 joy-filled years.

On our Diocesan Council and the consent of the Diocesan Convention, launched Birmingham Episcopal Campus Ministries in 1993. A wonderful moment in the life of this ministry occurred when Bob and Peggy Miller joined us unexpectedly for the first Holy Eucharist celebrated in the Trinity Commons Chapel on Sunday, August 5, 2007.

We have no way of knowing just exactly what the next 20 years will bring for BECM. Yet we pray that BECM will continue to be, as Trinity Commons Intern Emily Collette said recently, “a place where college students and young adults can own their own participation in the Church.”

There are far too many people to thank by name for helping to make this ministry happen. One person, however, deserves recognition and our gratitude. In 1992, the Rt. Rev. Robert O. Miller responded to the recommendation of our diocesan Department of Ministry for Higher Education to have a full-time Episcopal campus ministry in Birmingham and, with the support of our Diocesan Council and the consent of the Diocesan Convention, launched Birmingham Episcopal Campus Ministries in 1993. A wonderful moment in the life of this ministry occurred when Bob and Peggy Miller joined us unexpectedly for the first Holy Eucharist celebrated in the Trinity Commons Chapel on Sunday, August 5, 2007.

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For more about Birmingham Episcopal Campus Ministry and Trinity Commons, 1170 11th Avenue South in Birmingham, please visit www.trinitycommons.org.

It Takes Only a Commitment

By Donald Jay Howton, a Member of Trinity in Bessemer

Trinity Episcopal Church in Bessemer, the first church organized in Bessemer, was established in 1887. More than 125 years later, Trinity continues to serve and minister throughout the city.

Our most recent endeavor is hosting bazaars in Ribble Parish Hall. We have held six of these fundraising events each year for the past three years, with Vina Rahlf serving as chair assisted by Patricia Kee, Joy Davis, John McElroy, Judge Bill and Nancy Patton, Jeanne Fields, Diane Cooper, and me. The bazaars are open to the public, and in addition to clothing, art, holiday merchandise, electronics, books, jewelry, furniture, decorative accessories, and household items, we offer baked goods and lunches. We are using the proceeds to pay for the new roof on our historic church, and we donate items that have remained “in stock” after three bazaars to Jackson, Mississippi, where he is on the faculty of the medical school; and Sonja Smith, who served as an Advisory Council member and BECM chaplain’s assistant at Birmingham-Southern College in the early 2000s. The Allen Tobert Unit, with Advisory Council member Steve Smith on mandolin, entertained the partygoers with some great bluegrass music.

We are a small congregation, but we possess a large commitment to continue contributing and ministering to the community around us and the city of Bessemer at large.

We are currently a Rodgers organ for sale. For more information please call the parish at 205/966-3938.
Trinity Church in Clanton Celebrates 130th Anniversary
By Trinity Church Staff

During a service of Holy Eucharist on September 8, Trinity Church in Clanton celebrated the 130th anniversary of the Episcopal Church in Chilton County. The celebration included a reading from the soon-to-be-published Early Days of the Episcopal Church in Chilton County about the history of Trinity, which recent research reveals is much older than the congregation knew.

In 1883, Judge Randolph of Montgomery donated the land at Second Avenue and Ninth Street adjacent to the Wilson Hotel in Clanton for the purpose of establishing a mission church, and our diocese established the Episcopal Mission Station. Five years later, a wooden church was built on the property with lumber provided by Rudolph Ehrman from his large saw mill on Swift Creek about 3 miles south of Clanton. The current church building is at 503 Second Avenue South.

Priests Take 1st Place in Scarecrow Contest

The Rev. Jennifer Riddle and Rev. Mary Ann Akin created the winning scarecrow for the “Scarecrows in the Pines” contest at St. Martin’s in the Pines in Birmingham. The event, which was held on the campus of the assisted living and nursing facility in late October, included more than 20 entries from elders, staff, and participating organizations.

Music Camp at St. Thomas’ in Huntsville
Submitted by Dorothy Bolton, Parish Administrator

During the first week of August, 4th through 8th graders were invited to attend a free music camp at St. Thomas’ in Huntsville. Professional musicians Donna Clark, Melanie Payne, and Melody Hovik once again offered this wonderful opportunity for students to learn different instruments, work with choir chimes, xylophones and metallophones, practice on their favorite instruments, and learn a few new songs. At the end of the three-day camp, the children performed a concert for their families and friends.

Raising Funds for Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation
Submitted by Sally Marsh, EYC Leader at St. Barnabas’ in Hartselle

In late August, the young people of St. Barnabas’ in Hartselle held a fundraiser for Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation. They raised $288 for the treatment and research of childhood cancer.

Alexandra “Alex” Scott was diagnosed with neuroblastoma just before her first birthday and had a stem cell transplant right after her fourth birthday. She told her mother that when she got out of the hospital she wanted to have a lemonade stand and donate the money to help treat other children with cancer. Alex died when she was 8 years old, but the foundation continues her fundraising efforts (for more information please visit www.alexslemonade.org).
Grace Works—a New, Successful Outreach Ministry

By Kay Williams, a Member of Grace Church in Woodlawn

Grace Church in Woodlawn (Birmingham) has successfully completed the first summer of a new outreach ministry called Grace Works. The program was designed to provide Woodlawn youth ages 12 to 15 with an opportunity to participate in service projects with the goals of positive character development, community involvement, and spiritual exploration. This summer the children learned basic carpentry and landscaping skills while completing 50 service projects for the elderly and economically challenged residents of Woodlawn.

In addition to their four days of service in the community, the boys and girls enjoyed one day of recreation and educational enrichment opportunities each week. These experiences included outings to Camp McDowell, Oak Mountain State Park, and the Birmingham Zoo, as well as skating, bowling, and outdoor games.

The ministry began June 1 and ran five days a week through July 20. Through the partnerships of Grace Works with other ministries, including Woodlawn’s Hope Street Christian Ministries, Community Kitchens of Birmingham, St. Mary’s-on-the-Highlands, the Brotherhood of the Lord of Miracles, and the Church of the Highlands Dream Center, all of the Grace Works participants were provided with breakfast, lunch, snacks, transportation, tools and materials for projects, and recreation opportunities.

We thank our diocese, the Episcopal Church Women of Grace Church in Woodlawn, St. Mary’s-on-the-Highlands in Birmingham, Birmingham City Council member Maxine Herring Parker, St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Birmingham, and a number of generous individuals for funding and providing other support for Grace Works.

Take Your Place at 55th Place

Be part of the new generation of volunteers!

By Cathy Pace, 55th Place Board of Directors

One of the most personal outreach ministries of our diocese is 55th Place, a community thrift store located at 5 55th Place South in the Woodlawn community in Birmingham. Each week hundreds of local residents, and those from beyond the city who have discovered this community resource, visit at the shop to buy adult men’s and women’s clothing, jewelry, shoes, kitchenware, small electronics, furniture, music, and occasionally unique items like golf clubs, snow skis, and even the kitchen sink.

Volunteers Hansell Burke and Jan Roper welcoming customers at the checkout counter

These gently used (all items must be clean and in working order) and often new items are donated by the members of our diocese and the community.

“Because of the generosity of the members of our diocese and many others, people who, in many cases, could not afford to buy good quality clothing for job interviews, work, and church, as well as furnish and equip their homes, are able to purchase these items in a welcoming atmosphere,” says Robert Haughton, president of the 55th Place Board of Directors.

Because of the brisk sales, donated items are always in need—and so are the volunteers who keep the store open 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. every Wednesday through Saturday. “Being a volunteer is the most rewarding thing I have ever done,” notes Lucy McCown, past board president. “I’ve met people I would have never met. I’ve made many friends. I’ve helped people select the right clothing for special occasions. And, most rewarding, several customers have become some of our best and most enthusiastic volunteers.”

Members of the board are reaching out to recruit a new generation of volunteers from our diocese and the community; affiliation with an Episcopal parish is not a requirement. “This is a perfect opportunity for those who have flexible schedules to volunteer one day a week to enrich not only the lives of our customers, but also their own,” Robert explains. “Our hours are especially convenient for those who have children in school.”

Volunteers work in teams to sort and tag donated items, display and arrange them in the well-organized shopping area, and man the cash register. Training is provided by seasoned volunteers for those who have no retail experience. The atmosphere is congenial, creating bonds of friendship between the volunteers and the customers they serve.

Twenty percent of the proceeds are used for operating expenses like rent and utilities. The remaining 80 percent is returned to the community through charities, including Episcopal Place, a rent-assisted retirement home; Grace Church Outreach in Woodlawn; and YWCA housing program.

Because 55th Place is supported entirely by donations and sales, financial support is always needed. “If you cannot afford the time to volunteer, you can support this ministry by donating items, and even the smallest cash contribution will allow us to keep our door open,” Lucy emphasizes.

To learn more, please contact Robert Haughton at 205/213-5306 or rghaughton@aol.com or me at 205/541-1099 or cathypace@mindspring.com. You also can call the store at 205/591-4631.
Labyrinth Dedicated at St. Michael’s in Fayette

Bishop Marray dedicated a labyrinth at St. Michael’s in Fayette on Michaelmas Day, September 29. The dream of Herbert “Herb” Charles Lowe and Frances Merriam Lowe, the labyrinth was given in memory of Herb Lowe and Charles Steuart “Colonel Bud” Merriam.

In 1968, Herb put an ad in the local newspaper saying that “all those interested in starting an Episcopal Church in Fayette should meet,” and Matthew 18:20 says that when two or three are gathered in God’s name, God will be in the midst of them. Six people came to the meeting, and St. Michael’s was born. Herb was a faithful member of the parish until his death in 2011. “Colonel Bud” moved to Fayette after his wife died in 1988. A cradle Episcopalian, he actively participated in all aspects of St. Michael’s. During the years he served as treasurer, he always announced at vestry meetings, “All bills are paid within 24 hours!”

The labyrinth has a concrete base with the path delineated by red tiles in a design called Chelsea. It has five circuits with a seat in the center covered with mosaic tiles depicting Christian symbols. Artist Rhys Greene, a member of St. Michael’s, designed and tiled the seat, which is a lovely addition to her other artworks at the church, including a wall with mosaic scenes of the life of Christ that surrounds the Garden of Peace. Together the wall and labyrinth create a special place to enhance worship experiences.

Just east of our church building, adjacent to the newly planted park and meadow, sits the Martin and Carolyn Tilson Memorial Garden, dedicated to the memory of St. Luke’s fourth rector and his wife. In the midst of the Tilson Garden is a series of interwoven paths, marked off by stones set in the ground, called a labyrinth. This ancient spiritual tool, common to many religious traditions, has enjoyed a renaissance of sorts in recent years. The oldest labyrinths, found mostly in Europe, are nearly 4,000 years old and were used for prayer, meditation, and spiritual reflection. During the Middle Ages, when warfare made pilgrimages to Jerusalem and other holy sites too dangerous for ordinary Christians, many turned to labyrinth-walking as a tangible substitute for actual pilgrimages.

The shape of the path is meant to put us in mind of our lifelong journey toward God, growing closer to Him through all the ups and downs, twists and turns, and high and low moments of our lives. A typical use of the labyrinth involves quieting our minds and hearts, focusing prayerfully on the love and grace of God for us, perhaps pausing at points along the way to reflect upon crucial or meaningful moments in our spiritual lives, and staying on the path until we reach the center. There, persons often remain for a short time, offering their thoughts, prayers, and concerns to God and giving thanks for his presence in their lives. Returning again to the point where one entered the path becomes a time to draw strength from the experience and a time to reflect on where we are in our spiritual journey.

Every person’s experience of the labyrinth is unique. Some come for prayer, others for reflection, and still others for healing, etc. Though deeply rooted in the Christian tradition of prayer and meditation, the labyrinth is used by persons of all faiths and indeed predates the founding of the Christian faith. Even those from no particular religious persuasion can, and do, benefit from its use. St. Luke’s labyrinth is open to all people, every day of the year from dawn to dusk. There is no cost, and no reservation is needed. Small children should be supervised, and we ask that no food be brought into the garden, though you are welcome to picnic in the meadow adjacent to the garden. We invite all interested to come and participate.

For more information please contact me at 205/802-6203 or sdegweck@saint-lukes.com, call Mary Ellen Calhoun at 205/960-1244, or visit www.saint-lukes.com.
One—one event, one body, one church, one mission, one God!
March 7-9 at Camp McDowell
PLTE (Parish Leadership Training Event) and our diocesan Commission on Spirituality and Departments of Liturgy and Music, Christian Formation, and Youth and Young Adults are sponsoring this special gathering. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend! For more information please contact Kathy Graham, Coordinator of Lifelong Christian Formation, at kgraham@dioala.org or 205/358-9229.

ANGLICAN HERITAGE TRIP TO ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND
March 2014
The Rev. Scott Arnold, rector of St. Mark’s in Prattville, will lead a pilgrimage to Celtic and Anglican sites in England and Scotland from March 23 through April 1. The pilgrims will leave from Montgomery and fly to London, where they will visit Canterbury Cathedral, Durham Cathedral, Henry VIII’s Hampton Court, the ancient walled city of York, the city of Edinburgh and St Giles Cathedral, the Abby of Iona founded by St. Columba, and the holy island of Lindisfarne. All this and much, much more awaits any interested pilgrim who would like to trace our Church’s ancient history. If you’ve ever wanted to see the great cathedral, walk the ancient cobbled stone steps of Durham, see Lambeth Palace and Westminster Abbey then this is the trip for you! For more information, please contact the Rev. Arnold at fscott@stmarksal.org or 334/365-5289.

“IN SEARCH OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI THEN AND NOW”
June 2014
The Rev. Susan Sloan, the Rev. Deacon Mark LaGory, and Dr. Daniel Lesnick cordially invite everyone to join them next June on “A Pilgrimage to Italy—In Search of St. Francis of Assisi Then and Now.” The pilgrimage includes three preparatory seminars before traveling to Italy. The pilgrimage group will spend five days in the Umbria region exploring the world into which St. Francis was born and his personal conversion from wealthy merchant’s son to a life of self-deprivation and service to others. And, along with both the 13th-century St. Francis and the 21st-century Pope Francis, they’ll explore the power of personal recommitment and the saint’s advice to “Preach the Gospel at all times, and when necessary use words.” After Umbria, the group will spend four days in Rome, “the Eternal City,” which might also be called “the City of Earthly Power.” Through its two and a half millennia of history, monuments, and art, Rome provides another useful way by which we can contemplate power/powerlessness in our lives. For more information and to sign up, please contact Dr. Daniel Lesnick at dlesnick@italyadagio.com or 205/423-9982.

PILGRIMAGE TO WALES, DUBLIN, AND NORTHERN IRELAND
June 2014
The Rev. Bill Winters, interim rector of the Ascension in Montgomery, will lead a pilgrimage to Wales and Dublin with a sequel to Northern Ireland with visits to sites of religious importance and cathedrals as well as scenic areas of the countries. The Wales and Dublin pilgrimage is from June 14 through 25 with the sequel to Northern Ireland through June 28. For more information, please contact the Rev. Winters at 334/263-3529.

Are We Ready?
By Kathy Graham, Coordinator of Lifelong Christian Formation

More than 10,000 Baby Boomers turn 65 every day and will continue to do so for the next 16 years. Every 8 seconds someone celebrates their 65th birthday and will each year from now until the year 2029. This is the fastest growing age group in America!

People who are over age 65 already outnumber teenagers two to one. So what does this mean for our Church and our parishes? Are we planning and structuring our programs, facilities, and spiritual, social, and outreach opportunities to serve this population—as well as the other four generations in our congregations—now and in the future? What should adult ministry look like in 2013 and beyond? We have to take into consideration that for the first time in our history we have five living adult generations, and not all of them can be lumped into one “adult” category. One single style of adult ministry will no longer work—one size does not and cannot fit all.

Malinda Collier has written a review of John R. Mabry’s book Faithful Generations: Effective Ministry Across Generational Lines (please see excerpts from the review on page 23). This is a book we should all be reading to help us address the important questions mentioned above. I have started reading it and have found John’s findings and suggestions to be very helpful and thought provoking. The author doesn’t look at what we are doing wrong or have done wrong but instead gives a road map for what we can begin to do in formation, worship, evangelism, and outreach.

What are your ideas? What are you already doing with the five adult generations in your parish? What would you like to see done in our diocese and in your parish? If you are a Baby Boomer, what would you like to see offered in our churches?

Please share your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions with me at kgraham@dioala.org. More of this topic with take-home ideas and insights will be offered at the ONE conference at Camp McDowell on March 7-9 along with many other great offerings. So mark your calendars and plan to attend, and in the meantime let me hear from you!

Gifts That Keep On Giving
By the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick

At this season of giving, why not consider honoring your loved ones with a unique gift from the Gifts for Life catalog? Your gift, such as the ones listed below, can give an entire community the opportunity to thrive.

Please help spread the word about these effective ways to transform lives around the world.

* Basics for Life Gifts offer clean water and basic sanitation.
* Agriculture and Animal Gifts help feed and provide income for families and communities, moving communities toward the goal of self-sustainability.
* Green Gifts offer solar energy solutions and fruit trees to restore the forest.
* Health and Wellness Gifts help stem the tide of malaria with mosquito nets and training and provide HIV/AIDS education.
* Economic Opportunity Gifts offer micro-credit and micro-enterprise gifts to create small businesses.
* Community Gifts such as Community Gardens or Roving Health Clinics strengthen the community and enrich lives for all.

On my pilgrimage to Ghana this year, I saw firsthand what our gifts mean to the recipients. Young women gained self-confidence and earned necessary income from their small businesses. Farmers showed off their goats, which will feed their families for years to come. Mrs. Otonga expressed her gratitude for her mosquito net, which is saving lives in her family and village. Alice teaches girls how to sew and make batik clothing and beaded jewelry, providing a steady income to feed her son.

Please visit www.episcopalrelief.org to learn more about the amazing work of Episcopal Relief & Development. You can order Gifts for Life catalogs online at http://episcopalmarketplace.org/Products/Episcopal-Relief-Development, by e-mail at sales@episcopalmedia.org, by calling 866/937-2772, or by contacting me at jjquick@bellsouth.net or 205/669-6862.
What’s New/Noteworthy at the Episcopal Book Store

Witnesses to the Light: An Adventure into God’s Workmanship Past Present and Future by John Harris Harper

Author and compiled by the Rev. John Harris Harper, vice dean emeritus of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, this coffee-table book chronicles the story of the artworks at our diocese’s beautiful, historic cathedral. As the story unfolds, you will get a capsule glimpse of the early days of the city of Birmingham and many of the people who played a role in the city’s development. The 300-page book includes more than 70 photos of artworks plus 39 photos of the knellers in the kneller Chapel, one for each church in our diocese. The photos of the stained-glass windows include the scriptural reference, donor, date, style, and story. Janice Ford Freeman, who has a master’s degree in stained-glass art, wrote a description of each window as well as articles on the history of stained-glass art, how stained-glass windows are made, and the stained-glass studios represented. The book also features meditations written by the Most Rev. George Carey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury; Bishop Sloan; and the Very Rev. Larry Gibson and very Rev. Paul Zahn, former deans of the Advent.

《The Reason For My Hope: Salvation by Billy Graham》

In his newest book, the Rev. Billy Graham presents the saving message of the Gospel. When we are lost or in danger or have made a mess of our lives, salvation is what we all long for—and salvation belongs to us, when we reach out for the only One who can rescue us—Jesus. Millions of people around the world have heard Billy Graham proclaim this unchanging truth. He has never forgotten the transformation of his own life when he first said “yes” to God’s gift of salvation, and he has witnessed multitudes turn their hearts to the God of Hope. It is biblical and timeless, simple and direct, but it is far from easy. There are hard words directed toward a culture that denies the reality of sin and distracts us from the veracity of Hell. But through its ominous warnings shines a light that cannot be extinguished—a beacon of hope that Jesus came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

All the Places in the Bible: An A–Z Guide to the Countries, Cities, Villages, and Other Places Mentioned in Scripture by Richard R. Losch

The Rev. Richard R. Losch, rector emeritus of St. James’ in Livingston, writes, “I have been in more than one Bible study class in which someone thought that Paul wrote Thessalonians to the people of Thessalonion and Galateans to the people of the city of Galatia. And to add to their confusion, they had no idea whatsoever where either was located. In my studies of the Bible and Apocrypha, I have discovered that an understanding of the places involved often adds a whole new meaning to the stories and events. In many cases the background, topography, history, and culture of a place either help make sense of an otherwise rather enigmatic situation or enrich and flesh out a statement or event.”

Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God’s Work by Timothy Keller

Timothy Keller has taught and counseled students, young professionals, and senior leaders on the subject of work and calling for more than 20 years. Now he puts his insights into a book for readers everywhere, giving biblical perspectives on such pressing questions as: What is the purpose of work? How can I find meaning and serve customers in a cutthroat, bottom-line-oriented workplace? How can I use my skills in a vocation that has meaning and purpose? Can I stay true to my values and still advance in my field? How do I make the difficult choices that must be made in the course of a successful career? With deep insight and often surprising advice, the author shows readers that biblical wisdom is immensely relevant to our questions about our work. In fact, the Christian view of work (that we work to serve others, not ourselves) can provide the foundation of a thriving professional and balanced personal life. He shows how excellence, integrity, discipline, creativity, and passion in the workplace can help others and even be considered acts of worship, not just self-interest.

The Story of the Holy Land: A Visual History by Peter Walker

For those who want to see the place of the Bible from the comfort of their homes, the Rev. Dr. Peter Walker provides a visual tour of the promised land, from the stark vistas of the Judean wilderness to the lush banks of Jordan. The stunning series of color spreads vividly brings the history of the Holy Land—from Bible times to present day—to life. The author uncovers the rich layers of history that have shaped this sacred place, exploring the backdrop to the events that occurred in Old Testament times through to critical moments such as the Muslim conquest, the crusades, and the modern rediscovery of Bible sites.

Faithful Generations by John R. Mabry

Excerpts from a review by Malinda Collier

In America today we have five living adult generations. Sociologists have given labels to these generations of adults and attempted to generalize about their formative experiences and shared characteristics. Most of us will recognize these labels: GI, Silent, Boomers, Xer, and Millennium. Five living adult generations: this fact alone speaks to the formation and pastoral challenge the Church faces. We wonder how to keep current members involved, compete with the technology–fueled pace of 21st-century life, and how to reach those who are absent. This is made all the more challenging because for the first time in our society the generations have not been formed by the same meta-narrative—a practicing Christian culture/society. We live in a “Post-Christian Era,” and a single style of adult ministry is no longer viable. The Rev. Dr. John Mabry, writing out of his own pastoral experience, acknowledges these challenges in his book Faithful Generations and explores the question of what engages each generation—what calls to them and feeds their spiritual seeking, nurtures their spiritual growth, and heals their spiritual wounds. Mabry offers tools to work through the generational challenges, such as “Why don’t people respond the way I think they will?” John Mabry’s work is not another tired litany of what we have done wrong and why people are leaving. Instead, he offers a road map—or GPS—for what we can begin to do right as we plan formation, worship, evangelism, and outreach.
Send a Christmas Card AND Help Children Come to God’s Backyard!

By Sarah Mills Nee, Alabama Folk School Director

During the holiday season, I am reminded of Mary and Joseph’s desperate search for shelter in Bethlehem. They were turned away because there was no room in the inn. At Camp McDowell, we strive to always have room in our inn, and we never turn away a Summer Camp applicant or an Environmental Center student who is unable to pay.

Last year, through the generous donations of our supportive camp community, we gave more than $80,000 in scholarships. This year, we ask again for your monetary support of the Camp McDowell Scholarship Fund. Thanks to your gracious gifts, we will always have room in our inn and in our exceptional camps and programs.

Please consider making a gift to the Camp McDowell Scholarship Fund this year by going online to www.campmcdowell.com. In exchange for your donation (at the suggested $20 per card), Camp McDowell will send Christmas cards to the honorees of your choice, informing them that a gift has been given in their name to the Camp McDowell Scholarship Fund.

For more information please contact me at 205/387-1806 or folkschool@campmcdowell.com.

Merry Christmas from Sawyerville!

“I order the Christmas cards because they are a beautiful and meaningful way to spread the word about Sawyerville to family and friends.”

—Ashley

This year, please consider giving the gift of Sawyerville Day Camp by purchasing Sawyerville Christmas Cards! These cards are a beautiful gift-in-one—donate $10 and in turn receive a card that can be sent to your loved ones or coworkers with a note enclosed letting them know a donation was made in their honor.

This year we are using the wildly popular bus print from Sawyerville’s 20th birthday celebration auction. The original was sold to the highest bidder, but the owner of the painting and the talented artist, Carolyn Tweedy, agree that this is the perfect cover for our Christmas card. The end-of-the-day sendoff is such a special part of the Sawyerville Day Camp—rain or shine, the staff members wave and sing as the six buses leave with the week’s campers! It’s a beautiful picture of the tangible love that is felt at each session.

Your donation goes directly to sponsoring the three Sawyerville Day Camp sessions in 2014. We cannot wait to share the good news of Christ’s birth and Sawyerville Day Camp through this special fundraiser. Thank you for your continued support!

Cards will be available beginning the week of Thanksgiving. You can order online at www.sawyervilledaycamp.org or by e-mailing Jamie Plott at jdpua00@aol.com.

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.