St. Thomas Huntsville groups complete Living Compass program session

Two groups of parishioners and clergy at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Huntsville recently completed a six-week session of the Living Compass wellness and whole-ness program.

Each small group completed an individual self-assessment and an achievable weekly goal in an area of mind, heart, soul, or strength, during the six week session.

“Living Compass, grounded in scripture and the tradition of the church, is a faith-based wellness ministry that provides resources, coaching, education, training, and support to individuals, families, and congregations as they seek to live the abundant life God intends for them,” according to its website.

The program was facilitated at St. Thomas by Jeff Akamatsu. Participants were: Michael Jones, Pat Johnson, Gus Davis, the Rev. Mary Catherine Akamatsu, Jenna Pirani, Lloyd Cook, Frances Steel, and Mona Parker.

Additional information on Living Compass is available at: http://www.livingcompass.org.

Commission on Spirituality seeks information on practicing spiritual directors

The Commission on Spirituality is seeking to identify practicing spiritual directors, both lay and ordained, within the Diocese of Alabama. Practicing spiritual directors are asked to complete the form at: http://bit.ly/1Wu1HjC.

For additional information contact the Rev. Mary Catherine Akamatsu, 256-864-0788.

St. Thomas’s Madison seeks part-time music director and organist

St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Madison is seeking a part-time music director and a part-time organist. The parish is prepared to hire one person to fill both positions or to fill the positions separately.


For additional information contact Cathy Williams, Parish Administrator, office@stmatthewsmadison.org, 256-864-0788.

St. Thomas Birmingham seeks part-time organist/choir director.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Birmingham has a salaried position available for a part-time Organist/Choir Director (8 – 10 hours per week.)

This person will be responsible for leading the music program, which includes making musical selections for the liturgy in consultation with the rector, directing and rehearsing the choir, collaborating with the children’s choir director, and leading the congregation on the organ or piano on Sunday mornings at the 10:30 a.m. service and on Holy Days and special services. The church is looking for someone who is proficient on the organ/piano, comfortable playing different musical styles, and experienced in conducting a choir.

If you are interested, please send resume to Ben Paulk at benjamin.paulk@gmail.com by Dec. 31.
Discipline of recognizing whose church this is, and his invitation to follow in his footsteps, ironically, on the edge of the unknown, one of the mysteries of our faith is the ready acknowledgement that Jesus’ call is to follow in his footsteps, and to be ready to display fear. This level of trust is undergirded by the reality that Jesus is not ashamed or afraid to proclaim Jesus boldly to the world.

Recently, I had the opportunity to experience the pilgrim’s life in the Holy Land, the land of our Savior’s earthly life. One discovery that I very quickly made was that the pilgrim’s life is ‘tough’, both in its physical requirements, and mental fortitude, and emotional stability. The quality of perseverance, determination, and ability to adjust to surprises become remarkably formidable characteristics in the life of pilgrim.

As I journeyed with other pilgrims through this experience, and reflected deeply on the sacrifice of Jesus who chose to come among us, I grieved for our church that seems to have abandoned the art of, and call to be ‘pilgrim church’- ‘tough church’, that doesn’t give up, or relinquish her call to be the ever living presence of a reconciling loving Christ in a broken and hurting world. The church should be ready accepting of new surprises in so far as God through grace continues to draw the marginalized, outcasts, and the ‘holy other’ into the sacred community of faith that continues to encounter with the Spirit. What I discovered very early in the life of a pilgrim is to accept the reality on the ground without complaint! Poustinia – desert is unforgiving, draws the best or worst out of you, and quickly separates you from the rest.

As we enter into the Advent season, one of the two official penitential seasons in our liturgical calendar (Lent is the other), isn’t a more appropriate time to ponder pustinia. With all the many festive activities associated with this time of the year a period of pustinia may offer some leaves in the dough.

Thank you St. Mary-on-the-Highlands and Reverend Huey Gardner for giving us this opportunity to be pilgrims, and walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

A reflective, sacrificial, renewed and holy Advent my faithful sisters and brothers of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama, and beyond.

All my love!

Huey Gardner

Bishop Marray reflects on the installation of our 27th Presiding Bishop

It isn’t every day one gets to share in the experience of history making. This opportunity presented itself on the Feast of All Saints’, November 1, in the National Cathedral, DC. In what can only be described as a day of glorious celebration of monumental significance over 2,500 people from across the Episcopal Church, wider Anglican Communion and special invitees gathered under gloomy sky in wintry type conditions, in high autumn to witness, and participate in the Installation Service of the Right Reverend Michael Bruce Curry, 27th Presiding Bishop and Primate of the Episcopal Church.

The atmosphere before the service could best be described as electrifying and energetic somewhat descriptive of the personality of the new presiding bishop. One observation was quite palpable, and seemed overwhelming to everyone that, Michael Curry is God’s servant for this day, time and season. Bishop Curry’s inviting personality added a unique flare to the occasion, and his jovial and cheerful optimism of the church’s future gave even the most pessimistic reason to hope.

Michael Curry: A Servant of God

Bishop Curry reflects on the installation of our 27th Presiding Bishop

It’s my firm conviction that when leaders set the tone for indwelling the holy, God joins the effort. Bishop Curry is a remarkable person with a compelling story. He is the son of an Episcopal clergy whose father started for indwelling the holy, God joins the effort. Bishop Curry was overwhelmingly elected presiding bishop at the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church. Curry was overwhelmingly elected presiding bishop on the first ballot in the House of Bishops. The House of Deputies later concurred with similar overwhelming majority to confirm his election.

The church has spoken boldly, and recognized God’s presence as we witnessed the joyfulness and solidarity that marked the occasion. We know that the Lord has called his servant to lead this church for the next nine years. The Diocese of Alabama congratulates the new Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Most Reverend Michael Bruce Curry and prays for his ministry among us.

Finally, let’s embody his call afresh, anew in all of our churches in the Diocese of Alabama as we recommit to the Jesus Movement.

Pustinia

‘Pilgrims are Tough’

I t is typical for a person to display fear when entering the place of the unknown. The Russian word Poustinia means ‘desert’, a place noted for its aridity, yet its ability to stimulate deep sense of reflection; a desire to plumb the depths of the soul discovering, what might God be up to and/or what might God be calling me to? The Celtic community embraces this spiritual phenomenon regularly in their spiritual pilgrimage.

One of the mysteries of our faith is the ready acknowledgement that Jesus’ call is to follow in his footsteps, ironically, without much clarity associated with the call. I am fully aware of this motif because so much of my own vocation has been served through ‘blind’, or as I may be more inclined to say “reckless abandonment” grounded in obedience and self-sacrifice. This level of trust is undergirded by the reality of where God has brought us from.

Yet, in Poustinia God is found to be profoundly present and readily available much to the surprise of those who have abandoned the art of, and call to be ‘pilgrim church’- ‘tough church’, that doesn’t give up, or relinquish her call to be the ever living presence of a reconciling loving Christ in a broken and hurting world. The church should be ready accepting of new surprises in so far as God through grace continues to draw the marginalized, outcasts, and the ‘holy other’ into the sacred community of faith that continues to encounter with the Spirit.

The scripture reminds us to be still and know that God is God. The presence of the unknown is the place of transformation. The deeper life is in fact a deepening of our own relationship with God. One would hope that in truth this is the quest of every soul! Poustinia – desert may be the place where God may be drawing us to so that, Jesus the Christ in the power of the Spirit may redeem his church from its self-serving attitude and fatalistic mentality that the church is dying. Many have often heard me say – ‘a risen Savior is incompatible with a dying church’, ‘for the gates of hell shall not prevail against it’...

As we enter into the Advent season, one of the two official penitential seasons in our liturgical calendar (Lent is the other), isn’t a more appropriate time to ponder pustinia. With all the many festive activities associated with this time of the year a period of pustinia may offer some leaves in the dough.

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At the start of his All Saints Sunday installation Eucharist in Washington National Cathedral, Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry declared his bona fides to the church.

After knocking on the west doors in the traditional manner at noon as the sun broke through the clouds and being admitted to the cathedral by the Very Rev. Gary Hall, the cathedral’s dean, and Diocese of Washington Bishop Mariann Budde, Curry was asked to “tell us who you are.”

“I am Michael Bruce Curry, a child of God, baptized in St. Simon of Cyrene Church, Maywood, Illinois, on May 3, 1953, and since that time I have sought to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ,” he replied.

“Michael, Bishop in the Church of God, we have anticipated your arrival with great joy,” 26th Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori told him.

“In the Name of Christ, we greet you,” she added, and the greeting was echoed by the more than 2,500 people in attendance.

Curry, the former bishop of North Carolina, promised to be a “faithful shepherd and pastor” and, when asked by Jefferts Schori if they would support Curry in his ministry, those attending roared in reply, “We will.”

With that and all the liturgical celebration that followed, The Episcopal Church made history as it welcomed its first person of color as presiding bishop and primate.

“God has not given up on God’s world,” Curry told the congregation and the thousands of people watching the service’s live webcast. “And God is not finished with The Episcopal Church yet. God has work for us to do.”

Curry had officially become the 27th presiding bishop and The Episcopal Church’s chief pastor and primate at midnight. During the three-hour service, he was seated in the cathedral (Washington National Cathedral has been the presiding bishop’s seat since 1941). Jefferts Schori then gave him the primatial staff that she had carried for the past nine years and then warmly embraced him as the congregation loudly applauded and shouted its approval.

Music for the service ranged from Anglican chant to drumming and singing by the Cedarville Band of Piscataway Indians of Maryland, who led the 155 bishops of The Episcopal Church into the service. The Cedarville Band also played before the Gospel was read in Dakota by the Rev. Brandon Mauai, a deacon from North Dakota and member of the Executive Council. Jamey Graves and Sandra Montes soloed on Wade in the Water after participants had renewed their baptismal covenant and Curry, Jefferts Schori and others aspered the congregation. By the time they reached the altar, the congregation was on its feet singing along.

The St. Thomas Gospel Choir from the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas in Philadelphia had the congregation clapping and swaying. And when the Cathedral Choir of Men and Girls sang an arrangement of The Battle Hymn of the Republic as the offertory anthem, congregation members stood and joined in the final chorus, many of them with tears in their eyes.

Special prayers were said during the service by representatives of the Anglican Communion, ecumenical and interreligious communities, including the Most Rev. Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; Mohamed Elsanousi, Islamic Society of North America; Rabbi Steve Gutow, Jewish Council for Public Affairs; and the Rev. Elizabeth Miller, president of the Provincial Elders’ Conference of the Moravian Church.

After Anita Parrott George, another Executive Council member, read the Old Testament reading (Isaiah 11:1-9) in English, Fernanda Sarahi read the New Testament selection (Revelation 21:1-6a) in Spanish. And at the beginning of the Great Thanksgiving, Curry said the sursum corda (lift up your hearts) in Spanish.

Curry’s approximately 37-minute animated sermon drew applause, laughter and shouts of approval from the congregation. He swept his arms wide over the crowd at times, raised his hands and shouted, lowered his voice and brought his hands close together at other times to make his points.

The presiding bishop continued his call for the church
and its members to join the Jesus Movement, tracing the evidence of the movement through biblical and societal history. "What was true in the first century and true in the 19th century is equally and more profound in this new 21st century," he said.

Jesus himself continued a movement begun by John the Baptist and took it to a new level, Curry said. "John was part of the movement born out of prophets like Amos and Isaiah and Jeremiah. And prophetic movement was rooted in Moses, who went up to the mountaintop," he said. "Jesus crystalized and catalyzed the movement that was serving God's mission in this world. God has a passionate dream for this world.

The dream involves change, the presiding bishop said. "The Way of Jesus will always turn our worlds and the world upside down, which is really turning it right side up!"

"At home and in the church, do unto others as you would have them do to you. That will turn things upside down," Curry said. "In the boardrooms of the corporate world, in the classrooms of the academic world, in the factories, on the streets, in the halls of legislatures and council of government, in the courts of the land, in the councils of the nations, wherever human beings are, do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Curry returned again and again in his sermon to evangelism and reconciliation, especially racial reconciliation, calling it "some of the most difficult work possible."

"But don't worry," he said. "We can do it. The Holy Spirit has done this work before in the Episcopal Church. And it can be done again for a new day."

He called for an evangelism that is "genuine and authentic to us as Episcopalians, not a way that imitates or judges anyone else" and that is "about helping others find their way to a relationship with God without our trying to control the outcome." Such evangelism, he said, ought to involve both sharing the faith that is in us and listening to and learning from others' experiences.

Curry said that racial reconciliation is "just the beginning for the hard and holy work of real reconciliation that realizes justice across all the borders and boundaries that divide the human family of God."

The presiding bishop acknowledged that such work is "difficult work, but we can do it. It's about listening and sharing. It's about God."

And, Curry said, "in this work of reconciliation we can join hands with others."

"It is as the Jesus Movement, following Jesus' way, that we join hands with brothers and sisters of different faith and religious traditions, and with brothers and sisters who may be atheist or agnostic or just on a journey, but who long for a better world where children do not starve and where there is, as the old spiritual says, 'plenty good room for all of God's children,'" Curry said.

At the beginning of his sermon, the new presiding bishop took a few moments for "personal privilege." He first told the church that he looks forward to working with the Rev. Gay Clark Jennings in her role as president of the House of Deputies, saying, "We've been working with each other a bit over the summer and I look forward to working together with her in the years to come."

He then thanked Richard Schori, Jeffer's Schori's husband, and then turned to the 26th presiding bishop herself. "In a time when there is often debate and genuine consternation as to whether or not courageous, effective leadership is even possible, we can say to the world that we have had a leader and her name is Katharine Jefferts Schori," Curry said to applause and a standing ovation from the congregation.

The House of Bishops elected Curry June 27 during General Convention on the first ballot. It was a landslide: he received 121 votes of a total 174 cast. The number of votes needed for election was 89. It was the first time the bishops had elected a presiding bishop on the first ballot.

It's the second time in a row that the church made history with its installation of a presiding bishop. In 2006, 26th Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori became the first woman elected presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. She was also the first female among the primates, or ordained leaders, of the Anglican Communion's 38 provinces, a distinction she still holds.

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Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's Past Ministry

by the Rev. Mary Frances Schjonberg, Episcopal News Service

Born in Chicago, Illinois, on March 13, 1953, Curry attended public schools in Buffalo, New York, and earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1975 from Hobart and William Smith Colleges, in Geneva, New York, and a Master of Divinity degree in 1978 from the Berkeley Divinity School at Yale. He has also studied at Princeton Theological Seminary, Wake Forest University, the Ecumenical Institute at St. Mary's Seminary, and the Institute of Christian Jewish Studies.

He was ordained to the diaconate in June 1978 at St. Paul's Cathedral, Buffalo, New York, and to the priesthood in December 1978 at St. Stephen's, Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He began his ministry as deacon-in-charge at St. Stephen's, and was rector there 1979-1982. He next accepted a call to serve as the rector of St. Simon of Cyrene, Lincoln Heights, Ohio, where he served 1982-1988. In 1988, he became rector of St. James', Baltimore, Maryland, where he served until his election as bishop.

In his three parish ministries, Curry was active in the founding of ecumenical summer day camps for children, the creation of networks of family day-care providers and educational centers, and the brokering of millions of dollars of investment in inner city neighborhoods. He also sat on the commission on ministry in each of the three dioceses in which he has served.

During his time as bishop of North Carolina, Curry instituted a network of canons, deacons and youth ministry professionals dedicated to supporting the ministry that already happens in local congregations and refocused the diocese on the Episcopal Church's dedication to the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals through a $400,000 campaign to buy malaria nets that saved thousands of lives.

Throughout his ministry, Curry has also been active in issues of social justice, speaking out on immigration policy and marriage equality.

He serves on the boards of many organizations and has a national preaching and teaching ministry. He has been featured on The Protestant Hour and North Carolina Public Radio's The State of Things, as well as on The Huffington Post website. In addition, Curry is a frequent speaker at conferences around the country. He has received honorary degrees from Sewanee: The University of the South, Virginia Theological Seminary, Yale, and, most recently, Episcopal Divinity School. He served on the Taskforce for Re-imagining the Episcopal Church and recently was named chair of Episcopal Relief & Development's board of directors.


Curry and his wife, Sharon, have two adult daughters, Rachel and Elizabeth.
The roles of the presiding bishop

The presiding bishop is chief pastor and primate of the church, chair of the Executive Council, and president of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. The canonical outline of the presiding bishop’s election and term can be found in Title I Section 2 of the church’s Canons.

According to Title I Section 2, the presiding bishop as chief pastor and primate is “charged with responsibility for leadership in initiating and developing the policy and strategy in the church and speaking for the church as to the policies, strategies and programs authorized by the General Convention.”

The presiding bishop also “speaks God’s word to the church and world as the representative of this Church and its episcopate in its corporate capacity,” represents The Episcopal Church to the Anglican Communion, serves as chief consecrator of bishops, and leads the House of Bishops. He or she also holds a significant role in the discipline and changes in status of bishops, according to Title I Section 2.

Also, the presiding bishop exercises a significant role in the governance of the church by making appointments to various governing bodies, making decisions with the president of the House of Deputies, serving as a member of every churchwide committee and commission, and serving as chair and president of key church governing boards. He or she is the chair and chief executive officer of the Executive Council, which is the board of directors for the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, according to Canon I.4, and oversees the execution of the programs and policies adopted by the General Convention and carried out by the Society.

The staff of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society report to the presiding bishop, who is the Society’s president, either directly or through a group of senior staff and officers who, according to canon, report and are accountable directly to the presiding bishop. (The office of the General Convention, by canon, maintains a separate reporting structure.)

In its “Call to Discernment and Profile,” the joint nominating committee said the 27th presiding bishop would need to be “comfortable in the midst of ambiguity and able to lead the church in the rich, temporal space between the ‘now’ and the ‘yet to come.’” The person discerned and elected by the church would need to “delight” in the diversity of a “multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-generational church.” And, because “our polity has many components and complexities,” the 27th presiding bishop will need the “skills and wisdom for leading complex and democratic systems through a time of significant change.”

Originally, the office of presiding bishop was filled automatically by the most senior bishop in the House of Bishops, measured by date of consecration, beginning with the presidency of William White at the first session of the 1789 General Convention. That process changed in 1925 when the church elected the Rt. Rev. John Gardner Murray as the 16th presiding bishop.
A message from the 2014-2015 ECW president

by Linda Mayhall

It has been a blessed pleasure and a true honor serving as ECW president for the Diocese of Alabama during 2014-15.

The ladies in our diocese are so amazing in their service to our Lord and I have enjoyed traveling around the diocese meeting my sisters in Christ witnessing their work. This work of the ECW is so vital to our Diocese which includes UTO, CPC, Scholarships, supporting Bethany Village, presence on the Province and National levels of ECW, as well as numerous worthy causes around each parish and convocation.

Over the past 12 years or so as I have served in various offices on the ECW Diocesan board I have had the pleasure of serving with amazing women. A tradition of the ECW board is for the outgoing president to be presented with a pin during the Fall Conference closing Eucharist. I was extremely honored to be pinned by Olivia Weingarten (2003-05 ECW President) with her pin she has passed along to me. What an honor!

The next ECW board will be led by President Andrea Peacock. If you know Andrea, you know she brings with her much energy and excitement. The theme for 2016 is “Girls Just Want to Have Fun”. That’s Andrea! Check out her calendar, featuring how parish ECW’s enjoy being girls and having fun. We are in for an exciting two years, so buckle up!

Alabama Seminarians receive CPC funding

by Pat Clanton, ECW Church Periodical Club Diocesan Coordinator

The ECW of the Diocese of Alabama raised more than $8,000 this year through their very successful annual Church Periodical Club (CPC) ingathering which assists seminary students from the diocese.

The purpose of the CPC is to provide funds to help seminarians from the diocese purchase books. Every year before the annual ECW Fall Conference the money collected is divided among our Alabama seminarians. This year, each seminarian received a check for $806.68.

Alabama Seminarians receiving CPC gifts this year are Trey Kennedy III, Tyler Richards, Dr. Tommie Watkins, Jr., Pamela Payne, Katherine Harper, Corey Jones, Worth Stuart, Jamie Osborne, Jeremy Carlson, and Rachelle Thompson.

The 2015 seminarians were grateful for the gift received from Episcopalians around the Diocese and the ECW received thank you notes from them. The following are some of their comments.

- “Thank you again for the check helping with book expenses. Especially as I near the end of my seminary experience, this help is so important and needed.”
- “Thank you ever so much for your generosity this year as you’ve sent a gift to help with seminarian book expenses. I am so touched by the gestures, especially since they link back to the Alabamians of our diocese whom I miss!”
- “My sincere gratitude to the ECW of the Diocese of Alabama not only for the financial gift, but also for the continued thoughts and prayers.”

At the beginning of each year ECW reminds parishes, groups, and individuals that CPC ingatherings can take place anytime during the year at the local parish and convocation meetings.

Contributions may also be made to CPC by check, payable to “ECW, Diocese of Alabama,” with “For: CPC” in the memo line, and mailed to ECW, Carpenter House, 521 N 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203.

A Prayer for our 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 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

ECW gather in Birmingham for the 126th Fall Conference

by Brenda Mayhall, ECW President

The 126th ECW Fall Conference was held Oct. 1 and 2 at St. Stephens in Birmingham. The conference drew 110 registrants, representing 39 parishes.

Laura Lapins Willis was the keynote speaker. Laura lives with her family in Sewanee, TN where she is known for her work with the Community Action Committee as community organizer and advocate. She is the editor and publisher of the Sewanee Mountain Messenger, a weekly, free, community newspaper dedicated to printing “good news”. She is also author of the book “Finding God in a Bag of Groceries”.

Her message to the conference was disarming God’s call of the needs and service in your community. In conjunction with Laura’s message, the conference took time to participate in a hands-on project by packing baby supplies, making blankets and cards for infants born to HIV women. The conference heard Dr. Marilyn Crain speak about the project.

Leslie Manning was on hand to speak to the conference about Sawyerville Day Camp and her story with the ministry as well as it’s future plans. Leslie was named the 2015 Distinguished Woman by the Diocese of Alabama ECW for her work with Sawyerville.

The ladies of the Birmingham Convocation, led by their Convocation Coordinator Linda Kennedy, did an excellent job hosting the event with great food, decorations, and hospitality. With the ECW theme this year “Honoring our Heritage” there was special emphasis on the ladies who went before us in service and some were recognized throughout the conference.

An awesome video, created by Allison Kendrick, for the event was viewed during the Honor our Heritage Banquet as the conference enjoyed a lovely meal. Doug Carpenter along with past and future ECW Presidents were featured in the video.

Incoming ECW officers were installed by Bishop Murray during the Closing Eucharist. Installed were President - Andrea Peacock (St. James, Alex City), President Elect - Pearl Slay (Trinity, Demopolis), Secretary – Diane Weatherford (St. Luke’s, Birmingham), Treasurer – Phyllis McAnally (St. James, Alex City) and UTO Chair – Bea Strong (Christ Church, Tuscaloosa).

The ECW Diocesan outgoing and incoming boards enjoyed a lovely meal and social time at The Abbey prior to the conference opening. We greatly appreciate The Abbey hosting our gathering of the boards as we enjoyed getting to know each other as we transition into a new term of office, sharing our stories of how we serve Christ in our diocese.

We look forward to the 127th Fall Conference hosted by the Tennessee Valley Convocation to be held Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at Camp McDowell. Mark your calendars!!
Parishes throughout the diocese celebrated All Hallows’ Eve during the week leading to All Saints’ Day with a variety of activities ranging from Trunk-or-Treat and costume contests to special services and festive gatherings. One parish even handed out candy to community trick-or-treaters from the steps of the church. We decided to share a few photos events around the diocese.

Parishes celebrate Halloween in a variety of ways

Photos by: Amanda Goeke, Nativity, Huntsville; Emily Marsh, St. John’s, Decatur; Emily Collettes-Linton, St. Mary’s-on-the-Highlands; Becky Youngblood, St. Paul’s, Selma; Jennifer Jones, St. Stephen’s, Birmingham; Charlie Scott & Gail Perna, St. Thomas, Huntsville; Isabel Evans, St. Timothy’s, Athens; and Pat King, Trinity, Clanton.
Parishes celebrate the Feast of St. Francis with pet blessings

Photos by: Deborah Burnett, Holy Apostles, Hoover; Lee Coggins, Nativity Huntsville; Ann Stewart, St. John’s, Decatur; Gail Perna, St. Thomas, Huntsville; Patti Whitaker, St. Timothy’s Athens.

Elmore County Humane Society benefits from Holy Cross School project

The Humane Society of Elmore County recently received much-needed supplies thanks to the students of Holy Cross Episcopal School in Montgomery.

Every October the school celebrates the Blessing of the Animals. In preparation, students conduct an outreach project to collect pet food and other items for a local animal shelter. While Holy Cross students were excited to have their dogs, cats, rabbits, and even a chicken blessed, they became more excited as they watched the collection of donated pet supplies grow.

Students brought in an assortment of dog and cat food, treats, toys, bedding, cleaning supplies and stacks of old newspapers. The donated items were presented to the humane society during the animal blessing on Oct. 2, which was held in front of the Chapel of the Annunciation on the Holy Cross School campus.

“It was so heartwarming to see all the loved pets being blessed, said Humane Society of Elmore County Executive Director Rea Cord. “Donations like these truly help as we work to care for those pets that do not (yet) have loving families.”
We need a new faith forming ecosystem. One that remains faithful to the continuing mission of making disciples and forming faith across the whole life span, but is also responsive to the challenges of the twenty-first century and the religious and spiritual needs of people today.

We believe there are six crucial aspects to this new ecosystem. Without them, the future of faith formation is in peril. Here’s what really matters.

**Generations matter.**

Intergenerational faith formation and whole community faith experiences are at the center of the new faith forming ecosystem. People learn by participating in the life of a community. Practices of faith are taught through the interrelationships of worship, learning, service, ritual, prayer, and more. A faith forming education that is centered in the life of the Christian community is intrinsically an intergenerational experience. This involves much more than inviting parents and adults to “hover” over children while they learn.

**Family / Home matters.**

Parents and family play the primary role in transmitting faith to the next generation—a truth demonstrated in research studies, the Christian tradition, and pastoral experience. The faith of parents and grandparents, their role modeling, their teaching, their warm and affirming parenting style are the key factors in faith transmission. As faith formation leaders, we must learn to equip families to become centers of learning and faith growth at home.

**Digital / Online matters.**

We recognize the need to deliberately relocate ourselves in digital spaces in order to encounter the sacred in the world. Ours is no longer a “one size fits all” culture. It’s more like “one size fits one.” We seek to become digitally enabled in order to personalize and customize our efforts to the needs and people of the 21st century. Instead of a linear programmatic approach we seek a networked approach to faith formation that utilizes an intentional, creative blend of online and gathered programming. We need to deliberately relocate ourselves in digital spaces in order to encounter the sacred in the world.

**Age Groups matter . . . still.**

There remains a place for age-segmented faith formation—for children, youth, and adults—but it’s no longer the center place. Still, we recognize the need for intentional faith formation all across the life span by understanding life stages, not just of children and youth, but of adulthood as well. With this understanding we seek to develop an integrated faith formation plan that dovetails with all other aspects for congregational life, particularly worship.

**Misssional matters**

In the words of Keith Anderson (Digital Cathedral) referring to those not religiously affiliated, “Nones are not problems to solve, or issues to be debated, but rather individuals to welcome as if they were Christ himself.” We are called to focus on the needs of the spiritual but not religious. This means expanding our outreach, connection, relationship building, and engagement with people where they live — moving faith formation into the community.

**Leaders Matter!**

As faith formation leaders we must recognize two dimensions: internal (heart and soul) and external (practices and skills). We must cultivate the inner life by developing a spirituality that sustains and guides our leadership, and we must develop the knowledge and skills to practice truly effective leadership in the congregation and in the world.

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**Faith in Families- Begin with Advent**

*by Vibrant Faith@home, contributor Kathy Graham, Diocesan Lifelong Christian Formation Coordinator*

Starting with this Advent why not make a concerted effort to make faith part of your family’s everyday activities? It’s an important and exciting task. However, if you’re feeling a little unsure of where to start, you’re not alone. Many parents, grandparents and Godparents are left wondering how to go about this, and if they’re really equipped for the job. The good news is: you are!

No matter the age of the children you care for, as an adult in their lives you have the opportunity to make a difference in their faith journey by being authentic, available and affirming: a “Triple A” Christian adult.

- **Authentic:** Be yourself. Be real. Be honest.
- **Available:** Be there for your children, make the relationship a priority.
- **Affirming:** Affirm their gifts and notice how God is at work in their lives (out loud).

These are the characteristics of adults who have a big impact on faith and you are invited to become a Triple A Christian adult for the children and youth in your life.

Notice that having all the answers is not one of the required characteristics. We are all disciples who are learning and growing in our faith, and it’s okay not to know all the answers. Feel free to say that you’re not sure about something. Find out together, do some research or ask a friend or your rector.

Vibrant Faith @ Home has resources for families of all shapes and sizes to start incorporating faith practices into family routine. Family activities are available in six categories; each is a vital part of nurturing faith: Caring Conversation, Ritual & Tradition, Prayer, Bible Story, Serving Others, and Learning About Faith.

On the Vibrant Faith website you will find a simple how-to video for each category. It’s never too late to start incorporating these activities into your family life. So jump in! Try one. Some activities will bring about amazing God-moments. Others may not produce that same feeling, but keep at it; you never know how the Holy Spirit may be at work. And remember, you’re not alone on this journey; God is with you every step of the way. So what better way to begin than with prayer?

God of all creation, thank you for putting children in my life, especially _______. Thank you for putting adults in my life, especially ________. And thank you for giving me the opportunity to teach them about you. Help me to be authentic, available and affirming. Give me the courage and confidence to initiate family routines that focus us all on you and bring attention to the many ways you are at work in each of us. Amen.

Bookmark and visit www.vibrantfaithathome.org for all of these great resources.

Also check with your Christian formation leaders about resources they can recommend and/or loan.

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**Vibrant Faith Ministries**

We recognize the need to deliberately relocate our faith formation centers. We are not problems to solve, or issues to be debated, but rather individuals to welcome as if they were Christ himself. We are called to focus on the needs of the spiritual but not religious. This means expanding our outreach, connection, relationship building, and engagement with people where they live — moving faith formation into the community.

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Around Our Diocese

The Diocese of Alabama has a Pinterest page with lots of great ideas— visit and post yours—http://www.pinterest.com/dioaladirectors/boards/

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*Vibrant Faith Ministries*

by Leif Kehrwald & John Roberto of Vibrant Faith Ministries
Symbiotic Relationship: Needing Each Other

By The Rev. Mark Johnston

Some days it seems like I have been the Director of Camp McDowell my whole life. I have now been here 25 years and I still feel certain it is the best job in the whole world. However, of course I have not been here my whole life. Allow me to reminisce with you.

I was ordained ten years before I became the Director here. First, I was Rector at St. Michael’s, Fayette, and then St. Matthias’, Tuscaloosa. After St. Matthias’ I helped start the Black Belt Ministries and I served in numerous parishes across the beautiful Black Belt. Yes, I have a lot of experience working in small parishes. In every parish I was able to use Camp McDowell to grow my parish in numbers and in spiritual growth.

I always made certain that I sent as many children as possible to summer camp. Those campers made friends they would have for the rest of their lives, and they grew in their Christian faith. They learned that the Episcopal Church is much larger than their small parish, and many of those children are still active in the Episcopal Church. Many send their children to summer camp or come to McDowell parish retreats or other events. Susanna Whitsett who works with me was one of those children. I have strong relationships with so many of those former campers, and Camp McDowell the connection that keeps us in touch.

Camp McDowell was invaluable in my parish ministry, but it was also a symbiotic relationship. Camp has always needed the parishes I served. It could not have existed if our parish and other parishes, large and small, had not sent children to summer camp. That relationship is still there but in a much broader scope. Now Alabama Cursillo also grows people in their faith, helps them discover a larger church, and activates them in their home parish. Parish retreats, conferences, and the Alabama Folk School do the same. Camp McDowell is helping build parishes, and parishes are helping build Camp McDowell.

If it was not for parish support, Bethany at Camp McDowell would not have been built. Thank you!! We have raised 90% of the funds we need to build Bethany. If your parish has not made a gift to Bethany, please do! Every gift is important. If your parish has made a pledge to Bethany, please support it with a personal pledge. You are continuing to build Camp McDowell and McDowell will continue to build and support your parish.

Fill out the pledge card on this page today or contact danielle@campmcdowell.com to extend your pledge or make a pledge to Bethany at wonderful Camp McDowell.

Please add this to (my parish’s) __________ pledge total.

In support of Bethany Village at Camp McDowell, I/we intend to contribute a total of $ ______________. Payment of this gift is to extend over ___ (three to five) years, beginning in 20_____. An initial payment of $ ______________ is enclosed and I/we prefer to remit the balance ___ annually, ___ quarterly, or ___ monthly. I understand that this statement represents neither a binding obligation on my part nor the part of my estate, and that contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent provided by law.

Full Name ____________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________
Phone ___________________________________________ Email address ____________
Signature ______________________________________________

I prefer to receive statement information via  ___ email or ___ traditional mail.

Please make checks payable to Camp McDowell with Bethany Village in the memo line. Mail contributions to Danielle Dunbar:
Carpenter House, 521 N. 20th St., Birmingham, AL 35203
I recently read a story online about a young woman who lived with her grandmother and grew up poor. She remembers fondly their trips to “stand in line at the bull barn” to receive welfare staples or “commodities” like fruit cocktail, green beans, and a huge tub of generic peanut butter. She didn’t know they were poor.

The peanut butter container was white with black lettering and had a recipe on the back for peanut butter cookies. They were the first she ever made as she had to teach herself to bake. In the online article, she shared the recipe that she had rediscovered on Google titled, “welfare peanut butter cookies.” There were so many comments by people who said they remembered the big peanut butter jars and those delicious cookies and replying that they didn’t realize they were poor either.

It was a wonderful story and I wanted to make those peanut butter cookies just to share the experience. Yet we have all come from places where we didn’t know we were poor. Jesus has comforted, nurtured, and raised us up in so many ways that much of our poverty has been alleviated. At least that is how I feel.

During this time of year especially, I feel blessed and rich and full of abundance. It is felt in the giving of gifts to loved ones and donations to organizations that will put my contributions to good use. If you feel the same, I would encourage you to make a year-end gift to Camp McDowell. We have several opportunities for you and a few include peanut butter cookies.

• For new Bethany pledges or extensions of $1,000 or more (paid over 3-5 years) in honor of a friend or loved one, we will prepare a box of one dozen Mrs. Eppes’ Peanut Butter Cookies for you and deliver them to a parish nearby. (As a reminder, Mrs. Eppes was an important figure at Camp McDowell who cared for campers alongside her husband, The Rev. Scott Eppes. She made the campers feel loved and made a Spartan camp setting feel rich and abundant.)
• For Bethany gifts of a lesser amount, I’ve included Mrs. Eppes’ peanut butter cookie recipe below, for you to make at home. We will send a gift acknowledgement card for gifts of $20 or more to those you have honored.
• Purchase one or more “The Way the World Could Be” books by Doug Carpenter for $20. All proceeds benefit Bethany at Camp McDowell.
• Make a gift of stock towards your existing pledge or extend your pledge with an extra gift. Contact Danielle Dunbar at danielle@campmcdowell.com or 205.358.9234 for more information.
• Make a donation to the Camp McDowell Scholarship Fund. A Christmas card (pictured right) will be sent on your behalf for gifts of $20 or more. Our scholarship goal for 2015-16 is $100,000.

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**MRS. EPPES’ CAMP McDOWELL PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES**

— Makes 6 Dozen —

1 cup real butter
1 cup granulated sugar
5 Tablespoons egg (1 1/2 egg)
1 teaspoon soda
5 Tablespoons water
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup brown sugar
2 cups sifted flour
1/2 teaspoon salt

• Blend butter, peanut butter slowly.
• Add sugar, cream thoroughly after each addition.
• Sift together the egg, flour, soda, salt and add, alternating with water, to the creamed mixture.
• Roll dough into balls about one inch in diameter.
• Place on greased baking sheet.
• Press with back of fork.
• Bake at 325 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes.
Folk School offers three classes that focus on art and design. De-stress Back for its second year, the Art & Design workshop

WINTER WEEKEND January 15-18, 2016
Get ready! The best weekend of the winter is just around the corner! Director: (To Be Announced)
Program Leader: Susanna Whitsett

What is Winter Weekend?
Winter Weekend is a 3-night retreat open to all 7th & 8th grade youth at Camp McDowell! It is similar to Summer Camp, but in the winter! Whether you are new to Camp McDowell or come every year, we will love having you with us!

Winter Weekend will be a time to be with old friends and make new ones, to play games and be kids, to dance, laugh, and sing. Campers will enjoy being in the camp setting in the winter time with group games, arts & craft, hiking, marshmallow-roasting, a talent show, canteen, and the ever-popular “Winter Wonderland Dance” – no dates required! The staff will be full of all-stars, ready to make your Winter Weekend a blast!

ALABAMA FOLK SCHOOL AT CAMP MCDOWELL
Art & Design Fri, Jan 15, 2016 to Sun, Jan 17, 2016
Back for its second year, the Art & Design workshop offers three classes that focus on art and design. De-stress from the holidays and enjoy a weekend at the Alabama Folk School.

- HISTORIC LONGSTITCH with MARGOT ECKE
- THE VISUAL LANGUAGE OF COLLAGE with DARIANA DERVIS
- JAPANESE POSTCARDS with CHIHARU ROACH

Summer Camp Schedule 2016 on Clear Creek
Primary I—May 27-29 .......................................................... (entering 1st-3rd with parent)
Junior High I—June 1-7 ........................................................ (entering 6th and 7th)
Sophomore—June 10-18 ..................................................... (entering 8th and 9th)
Middler—June 21-26 ......................................................... (entering 5th and 6th)
Elementary I—June 29-July 3 .............................................. (entering 3rd and 4th)
Junior High 2—July 6-13 ...................................................... (entering 7th and 8th)
Senior Camp—July 17-26 .................................................... (entering 10th-12th)
Elementary II—July 30-August 3 ......................................... (entering 4th and 5th)
Primary II—August 5–7 ...................................................... (entering 1st-3rd with parent)

Summer Camp Schedule 2016 at Bethany Village
Our Time grief camp—June 3-5 (entering 6th—8th For kids healing from loss; concurrent program for their adult caregivers.)
Diocesan Homecoming—June 10-12 (All ages! Diocesan-wide weekend retreat.)
Alabama Folk School Youth Workshop—June 14-17 (entering 5th—12th Classes in fiddle & guitar, some experience helpful.)
Special Session—June 19-26 (Summer camp for adults with disabilities.)
CREATE! June 28—July 1 (entering 9th & 10th—leadership development through work projects & camp community!)
Bethany’s Kids I—July 1-12-15 (entering 4th-6th—inclusion summer camp for typical kids & kids with disabilities. “Camper Buddies” program for 9th gr—HS grads.)
Bethany’s Kids II—July 19-22 (entering 6th-8th—inclusion summer camp for typical kids & kids with disabilities. “Camper Buddies” program for rising 9th—HS grads.)
Here are ten reasons why you might buy copies of the recently published story of Camp McDowell for yourself or for Christmas gifts.

1. You are part of a great story. Celebrate the fact. Being included in a valuable and ongoing story brings a better understanding of Jesus’ message that each one of us is of great value.

2. You may have noticed that people you admire are loyal to the institutions that nourished them, and they share their stories.

3. You’ll enjoy knowing more about our three Camp Directors and two Caretakers.

4. The picture on the cover by the famous conservation photographer, Beth Maynor Young, is worth the price of the book.

5. You’ll find out why the swinging bridge and the pool it leads to are both named Christopher.

6. You will find out how the first land and the first buildings at McDowell were bought with pennies, literally.

7. You’ll read about Bill McLemore being attacked by a bear when he was telling the story of the Nauvoo Bear.

8. You’ll find out that Camp McDowell’s beginning was on the shores of Mobile Bay in 1923.

9. For each book you buy, you’ll be contributing $20 (or more if you like) to paying for Bethany, and Bethany adds to the fact that McDowell is the most remarkable camp and conference center in the Episcopal Church.

10. It’s easy to buy. Buy it from the new Camp Store at McDowell, by emailing julia@campmcdowell, or from Danielle Dunbar at the Diocesan Headquarters. If you want a signed and inscribed copy, email the author at carpenter.doug7436@att.net and let him know your mailing address and how many copies you want. He’ll enclose a bill with the books: $20 for each copy, and the mailing cost is only $3 no matter how many books. Make check to Camp McDowell. If you don’t use email, the address is Doug Carpenter, 3037 Overton Rd., Birmingham, AL 35223. Phone: 205-381-3553.

These are two pictures from the very early days at Camp McDowell at the Beach Hotel at Battles Warf on Mobile Bay. One picture is of boy counselors the other is of older counselors.

I think this must have been about 1931 because Marshall Seifert the boy on the far right looks to be about sixteen years old, and he was born in 1915. In the adult picture the tallest fellow is Bishop McDowell. - Doug

From all the staff at Camp McDowell:
Have a blessed Advent and a very merry Christmas! We hope to see you more often in 2016!
District Day Reflections

In Northern district we often don’t see a large amount of youth at our district day event but this year we saw nearly 40 kids show up, which I am very pleased to state is the largest I have ever seen. Our theme was superheroes which many kids took advantage of and wore their favorite superheroes T-shirts and other attire. We made capes and played kickball which was fun and competitive but the most incredible part to me was right after everyone arrived and we gathered under a pavilion to surprise William Blackerby and Kristin Hanson with cake to celebrate their then upcoming wedding. It might have been the cake, but everyone got really excited (even total strangers) to wish them good luck and happiness in their life together. The excitement and not awkward around each other. But after about five minutes, we were already sharing most embarrassing stories as our ice breaker. I believe this is an indicator of how good of a job we did this year in trying to help everyone share the love of Christ through fellowship with each other. I am excited to see what the Birmingham district as well as the entirety of the YD will accomplish this year and I hope you will be a part of it.

~ Robert McCown, YD Rep, Northern District

We had originally planned to have this event at Overton park but due to rain conflicts it had to be moved to St Stephens, which I thought was a blessing in disguise because it brought everyone together as a closer knit community. As the kids arrived it was so uplifting to see bright eager new faces traveling from near and far to be a part of this event. Obviously, we had loads of fun playing tag and telling the kids of the upcoming events, but what stood out the most to everyone was the immediate fellowship every person seemed to grab hold of so quickly. This year we decided to partake in small groups because of the increasing size of this event. There were about 7 groups composed of around 10 kids each. Being a group leader, I was surprised to see how comfortable everyone was with each other. In my past experience with middle schoolers and underclassmen high schoolers, it takes usually two or three days for them to become loose and not awkward around each other. But after about five minutes, we were already sharing most embarrassing stories as our ice breaker. I believe this is an indicator of how good of a job we did this year in trying to help everyone share the love of Christ through fellowship with each other. I am excited to see what the Birmingham district as well as the entirety of the YD will accomplish this year and I hope you will be a part of it.

~ Ann Mosely Whitsett, YD At-Large

District Day this year was an eye opening experience. I didn’t really know what I was getting into, but I knew that it was going to be a lot of fun. What I did not know was how much effort it was going to take to make sure everything went smoothly. It’s funny how you never really appreciate something until you are the one who has to do it.

This year we held District Day at the Capitol building, and played capture the flag on the lawn. Seeing the caravan of kids engulfing the state house caused a sense of fulfillment. To me, the Birmingham district was always the one to have the biggest turn out, but in reality we were not far behind them numbers wise. It was encouraging to see how successful the Episcopal community is, as well as how much the southern presence has grown in the diocese due to extraordinary leadership in the past. I hope that every child in this community is able to experience District Day at some point solely for the purpose of realizing how strong we are as a whole. It was surprising to me at least, definitely the best District Day I’ve been to so far.

~ Brucie Porter, YD Rep, Southern District

Rites of Spring
2016

Where: Camp McDowell
When: April 1-3
Apply: http://goo.gl/APGNCC
Cost: $115 (scholarships available)

Senior high youth are invited to attend this fun spring retreat. No convention is also hosted during this event to elect new members to represent the youth department for the upcoming year.

Calling Grades 9-12... to Join the Youth Department

Diocesan Convention Youth Retreat

February 5-7, 2016
At Camp McDowell
$115 with Scholarships Available

This retreat is a time for community building and bringing a strong youth presence to the diocesan convention. All high school youth and the adults who work with them are invited.

Registration opens in January
www.diagala.org/ministries/senior-high-events.html

November/December 2015
An incredible year for Sawyerville Day Camp

by Leslie Manning, Director

2015 was an incredible year for Sawyerville Day Camp (SDC)! We registered 739 campers for our free summer camp that spans three sessions with three camps taking place during each session, served 21 rising 5th graders in our newly expanded Yellowhammer Literacy Project (the new reading intervention and academic program of SDC), worked alongside 10 incredible young adult interns throughout the summer, served with over 300 volunteers, most of whom were high school and college aged young adults, and watched as the Holy Spirit continued to move and breathe within this program.

In its twenty-third year, the Sawyerville Day Camp continues to work with the community to bring hope and joy to its children as well as giving the young people of our diocese and Hale County an unbelievable chance at servant leadership & service-learning—coexisting among other staff volunteers with whom they might not otherwise come in contact. It is an amazing thing to watch evolve and grow over the years and with a grateful heart I continue to see improvements, transformation and goodness unfold.

We are closing out a time of formal strategic planning, asking for guidance from God and God’s people as we discern the way forward over the next five to 10 years. It is an exciting time in the life of the camp and all of its programs. We look forward to showing you the results of the many hours of listening sessions, the hundreds of people’s opinions we have sought out and the new partnerships we have established. One of our interviewees from Hale County said it best, “Camp is a gift we give our children that they will benefit from and remember forever. If ever there was a time when the world needed a generation of future leaders who understood the intricacies of living in a community, having tolerance, and being open — that time is now.”

We are so proud of this summer, and we believe it reflects the support and kindness of our individual donors and parishes. In 2015, we experienced an inspiring increase in participation from the diocesan parishes. Thirty-four Episcopal parishes in Alabama gave monies totaling $114,621.50. This is a 14-parish increase and $27,415.68 more than in 2014! In regards to all forms of participation – donating supplies, bringing meals, writing prayer partner letters, and giving funds – 58 parishes in the diocese supported Sawyerville Day Camp in some form. That accounts for 65.17% of the diocese, an increase of 5.62% from last year.

Thank you to all!

Parish Participation 2015 vs 2014

2014:
21 parishes gave meals
38 parishes gave supplies
18 parishes gave money totaling $74,000
TOTAL: 53 parishes (59.55% of the diocese) participated in Sawyerville in at least one of these forms

2015:
19 parishes gave meals
42 parishes gave supplies (increased by 4 parishes)
32 parishes gave money totaling $101,415.68 (increased by 14 parishes and $27,415.68)
TOTAL: 58 parishes (65.17% of the diocese) participated in Sawyerville in at least one of these forms (increased by 5.62%)
Thanks to our wonderful staff

by Crystal Jones, Assistant Director for Staffing & Logistics

“What an incredible summer we had down in Greensboro. Thank you to our wonderful staff -- our interns, small group leaders, coordinators, bus drivers, and kitchen staff. From those who start planning and preparing months in advance to those who arrive a few days early for training, they all did an amazing job and worked so hard to make 2015 a successful and fun summer for the campers. In 2015 we had over 360 staff spread out over all three sessions: 107 new staff, 255 returning staff, 89 local staff, and 59 staff that were previously campers.”

Staff Sawyerville in 2016...Come one, come all!
If you are interested in volunteering for a whole session or two for the 2016 summer, you will be able to apply for staff at the beginning of December. Staff selections will be made mid March and applicants will be notified at the end of March. You must be at least 16 years of age but there is no maximum age! Come and share your time and talent as a SDC camp counselor. Adults, there are opportunities for you too!
If you are at least 19 and are interested in interning with the Sawyerville Day Camp this summer, please consider applying. This is a paid internship with housing provided (both in Birmingham and Greensboro). The intern applications will be available at the beginning of December and the Sawyerville Day Camp 2016 interns will be selected early January.
All staff applications can be found online on our website in January, www.sawyervilledaycamp.org.

Proposed 2016 Camp Staff Dates

Pending approval by the Hale County Board of Education, the following are proposed Sawyerville Day Camp Staff Dates for 2016. (Staff dates include training and clean-up):
• Session 1: June 10-June 18
• Session 2: June 24-July 2
• Session 3: July 8-16
Yellowhammer Literacy Project dates are to be determined. SDC and YLP interns will work all of June and July with SDC interns starting in mid-May.

It is that time again...Time to get camp

by Claire Cotten, Assistant Director for Parish Giving & Connections

We’re already looking forward to Summer 2016! Parishes can collect supplies like bathing suits and snacks, provide a meal for the staff, send staff volunteers, write prayer partner letters, give a financial gift, or all of the above.
Whatever your parish has to offer, please know that the staff and campers are very thankful for your support. Camp wouldn’t be possible without you. If you haven’t heard from someone already and would like to get more involved, visit the website, call (205) 715-2060 ext. 9242 or email clairedcotten@gmail.com or Leslie Manning, sawyervillecamp@gmail.com.
Whether your parish is considering participating for the first time or you’re seasoned SDC supporters, we’d love to come and visit. We can give a presentation to your Sunday school class, Wednesday evening program, or any other group. We’ll talk about the basics of the camp, play a brand new short film we had made this summer, and share news about what’s coming up next. We can tailor this presentation to speak more about the Yellowhammer Literacy Project or the program in general. We can also customize this presentation to meet your current program year’s theme or a season of the Church. If you’d like to request a presentation, please contact Claire Cotten at clairedcotten@gmail.com or look us up online, www.sawyervilledaycamp.org. Hurry, before we get booked up!
All Saints Episcopal Church, Birmingham
Canterbury Episcopal Chapel, Tuscaloosa
Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham
Christ Episcopal Church, Albertville
Christ Episcopal Church, Fairfield
Christ Episcopal Church, Tuscaloosa
Church of the Ascension, Birmingham
Church of the Ascension, Montgomery
Church of the Epiphany, Guntersville
Church of the Epiphany, Leeds
Church of the Holy Comforter, Montgomery
Church of the Nativity, Huntsville
Church of the Resurrection, Rainbow City
Cursillo Reunion Group: Caroline Bolvig, Stephanie Sewell, Bo Berry
Cursillo Reunion Group: Susan and Jimbo Moore, Beth Hansen
Church of the Epiphany, Leeds
Gilbert Wright and Caroline Cutler
Grace Episcopal Church, Mount Meigs
Grace Episcopal Church, Cullman
Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Trussville
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Auburn
Sixth Ave. Baptist Church, Birmingham
St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Montevallo
St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal, Florence
St. Dunstan’s College Center, Auburn
St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church, Indian Springs
St. James Episcopal Church, Alexander City
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Decatur
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Montgomery
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, Prattville
St. Mary’s on-the-Highlands, Birmingham
St. Matthias’ Episcopal Church, Tuscaloosa
Grace Episcopal Church, Mount Meigs
Grace Episcopal Church, Cullman
Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Trussville
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Auburn
Sixth Ave. Baptist Church, Birmingham
St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Montevallo
St. Bartholomew’s Episcopal, Florence
St. Dunstan’s College Center, Auburn
St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church, Indian Springs
St. James Episcopal Church, Alexander City
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Decatur
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Montgomery
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, Prattville
St. Mary’s on-the-Highlands, Birmingham
St. Matthias’ Episcopal Church, Tuscaloosa
St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Millbrook
St. Michael’s Episcopal Church, Fayette
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Selma
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Greensboro
St. Philip’s Episcopal Church, Fort Payne
St. Simon Peter Episcopal Church, Pell City
St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, Eutaw
St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, Huntsville
St. Stephen’s, Birmingham
St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Birmingham
St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Huntsville
St. Wilfrid’s Episcopal Church, Marion
Third Street Church of God, Greensboro
Trinity Church, Demopolis
Trinity Church, Florence
Trinity Church, Wetumpka
Wilson Chapel United Methodist, Birmingham

### 2016 Sawyerville Christmas Cards now available

This year, give the gift of Sawyerville Day Camp and its myriad of programs! Consider purchasing Sawyerville Day Camp Christmas Cards for your loved ones and help provide the experience of a free camp, literacy or service-learning opportunity for a young person. These cards are a beautiful gift-in-one! Donate $10.00 and in turn receive a card that can be sent to loved ones or co-workers with a note enclosed letting them know a donation was made in their honor at Christmas. Your donation at Christmas goes directly to our 2016 fundraising need! We cannot wait to share the good news of Christ’s birth and the camp through this special fundraiser. Cards will be available for purchase online starting at Thanksgiving.

Questions? Contact Jamie Plott, jdpua00@aol.com.

### Give back in prayer

Mark your calendar for #GivingTuesday on Dec. 1! After Black Friday and Cyber Monday, we’ll all be ready to switch gears and give back on Giving Tuesday. Join us on social media as we work towards a one day fundraising goal of $15,000. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter @sawyerville and Instagram @sawyerville, for updates throughout the day. In addition to giving monetary gifts, we’re asking for supporters to give their time on Giving Tuesday. We’ll be hosting Prayer Partner letter writing events all over the diocese. Be on the lookout for more information via social media, the website and email blasts. Questions? Contact Linda Kennedy, lindakennedy17@gmail.com.
A very special thank you to St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Greensboro, the 5K Race Coordinator, Meg Byrd, and all the runners, walkers and donors that supported SDC through the 5th Annual 5K. It was a gorgeous day that has brought in $5,622.87 and counting in donations for the camp!

We had one of the largest crowds yet and had the support of the local community—from businesses, to the HERO Bike Lab leading the pack on their amazing bamboo bikes to the Greensboro High School track team showing off their speed and endurance for the race crowd! Make plans to join us next fall if you haven’t already. A fun day for the whole family. Thanks again, St. Paul’s, for coordinating this fundraiser on the camp’s behalf!

Want to donate to the camp? Find out more?
Visit, www.sawyervilledaycamp.org

Sawyerville 5K:
We came, we ran, and we ate ice cream, too!
Global Refugee Crisis: How You Can Help

By the Rev. Deacon Judy Quick, Deacon, Diocesan Coordinator, Episcopal Relief & Development

As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Colossians 3:12 NRSV

The immense scope of the global refugee crisis has stirred deep concern throughout the diocese with many inquiries on how parishes and individuals can best respond. The United Nations has deemed this the largest humanitarian crisis since World War II. While the crisis in Syria has dominated the media, it is important to remember, hold in prayer, advocate for, and support refugees from conflict zones across the globe, as well as the countries that host them.

There are many possibilities to offer a compassionate response to the plight of those who are seeking refuge from war and political persecution. Refugee status is conferred on those whose refugee claim has been evaluated by the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR). Asylum seekers have fled their home and crossed an international border seeking safety and protection and have applied for refugee status. Internally displaced persons are displaced by violence and conflict within their own country.

Episcopal Relief & Development is actively responding to human need partnering with the Diocese of Jerusalem, the ACT Alliance, the Anglican Alliance, and with Islamic Relief to serve refugees and asylum seekers in the Middle East and throughout Europe.

For example, Episcopal Relief & Development is supporting Islamic Relief’s efforts on the island of Lesbos, Greece, to provide critical emergency supplies as well as language and cultural mediation services to people traveling en route to mainland Europe.

Episcopal Migration Ministries is the Episcopal Church’s response to refugee crises, working with governments, non-governmental organizations, and a number of local dioceses in the Episcopal Church to help provide vital services upon the arrival of refugees in America.

Here’s how you can respond:

**PRAY:** There are several prayers for Refugees posted on the www.dioala.org website, Prayer for the Victims of the Syrian Conflict; Prayers of the People for Refugees and Displaced People; Prayer for Refugees

**KEEP INFORMED:** Follow news releases on www.episcopalrelief.org and www.episcopalchurch.org/episcopalmigrationministries, also Facebook and Twitter. The US Office of Refugee Resettlement is another information resource. President Obama has increased the refugee admissions to 85,000 for 2016 (10,000 Syrian) and 100,000 for 2017.

**ADVOCATE:** Join the Episcopal Public Policy Network (EPPN), a grassroots network of Episcopalians dedicated to striving for justice and peace. Through the EPPN action center, you contact your member of Congress directly via email, participate in direct advocacy, and spread awareness in your community. http://tinyurl.com/JoinEPPN or contact Lucy Breemel, lbreemel@episcopalchurch.org, 202.547.7300. Here is a tool where you can find your elected officials: http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/app/lookup?2&zm=29652 Here’s an action alert (it takes about 2 minutes to send a message to your members of Congress calling for more refugees): http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/app/write-a-letter?6&engagementId=130613

**DISCERN:** Assess the hand, head, heart, and human gifts of your congregation to discern opportunities for connection, for support, and for partnership in the work of refugee resettlement. Visit www.calledtotransformation.org to learn more about this resource from Episcopal Relief & Development and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society. Also posted on www.dioala.org/ministries/missionandoutreach are several documents from Episcopal Migration Ministries to consider in your discernment: Background on the Global Refugee Crisis; How You Can Help; Best Practices for Engaging Congregations; Checklist for Congregations; Activity to Discern Gifts for Ministries of Welcome.

**WELCOME:** The Office of Refugee Resettlement places refugees with approved refugee resettlement organizations, such as Episcopal Migration Ministries and its affiliates or Catholic Social Services. Episcopal Migration Ministries currently does not have an affiliate in Alabama. The EMM affiliates in Atlanta, Chattanooga, and Knoxville serve only a 100 mile radius. The only Alabama refugee resettlement organization, Catholic Social Services in Mobile, serves only a 100 mile radius. A diocesan team is researching additional avenues on how to welcome refugee families to the Diocese of Alabama. If you are interested in welcoming refugees and working on a solution to receive refugee families in the Diocese of Alabama, please contact the Reverend Judy Quick, Deacon (jjgquick@bellsouth.net).

**DONATE:** A Syrian Refugee Relief Fund has been established at: https://www.episcopalrelief.org/syria-crisis-response.

Let us continue to clothe ourselves with compassion as we respond, as we are called, to this global refugee crisis.

Editor’s Note: To learn more about Episcopal Relief & Development’s programs worldwide, visit www.episcopalrelief.org or contact the Reverend Judy Quick, Deacon, at jjgquick@bellsouth.net 205.669.6862 (home), 770.366.4034 (cell) or Mrs. Marilyn Lands at marilynlands@gmail.com.

Grace Woodlawn celebrates former rector’s 90th birthday

by Joyce Benington

The Rev. Canon William Maurice Branscomb, Jr. was honored on his 90th birthday with a Solemn Celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Grace Episcopal Church, Woodlawn, Saturday, Sept. 19. During his tenure in the Diocese of Alabama, Branscomb served St. Andrew’s on Birmingham’s Southside for eleven years and Grace Church for nine. He retired in 1997.

At both St. Andrew’s and Grace, Branscomb introduced the concept of “Street and Altar” ministry, a tradition that continues in both parishes today. Derived from the 19th-century Oxford Movement in the Church of England, this approach to ministry emphasizes a strong commitment to serving the poor, along with “high church” or Anglo-Catholic liturgy, often sung. Recognizing the centrality of the Eucharist, Anglo-Catholics believe in worshiping God “in the beauty of holiness,” with incense and candles, beautiful vestments and music.

While serving in Birmingham, Branscomb began many outreach efforts to benefit the poor and marginalized, including Community Kitchen, 55th Place Thrift Store and Interfaith Hospitality House, all of which continue to serve individuals and families in need.

Well-wishers from Grace Church and St. Andrew’s, as well as from other parishes in Alabama and beyond, joined Branscomb for the Celebration of Holy Eucharist and later in Branscomb Commons (Grace’s parish hall) for a festive reception.

Maurice Branscomb with Frances Henckell during his 90th birthday celebration at Grace Church, Woodlawn. Henckell is also 90. Photo by Elizabeth Anderson

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Maurice Branscomb with Frances Henckell during his 90th birthday celebration at Grace Church, Woodlawn. Henckell is also 90. Photo by Elizabeth Anderson
The Rev. Matthew Grunfeld, rector at All Saints in Montgomery, has accepted a call to serve as priest in charge at Church of the Annunciation, Holmes Beach, FL, effective Dec. 1. His last Sunday at All Saints, was Nov 22.

The Rev. Robert Fowler has accepted a call to serve St. Luke’s, Jacksonville beginning Dec.1. He is presently serving as associate rector at St. Margaret’s in Carolton, GA.

The Rev. Louie Skipper has announced his retirement. His last Sunday as rector of South Talladega Episcopal Ministries was Nov. 15.

The Rev. Joe Gibbes accepted a call to serve as rector at Church of Our Savior in Jacksonville, FL. His last Sunday at Holy Cross in Trussville was Oct. 25 and his last Sunday at the Cathedral Church of the Advent was Nov. 8.

The Rev. Monica Carlson accepted a call to serve as rector at Church of the Epiphany, Leeds effective Nov. 1.

The Rev. Ron DeBene began serving as consistent supply priest for St. Andrew’s in Montevallo Nov 1.

The Rev. Jonathan Waddell has accepted a call to serve as part-time chaplain at St. Martin’s in the Pines, Birmingham. His ministry there began Oct. 28.

The Rev. John Wesley, rector of St. Andrew’s, Montevallo, accepted a call to serve as part time rector for St. Paul’s Church in Quincy, FL, in the Diocese of Florida. His resignation from St. Andrew’s was effective Oct 18.

The Rev. David Hodge accepted a call to serve as Chief Development Officer for St. Francis Community Services in Sylva, KS. St. Francis is an Episcopal agency which serves children. His ministry there began Oct 1.

Get all the news faster

Don’t want to wait two months for news from around the diocese? The Diocese of Alabama provides a variety of way to get the news as it happens.

- Sign up for our bi-weekly “News Update” email at: http://bit.ly/1760Kz. You will receive an email every other week with headlines that link back to online news articles.
- Find us on Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/dioala/ to learn of diocesan news and events even faster.
- Follow us on Twitter @DioAlaNews, and get messages to your phone or mobile device.
- We are also on Instagram at: @EpiscopalAlabama, and you can find helpful Christian Formation ideas on the diocese Pintrest page at: http://www.pinterest.com/dioaladirectors/boards/

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**Shoals-Area Churches gather for annual Great Episcopal Picnic**

The three Muscle Shoals-area Episcopal Churches gathered for their annual Great Episcopal Picnic Oct. 11, and shared worship, food, fellowship and fun.

Grace Episcopal Church in Sheffield hosted this year’s gathering. The other participating parishes are St. Bartholomew’s and Trinity Episcopal Churches in Florence. The offering at the event supports the Shoals Area Episcopal Foundation. It was established in 1983 to sponsor events and bring speakers in the field of religious studies to the Shoals area, and to foster unity in mission of the three parishes.

The celebrant for this year’s joint service was the Rev. Anna Brawley, St. Bartholomew’s rector; the homilist was the Rev. Andy Keyse, Trinity’s rector. The Rev. Foster Eich, St. Bartholomew’s, read the lessons; The Rev. Deacon Tom Osborne, Grace Church, proclaimed the Gospel; Callie Plunket-Brewton, Trinity Church, led the Prayers of the People. The Rev. Deacon Catherine Schiesz, Trinity, set and served at the table; and numerous lay people form the parishes served as acolytes, Eucharistic Ministers.

Clergy and elected lay representatives of the three area Episcopal Churches.

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**Diocese names executive director for Special Session**

Lindsey Mullen has joined the Diocese of Alabama staff at Carpenter House as Special Session Executive Director. A ministry of the diocese, Special Session is an Episcopal camp for persons of all ages who have mental and physical disabilities.

As executive director, Mullen will oversee and supervise all operations of Special Session, including finance and administration, fundraising, public relations, staff recruiting and training, coordination with pertinent agencies, and planning the actual camp sessions.

“We’re excited to move the Special Session program forward in the hiring of a dedicated Special Session coordinator, and especially excited that Lindsey Mullen has accepted the position,” said the Rt. Rev. Kee Sloan, bishop of Alabama. “She has been a big part of Special Sessions for years, and will help us to maintain and expand the program into the future.”

Mullen was graduated from the University of Alabama in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts degree where she majored in social justice. She earned a Master of Divinity degree from Wake Forest Divinity School this year.

Before joining the diocesan staff Nov 1, she served as Minister for Children, Youth, and Families at Wake Forest Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, NC, and as a program director with the YMCA of Northwest North Carolina. She previously served at Camp Hill Community Glen Craig in Belfast, Ireland. Camp Hill is a residential community for adults with special needs.

Mullen became involved with Special Session in 2003 at age 16, where she served as a counselor and later lead counselor during the next decade.

Began in 1998 by St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Huntsville, Special Session provides a safe haven of unconditional love for those who are often overlooked by society. Unconditional love and acceptance is promoted and experienced through a variety of activities at Camp McDowell. Special Session is staffed by young people and adults.

From Sheffield, AL, Mullen is a member of Canterbury Chapel in Tuscaloosa.
Cathedral Church of the Advent 2015-2016 music series continues

The Cathedral Church of the Advent is offering its 2015-2016 music series. All events listed below are free and open to the public, except for the event listed on April 24, 2016, which is a ticketed event.

Friday, December 4, 2015, 7:30 p.m. - Organ Recital – Frederick Teardo: Frederick Teardo, Director of Music and Organist at the Cathedral Church of the Advent, will perform on the 100-rank Grieb-Williams Organ.

Friday, December 20, 2015, 12:30 p.m. - Mid-Day Music: The Cathedral Singers Handbell Ensemble, under the direction of Frederick Teardo, will perform a free, 30-minute concert.

Friday, January 29, 2016, 12:30 p.m. - Mid-Day Music: Philip Brisson, organ, will perform a 30-minute recital on the 100-rank Grieb-Williams Organ.

Sunday, March 20, 2016, 3:00 p.m. – Holy Week Organ Meditation– Frederick T. Teardo, organ: Frederick Teardo, Director of Music and Organist, will perform J.S. Bach’s Sei gegossen; Jesu gütig and Johannes Brahms’ Eleven Chorale Preludes, Opus 122 on the 100-rank Grieb-Williams Organ.

Friday, April 15, 2016, 12:30 p.m. - Mid-Day Music: The University of Montevallo Concert Choir, Melinda Doyle, conductor, will perform a 30-minute concert.

Sunday, April 24, 2016, 4:00 p.m. – Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys: Considered by many to be the leading American ensemble in the Anglican choral tradition, the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, directed by John Scott, provides music for five choral services each week at Saint Thomas Fifth Avenue, New York. The choir regularly appears in concert with period-instrument ensembles in New York, and for the past three decades has also toured throughout the United States and Europe. For more information on the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, visit SaintThomasChurch.org. For ticket information, please call the Music Office at (205) 443-8553, or visit iTickets.com. Tickets: $25 Reserved Seating, $15 General Admission, $10 Student Tickets.

Young Adult Service Corps now accepting applications

Are you 21 to 30 years old? Do you want to be a part of what God is doing in the world? Are you ready for an experience that will transform your life? Do you want to experience diverse cultures, make a spiritual commitment, and reflect on your vocational possibilities?

If your answer is “Yes!” then you are ready to serve with the Young Adult Service Corps (YASC) in a one-year international mission assignment.

Tuesday, February 24, 2015, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Application Information Session: Join us at The Advent Episcopal Church to learn more about the YASC program. Find out what YASC does, what areas of the world they serve, and what it’s like to be a YASC member. Applications are due by Friday, Jan. 8, 2016. For additional information and to submit an application visit http://bit.ly/ SIDEYASC.
The Nativity by Geraldine Elschner with illustrations by Giotto (Min- edition, hardback)

Exquisite artwork with gold foil and a skillfully written text convey the universal appeal of the Christmas story to children of all ages. The account of Jesus birth, familiar to children around the world, is powerfully retold here. Giotto’s unsurpassed fresco cycle of the Nativity brings the story to vibrant life, while Geraldine Elschner’s thoughtful text engages readers young and old.

The Christmas Story from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke
(Metropolitan Museum of Art and Abrams Books)

The timeless story of Christmas is beautifully retold through paintings by some of the world’s greatest artists. All the works are from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Artists of the period often portrayed members of the Holy Family and other important biblical figures in European dress of the time to make their works of art immediately accessible to contemporary audiences. The artworks are sensitively coupled with excerpts from the King James Bible.

The Story of Christmas
From the King James Bible with Illustrations by Pamela Dalton (Chronicle Books, hardback)

The Nativity story from the King James Bible serves as the text for this engaging interpretation done in exquisite cut-paper—and-watercolor illustrations that stand out against dramatic, black backgrounds—a technique of scherenschnitte, used in Pennsylvania Dutch folk art.

Dalton’s intricate illustrations are cut from paper and then hand-colored to fill in textures and details. Many of the illustrations employ mirror images at each side as in traditional paper-cutting art, with a single focal element showcased in the center.

Daily Reflections for Advent & Christmas
by Genevieve Glen and Jerome Kodell (Liturgical Press, paperback)

Prepare spiritually for the coming of Christ with this easy-to-use annual guide. During the especially busy Advent and Christmas seasons, this little book offers brief, down-to-earth reflections that bring prayer and Scripture into everyday life. Through the insightful reflections on Scripture readings, readers will grow in their understanding of the word of God. This book will help busy people achieve their goal of enriching their personal prayer life during the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

Counting the Days, Lighting the Candles
by Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Jessica L. Thompson with Jami Nato (CreateSpace, paperback)

Of course we know that Christmas is about Jesus... So why is it that we miss seeing him in the midst of all the hustle and bustle? "Counting the Days, Lighting the Candles" is a Christmas Advent Devotional to help you and your family rejoice and rest in the holiday season. Beginning with Dec. 1 and all through the month, you'll find separate readings for adults and children for each day. Also included are 4 activity suggestions that will enhance your family’s experience of this blessed season.

The Book Store is open Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday from 8:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

For information about these and other books, or to have the staff research and special order a particular book, please contact the Episcopal Book Store, 2015 Sixth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203; 205-323-2959; ebsinfo@episcobooks.com; or visit the bookstore online at www.episcobooks.com.
Episcopal Diocese of Alabama seminarian Jamie Lee Osborne has been awarded the 2015 Woods Leadership Award.

The award is presented annually to a mddler at the School of Theology, University of the South, Sewanee, who has successfully taken the initiative in assuming a leadership role in the class during their junior year.

The award's recipient is decided by the dean and faculty of the School of Theology and was announced at the University of the South's Founders' Day convocation on Oct. 16.

"Jaime is a quiet, reflective, but powerful leader," explained the Rev. J. Neil Alexander, dean of the School of Theology, as to why he was the School's choice this year. "Jaime embodies the temperament of effective leadership both within the School of Theology and the larger Sewanee community. His presence among us has made a measurable difference in our common life. He is a deserving recipient of the Woods Leadership Award."

For the purposes of identifying the recipient of this award, leadership is defined as the ability to bring people together into a cooperative community to accomplish assigned tasks and to identify and implement strategies, goals, and programs. Established by Granville Cecil Woods and James Albert Woods, the award recognizes and encourages the students of the School of Theology who make a significant contribution to the quality of the community's life.

When asked to comment on receiving the award, Osborne stated, "I am humbled to receive the Woods Leadership Award. I hold the dean and faculty of the School of Theology in the highest regard and I am honored by their selection. I would like to thank my wife, Lauren, for her love and support. I am also grateful for the support of many who have made it possible for me to be here—St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Huntsville, AL; the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama; and my friends and family. Finally, I'd like to thank my classmates who have dedicated their lives in service to the Church and the world. Their leadership inspires me."