The Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry elected Bishop Coadjutor

See article on page 10
IN THIS ISSUE
04 And the story of God and the people of God, continues
10 Election of our Bishop Coadjutor
12 189th Diocesan Convention

NEWS FROM OUR SHARED MINISTRIES
19 GEMN Conference Highlights Creation Care in Global Mission
20 Sawyerville Mentoring Connects Students With Professionals
21 Fourth-Annual Person2Person Visits Montgomery and Selma
22 Christmas Conference
23 DOK Fall Assembly
23 Friends of Camp McDowell

NEWS FROM OUR PARISHES
24 Alabama Episcopalians serve as faculty for the Institute of Conscious Being
26 St. Andrew’s Birmingham hosts Eucharist for the Feast of Absalom Jones
27 2020 Saint Stephen’s Spring Lecture, Faith leader Workshop, and Contemplative Outreach Retreat all featuring the Rt. Rev. Marc Andrus

28 CLERGY NEWS
29 BISHOP’S VISITATION SCHEDULE
30 UPCOMING EVENTS
31 SHARE YOUR STORIES & EVENTS!
Hello, friends.

Several times through the years, people have asked me, why do you write “Hello friends” and not “Hello brothers and sisters” or “Children of God”? The reason is because you don’t choose your brothers and sisters. We don’t choose who is the children of God. We choose our friends, and I’m glad to be able to stand here and address this part of God’s Church and call you friends.

I imagine that there are some of you sitting here and some of you out there in internet land who are saying, “Hey, wait a minute. I thought we just elected a new Bishop. Why is this guy still up there?” And you’re right. We did elect a new bishop – the Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry was elected to be our Bishop Coadjutor a couple of weeks ago. She preached our opening Eucharist on Thursday evening, and did a great job reminding us that we’re called to be salt of the earth and the light of the world. She told us that one of the letters of congratulations she got from a young person, who said he wasn’t really sure what the Bishop does, but congratulations anyway. And I think that’s probably as good a summary of the Episcopacy as I’ve ever heard. So, Glenda, congratulations anyway, for whatever it is you’ve let God get you into.

I think we made a good choice in electing Glenda, and I’m excited about working with her. I believe we’re in good hands. She will continue to serve as the rector of All Saints’ in Homewood for a few more months, and she will be ordained a bishop on June 27th. Then she will serve as our Bishop Coadjutor until she becomes our Bishop Diocesan on January 9th, 2021. There are a lot of details to be worked out, but we’ll let you know in plenty of time – meanwhile, save those dates: June 27th and January 9th; it wouldn’t be the same if you were not there.

I hope and trust that you will give her and Bill the same love and support that you have given me and Tina through the years. I also want to thank the other folks who have allowed their names to be placed into consideration, especially our list of nominees. Our friend Evan Garner, our friend Allison Liles, our friend Aaron Raulerson, their spouses and families and the parishes they serve.

In the meantime, you’re stuck with me for a little while longer. But this will be my last address to the Convention of the Diocese of Alabama as your Bishop.

Let us pray.

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

And the story of God and the people of God, continues
Bishop’s Address to the 189th Convention of the Diocese of Alabama

The Rt. Rev. John McKee Sloan

And now I apologize to our friend Kelley Hudlow who has the script I have in front of me and which I will now completely disregard.

The truth of it is, every year I come to this and I’m always, I love diocesan convention. I love it when we’re all together and I dread the Bishop’s Address. I used to dread it when I sat out there, but now I really dread it. Not because I don’t like talking to y’all, but because I’ve made myself write it all down. And then you write it all down and read it out loud and rearrange things, and should that be a semicolon, and do I really need that sentence in there? And I don’t know how you people who write your sermons out every week do it. It just drives me crazy.

What would you say in your last address to the diocese of the church that you love?

Yesterday, I was walking from one place to another and I came upon my friends Bartlee and Emily; Emily is a senior at VTS. Bartlee’s a good guy. Both of them children of this diocese, Special Session counselors and staff; Sawyerville counselors and staff. And Bartlee observed that this is my last address and I can say whatever I want to say. Bartlee said, “You are a dangerous man – a Bishop with nothing to lose.”

So, I’m going to tell you what I think.

Years ago, a lady in church turned 80 and we had a birthday party at the church, and I was talking to her and she said, “Now I can say whatever the hell I want to say.” I got a few years before I turn 80; mostly I want to say thank you.

I spent a couple of days making a list of all the people I should thank in this moment, and well after the list got too long I was still adding to it, so I tried to cut it back to just a couple of hundred people, and then I decided I’m not going to put you or me through all that. For the moment, I’m hoping it will be enough to thank you all for everything you’re doing and have done, and to thank my sweet Tina, who I can never thank enough, and our children McKee and Mary Nell, for their love and support, and for living this with me. I probably should be a clergy spouse is one of the most difficult jobs in

the church, whether your spouse is a priest or a deacon or a bishop, it’s a hard job – and we’re grateful to all of you. I’m back on script now.

To get myself all psyched up for this moment, I took some time to read through all the previous addresses I’ve given, and I’ve got to say: Y’all have been real patient with me through the years.

You’ve listened to me tell some of my favorite stories – about Jimmy Lee Washington, who told me that God loves us more than our mamas, who told me there ain’t nobody no better ’n me, and I ain’t no better’n nobody else; about my mother who held her breath for me when we crossed a bridge and I couldn’t hold my breath because I was crying; about an elderly woman who talked about her father who chose not to pursue a career in dancing and felt the weight of that regret for the rest of her life.

You have suffered through story after story about summer camp: about being included in a game of Spades that changed my life; seeing a glimpse of the Kingdom of God in my first Special Session, and every Special Session since; about the transformation of a Special Session camper we were all afraid of until she had a counselor who didn’t know that she was supposed to be afraid and loved her anyway; and another camper who was born blind and trusted his muffler-headed counselor enough to go off the high dive with him. And there are other stories – and on and on.

You have sat there without objection as I quoted Jimmy Buffet, George Carlin, Morgan Freeman, the apostle Paul and Popeye the Sailor Man.

You played along when I asked you to sing “The Garden Song” and “The Butterfly Song” and you popped up like popcorn when I called out a ministry that you were involved in or supported. You sang Happy Birthday to our daughter on her 16th birthday. And you, my friends, have listened to me talk and talk and talk about the Good News of our hope in the love of God and Jesus Christ our Lord. Thank you, thank you all.

The next part of this address will be available on the diocesan website, because it’s really good and because I spent a long time writing it. I want you to know, I want us all to know, that we are part of the story that started a long time ago, and the story continues through us and into the generations to come.

My wife came up a little while ago and said, “Are you going to tell a story?” I said, “Yes, I’m telling the story of the people of God from the Big Bang and to this day.” She said, “What?” I said, “I am telling the story of the Old Testament, New Testament and church history all in one sitting.” She said, “What? You’re not going to tell a story?”

Well, I have learned over the years that I need to listen to Tina. So all of that wonderful story, Old Testament, New Testament church history will be on the website. It’s worth a read, but not right now.

Every year I get up here and wherever St. Thomas Episcopal church in Huntsville is, I start to tell a story and I can see them around the table saying, “Yeah, we heard that one.” Well, I haven’t heard this one.

Every 23rd of December I go to St. Mark’s in Boligee, Alabama. It’s in the diocese of Eutaw, 11 miles west where my mama was baptized and my mom and dad and grandparents and great-grandparents are buried. It’s a sweet little church; I think there are five or six members, three or four of them are Methodists. Five of them are related to me somehow, and they pack the church every 23rd of December and have decorations, and it’s really a sweet, sweet service. This year I know, I knew that my sister Becki was coming, so that her husband could hear me preach before I retire. And as I was driving to Boligee and wondering how many songs they had to play, but they played one over and over and over, as we stood in line. “You better watch out. You better not cry. You better not pout. I’m telling you why – Santa Claus is coming to town.” And listen to this: “He knows when you’ve been sleeping. He knows when you’re awake. He knows when you’ve been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake.” Well, it was too late for me. Back then – I guess 1961 or 2 or 3. Santa didn’t have so many helpers as he does now and the town was totally up to see Santa, and the line moved slowly and the whole town was eventually moved towards Santa and then the more they played, “You better watch out, you better not
And here's what I think. I think the church has, for far too long, made far too much about sin and judgment and fear and dread, and not nearly enough about grace and love and mercy. I think that God loves all of the children of God, all of them, and invites us to do the same.

That. There was no coal. Either Santa is not paying attention or it’s not that important to him who’s good and bad.

Not many years after that, I went off to seminary and I got the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, which every seminarian should have. It’s one of those books that tells you everything about the Christian Church that you want to know and a whole bunch of other stuff too. And eventually I looked up Santa Claus and it said, see Saint Nicholas of Myra. I looked up Saint Nicholas of Myra and found out that in the fourth century there was a Bishop remembered for his kindness to children. Saint Nicholas of Myra is the patron saint of Russia, of sailors, of children of prostitutes. On the list of people that went to the council of Nicaea in 325 one of the bishops listed is Nicholas of Myra. I just love the idea that Santa Claus might have had a hand in writing the Nicene Creed.

Saint Nicholas is one of the most popular saints in the church, and more churches are named for Saint Nicholas than any other saints except for Mary and Paul. And look what we have done to Saint Nicholas who loved children. “Youceived in chaos, born in compromise, raised in controversy, until we come to this day, until we come to the election of Glenda Curry, until we look at what’s coming up next.

The story that began so long ago, before the worlds were made now continues. Now it’s our turn to give witness to the Good News of great joy for all the people.

And here’s what I think. I think the church has, for far too long, made far too much about sin and judgment and fear and dread, and not nearly enough about grace and love and mercy. I think that God loves all of the children of God, all of them, and invites us to do the same.
Election of our Bishop Coadjutor

Deacon Kelley Hudlow, Communications Coordinator

During his address to the 188th Convention of the Diocese of Alabama in 2019, Bishop Sloan announced his plan to retire at the end of 2020 and called for the election of a Bishop Coadjutor. Following this announcement, the Standing Committee of the Diocese appointed persons to serve on a Bishop Search Committee and a Bishop Transition Committee.

For the Search Committee, the Standing Committee sought people who would represent the diverse interests of the diocese, make sound and faithful decisions, and follow through the Ordination and Consecration of the Bishop Coadjutor and Bishop Sloan’s retirement.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2019, the Search Committee met to develop the Diocesan Profile. Listening Sessions were held throughout the Diocese to provide information and guidance on writing the profile. The profile was published on August 28, 2019, and the nomination period was opened. At the conclusion of the nomination period, the Search Committee reviewed documents and interviewed nominees. On December 1, a slate of three nominees was announced to the Diocese. At the end of the Petition Period, the final slate of nominees was the Rev. Dr. Glenda S. Curry, the Rev. Evan Garner, the Rev. Allison Sandlin Liles, and the Rev. Aaron Raulerson.

The Walkabout was held on January 4, 2020. Delegates filled the nave at St. Luke’s in Birmingham for the Walk About with the bishop candidates, while others watched on-site from Graham Hall or via the internet. The Walkabout was an opportunity for voting delegates to learn more about the candidates. The event began with Noon Day Prayer, and the conversation with the candidates was moderated by Mr. Bill Gamble. Each candidate was given 50 minutes to address the convention. Each began with short opening remarks. Following this, each candidate was asked the same four questions that had been selected by the Standing Committee. Delegates in attendance were invited to submit questions that were placed in a basket. Delegates could submit a general question, or questions for a specific candidate. Following the questions from the Standing Committee, as time allowed, the moderator pulled delegate questions from the basket. Candidates were then given the opportunity to offer brief closing remarks.

On January 18, 2020, delegates gathered at the Cathedral Church of the Advent for the election. The proceedings began with the Liturgy of the Word, and Bishop Sloan preached. Prior to the Great Thanksgiving, the Special Electing Convention was convened. The two orders met separately, with the Clergy delegates meeting in the Refectory. To be elected, a candidate needed to receive a simple majority of votes from both clergy and lay delegates, voting separately on the same ballot round.

The Rev. Dr. Glenda S. Curry, rector of All Saints’ Birmingham, was elected on the 2nd ballot, receiving 77 clergy votes and 127 lay votes. As Bishop Coadjutor, Curry will succeed Bishop Sloan upon his retirement at the end of 2020 and will become the 12th Bishop of the Diocese of Alabama. Curry is the first woman elected bishop in the Diocese of Alabama. In addressing the gathering, Curry said “I’m overwhelmed and I’m humbled. I know that we can do whatever God points us to do, with God’s help.” Delegates then joined together for the Great Thanksgiving and Holy Communion.

According to the canons of The Episcopal Church, all bishop elections must receive the consent of a majority of diocesan bishops and diocesan standing committees. Following a successful consent process, Curry will be ordained and consecrated bishop on Saturday, June 27, 2020, at St. Luke’s, Birmingham, by the Most Rev. Michael Curry, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church.

On February 6-8, the 189th Convention of the Diocese of Alabama gathered at Camp McDowell. This year our convention theme was “Behold what you are; Become what you receive,” and centered on lifelong Christian Formation.

Day One

Convention began on Thursday evening with dinner in Doug Carpenter Hall, followed by a Eucharist in St. Francis Chapel. A “Pop-up” Choir provided the music, and the Department of Lifelong Christian Formation offered an “Instructed Eucharist” service booklet. The Rev. Dr. Glenda S. Curry, Bishop-elect, preached. Reflecting on the Gospel reading, Curry stated, “as Bishop-elect, I am a work in progress, and as a child of God we are all works in progress and Jesus calls us to be salt and light anyway.” She continued, “Jesus will help me be ‘salt and light’ to you, and Jesus will help you be ‘salt and light’ to me, and together we’ll be like a lamp on a stand that brings light to the whole world.”

The offering at the Eucharist was designated for students from the Virgin Islands entering the AIMS program. Following the Eucharist, those in attendance were invited to a reception in Hall Hall hosted by the Department of Lifelong Christian Formation.

Day Two

Registration continued on Friday, and delegates were invited to attend workshops. These offerings included Respite Ministry and Memory Care in our parishes with Susanna Whitsett and the Rev. Rich Webster; Handicapped Access to our Worship Spaces and services with Deacon Bob Serio; Information for Retired Clergy and Spouses with the Rev. Bill King; a “WALK-shop” to the dam on Clear Creek to learn more about the Archimedes Screw and renewable energy with the Rev. Tom Brown; and Folk School Arts & Crafts with Caitlin Lollar.

The first business session began following lunch and was held in Doug Carpenter Hall. The session was opened with singing led by the Rev. Mark Waldo and with prayers led by Bishop Sloan. The session began with introductions of those seated at the dais with Bishop Sloan—Rip Britton, Chancellor and appointed parliamentarian; the Rev. John Mark Ford, diocesan Secretary; and the Rev. Candice Burk Frazer, appointed Chair Dispatch of Business. With 69 parishes and 101 canonical clergy present, a quorum was had and business could proceed.

The Convention was welcomed by the Rev. Corey Jones, Executive Director of Camp McDowell. Following this welcome, Bishop Sloan introduced diocesan staff. Additionally, Bishop Sloan recognized Diocesan Council.
Keynote Address

Our keynote speakers were Lisa Kimball, Ph.D., and the Rev. Dr. Tricia Lyons. Kimball is the James Maxwell Professor of Lifelong Formation and Associate Dean of Lifelong Learning at Virginia Theological Seminary. Currently, she is directing Baptized for Life, a 5-year project supported by the Lilly Endowment, Inc., to mentor 17 congregations across 7 dioceses as they explore Christian calling and form lives of meaning and purpose. Lyons is currently serving as Affiliated Faculty and Director of Evangelism Initiatives at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA. Prior to her current role at VTS, she served in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington as Canon for Evangelism. Lyons is the author of three books on faith formation, most recently Teaching Faith with Harry Potter and What is Evangelism?

They spoke to the Convention on Friday and Saturday afternoon. Part One of their remarks focused on “The Marriage of Formation and Evangelism.” Lyons began with a lively discussion using images from the Chronicles of Narnia, while Kimball pointed us to the importance of both “Macro” (ongoing life of the church, worship, fellowship, teaching, service, witness, life-long, life-wide, life-deep, metabolism of a baptized community) and “Micro” formation (deep-dive, intentional bursts of focused, context-specific faith intensification). Part Two of their remarks given on Saturday, invited the Convention to consider how they view the facts about the current state of the church, and the vitality of smaller congregations when the focus is on lay leadership development and discipleship formation. You can view the keynote addresses online: Part One (vimeo.com/390795330) and Part Two (vimeo.com/390818975).

Day Two

The second business session began with the ratification of the caucus elections of representatives to Diocesan Council and Delegates to General Convention, followed by the Diocesan Council Report.

The Department of Lifelong Christian Formation developed the program for this year’s convention. Pictured (Back Row L-R) Linda Nichols, the Rev. Aaron Raulerson, the Rev. Jamie McAdams, Christina Dorn, the Rev. Polly Robb, Katie Dewes, Katherine Gould; (Front Row L-R) Deacon Jeannie Randall, Sally Marsh, Kathy Graham.
made by the Rev. Jack Alvey, Phyllis Hall, Diocesan Treasurer, presented the budgets for the diocese and Camp McDowell. Following this presentation, all budgets (Resolutions 1-2) were approved by convention. Bishop Sloan thanked Hall for her service as treasurer. The convention approved the chairs of the Departments, Commissions, and Agencies of the Diocese. The Convention also approved the Nominations from the Chair, which include positions such as the chancellor, treasurer, secretary, and Commission on Ministry.

As Convention resumed, the youth attending the Lock-in at Lower Camp on Clear Creek energized the gathering through dance for the final business session. The final session centered on the election of clergy and lay representatives to the Standing Committee, the Disciplinary Board, and At-large Delegates to General Convention, as well as the introduction and discussion of proposed resolutions. Convention approved Resolution 3, which encourages congregations to consider a carbon emissions financial offset and to take steps to reduce CO2 emissions; and Resolution 4, which reaffirms the commitment to parishes and community organizations that offer hospitality to migrants, immigrants, and refugees.

The business session was closed with a Commissioning Service. Before the Convention was adjourned, the Rev. David Meginnis, Christ Church Tuscaloosa, brought a final resolution to the floor honoring Bishop Sloan. The resolution was approved by a standing ovation. The Convention was then adjourned.

Special thanks to the staff of Camp McDowell, the members of the Department of Lifelong Christian Formation, St. Thomas Huntsville, and to all those that worked so hard to make convention a success. Also special thanks to Gene Lawson, Steven Lawson, and Deacon Dave Drachlis for their hard work with the audio and video.

Resolutions
Resolution 1: Diocesan Budget (Adopted)
Resolution 2: Camp McDowell Budget (Adopted)
Resolution 3: Energy Usage & Emissions and Financial Offset (Adopted as Amended)
Resolution 4: Continuing Hospitality to Refugees (Adopted)

For complete coverage of the 189th Diocesan Convention, including video reports, live stream, Opening Eucharist sermon, and photos, visit https://www.dioala.org/dfc/newsdetail_2/3201630.

Election Results
General Convention Delegates
Northern
The Rev. Polly Robb, Clergy Delegate
The Rev. Aaron Rauterson, 1st Alternate
The Rev. Worth Stuart, 2nd Alternate
Shari Harrison, Lay Delegate
Sally Upchurch, 1st Alternate
Marsha Babb, 2nd Alternate
Southern
The Rev. Candice Frazer, Clergy Delegate
The Rev. David Peeples, 1st Alternate
The Rev. Donna Gafford, 2nd Alternate
Anne Kinney, Lay Delegate
Quincy Hall, 1st Alternate
Jane Dickson, 2nd Alternate
Middle
The Rev. Dr. Tommie Watkins, Clergy Delegate
The Rev. Seth Olson, 1st Alternate
The Rev. Josiah Rengers, 2nd Alternate
Bob Boylan, Lay Delegate
Virginia Hillhouse, 1st Alternate
Brian Denton-Trujillo, 2nd Alternate

At Large
The Rev. Seth Olson, Clergy Delegate
The Rev. Judy Quick, Deacon, 1st Alternate
The Rev. Chris Hartley, 2nd Alternate
Richard Norris, Lay Delegate
Mark Smith, 1st Alternate
Jim Jolly, 2nd Alternate

Diocesan Council
Northern District
Carl Ferguson, St. Joseph’s on the Mountain Mentone (2023)
Middle District
Lee Auman, St. Thomas Birmingham (2023)
Southern District - Suellen Young, Trinity Wetumpka (2023)

Standing Committee
The Rev. Jeff Evans, St. Stephen’s Huntsville (2024)
The Rev. Josiah Rengers, St. Thomas Birmingham (2022)
Richard Norris, Ascension Montgomery (2024)

Disciplinary Board
The Rev. Carl Saxton, Holy Comforter Gadsden (2023)
The Rev. Gail Goldsmith, Holy Trinity Auburn (2023)
Ellen Brooks, Ascension Montgomery (2023)

New Clergy Introductions
Tennessee Valley Convocation: the Rev. Chase Ackerman, St. John’s Decatur
Mountain Convocation: the Rev. Polly Robb, St. Luke’s Scottsboro
Birmingham Convocation: the Rev. Paul Goldman, Christ Church Fairfield
Montgomery Convocation: the Rev. Mark Likos, Trinity Clanton; the Rev. Pam Long, Todos los Santos Montgomery

(L-R) the Rev. Chase Ackerman, St. John’s Decatur; the Rev. Pam Long, Todos los Santos Montgomery; the Rev. Jeff Evans, Dean of the Tennessee Valley Convocation; the Rev. Mark Likos, Trinity Clanton; the Rev. Paul Goldman, Christ Church Fairfield; the Rev. Robert Wianowski, Dean of the Montgomery Convocation; the Rev. Rich Webster, Dean of the Birmingham Convocation; the Rev. Polly Robb, St. Luke’s Scottsboro; the Rev. Carl Saxton, Dean of the Mountain Convocation.

The Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry preaches at the Opening Eucharist, February 6, 2020.
Earthkeeping: Creation Care in Global Mission is the theme of the 2020 GEMN Conference to be held at Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis, April 29-May 1, 2020.

Keynote Speakers include:

• Katharine Jefferts Schori, former Presiding Bishop and oceanographer, will provide theological grounding, scientific background and insights from her experience around the world.
• Leon Sampson of Navajoland will share how Native American perspectives correlate with Christian theology and offer ecological approaches from the First Nations.
• Rachel Mash, eco-activist and coordinator of the Green Anglicans network in Southern Africa, will discuss innovative approaches taken by the church in Africa and suggest specific ways Christians in the West can engage ecologically with companions in the Majority World.
• Orlando Gomez, the bishop of Costa Rica, and a team from that diocese will share how the climate crisis is affecting Latin America and how his diocese and others in that part of the world are actively engaged in the care of creation.

Mission workshops will give practical tools for mission:

• Active environmental ministries and global mission partnerships
• Theology of environmental mission
• Building climate resiliency (Deacon Judy Quick will lead this workshop)
• Healthy short-term mission
• Asset-Based Community Development
• Sustaining mission relationships
• Discerning a call as a missionary
• Cross-cultural best practices in mission engagement

At the annual GEMN Conferences, mission advocates connect with others who are passionate about global mission. They exchange ideas and experiences on how to expand the awareness of God’s mission throughout the world, sharing best practices to grow God’s kingdom, as missionaries meet God in the other. The many and varied forms of worship at these Conferences deepen one’s own connection to God and to community.

Register now for the 2020 GEMN Conference in Indianapolis, April 29-May 1 (www.gemn.org) Come join other mission advocates to proclaim, inspire, and ignite the joy of God’s mission. Learn more about GEMN (Global Episcopal Mission Network) contact Ms. Christine Mercer, GEMN Board Member from the Diocese of Alabama (cmercer@gmail.com).
On January 30, Sawyerville Mentoring hosted a full day of activities for its mentees. The mentees, juniors and seniors from Greensboro High School, traveled from Greensboro to Birmingham and convened at Vulcan Value Partners.

In the morning, a panel of professionals shared their career stories. Next, a member of Daxko’s human resources department talked about resumes and interviewing. Then, other Daxko employees engaged the mentees in mock interviews. Finally, the mentees shadowed a professional in their field of interest. The entire day helped to broaden the students’ horizons, one of Sawyerville’s three goals, and they returned home with a greater understanding of how they might achieve their career goals.

Thank you to Greg Keyes, Kim Kimberlin, Stephen Owenby, and Derrick Mills for participating in the panel; Chris Estes, Courtney Underwood, Selina Cervantes, and Kelly Lewis for teaching interview skills; and Janet Hall, Chris Skinner, and Jimmy Tracy for hosting job shadowing. Also, thank you to Kay Donnellan for coordinating the event and providing lunch and to Anne Douglass Williams for transporting students!

If you’d like to be involved in Sawyerville Mentoring, contact Crystal Jones at crystal@sawyerville.org.

Sawyerville’s Person2Person event welcomed 26 participants and staff from all over the Diocese. High school students, college students, and adults spent Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend learning about the history of race in Alabama and discerning how Christians are called to improve race relations now.

Similar to years past, the group stayed at St. John’s Episcopal Church and visited the National Memorial for Peace and Justice, the Legacy Museum, and the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery. The group also made a day trip to Selma where they toured the Selma Interpretive Center and enjoyed lunch at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

The weekend was packed with visits to important historical and cultural sites as well as group discussions about race. One participant said, “The field trips were great. They were powerful sites and really gave us a good idea of the Civil Rights Movement and the state of race relations today.” Another noted, “I liked how everyone was vulnerable this whole weekend and everyone respected everyone.”

Thank you to St. John’s, Montgomery for hosting the event and to Allison Manley, Kay Donnellan, St. Paul’s in Selma, Natalie Sansom, Rebecca Miller, Laura Malone, and St. Mary’s in Millbrook for providing meals!

If you’d like to be involved in Person2Person 2021, contact Bre Mitchell at breanna@sawyerville.org.
Christmas Conference
Emmie Neely, At-Large member of the Youth Department

Christmas Conference is one of my favorite youth events all year. All of the youth come together after Christmas and celebrate the season with their brothers and sisters in Christ. The joy is limitless throughout the weekend as we sing, dance, and pray together at Camp McDowell. The theme that the Youth Department chose for the program was, “The Joy in the Journey.” Thanks to Rev. Worth Stuart and his program staff, we learned about the journey that we are all taking and how Christ walks with us. There are a lot of special moments planned throughout the weekend, but the campers and counselors really make the event what it is every year. On that note, I would like to give thanks to all of the campers and counselors who participated, the adult staff who volunteered, and all of my fellow members of the Youth Department who planned this year’s Christmas Conference!

DOK Fall Assembly

The Fall Assembly Meeting for the Daughters of the King (DOK) in the Diocese of Alabama was held at the Episcopal Church of the Holy Apostles on September 14, 2019. DOK sisters from throughout the Diocese were in attendance.

Dr. Jose Fernandez presented an awesome program based on the theme for the day, “Harmony—Body, Mind and Soul”. In fulfillment of the DOK’s vow of Service, members brought hygiene items which were donated to One Roof, a nonprofit agency in Birmingham, AL.

The Spring Assembly Meeting for the DOK will be held on March 28, 2020, at The Episcopal Church of the Nativity in Huntsville, AL. A day of reflection, fellowship and growth is planned with Rev. Kaki O’Flinn, Deacon, leading the program, “HIDE and SEEK—Finding God’s Love in Life’s Challenges”. Registration forms will be emailed via the DOK Newsletter on or near February 15, 2020; copies will be mailed to all parishes with DOK chapters. Please contact Kathy Whatley, President, at 205-999-8920 or 205-874-6127 for more information.

Greetings from Camp McDowell. Convention at Camp is always a wonderful time for us to come together as a diocesan family. We love having everyone come up to visit God’s Backyard. Each year we have a spring fundraiser called the Friends of Camp McDowell Campaign. We usually ask for people to give so that we can make important updates and perform general maintenance around Camp. This year we are asking for your help to update lower camp! Eppes, the cabins, the chapel...it is all in need of some love. Bethany Village has been such a blessing to Camp McDowell, and we have so many diverse and amazing groups come through each year. It is the result of years of dreaming, building, and growing. It is time to turn our focus from the good work we’ve done up the hill at Bethany to the heart of Camp down the hill. Our dream is not to add any new buildings. It is not to change the things that have made the Camp we all know and love. Our goal is to make lower camp a place where people want to come and stay. To fix the things that need fixing and update the things that need to be brought up to date. I hope you join us in our effort to give back to the place that has given us all so much! Our summer campers and students from all over the southeast will be forever grateful. To learn more, please visit www.campmcdowell.com.
The Enneagram has become increasingly popular in the last few years, with religious folks as well as non-believers becoming more and more interested in the subject. To some, the nine-sided figure is a new phenomenon that helps in the self-discovery of their ego type. But the Enneagram is an ancient tool for spirituality when used for its highest purposes. And Alabamian and member of Grace Episcopal Church, Anniston, Dr. Joseph Benton Howell has been on the forefront of studying and teaching the spiritual tradition of the Enneagram since the early 1980s.

In fact, when our former Bishop Suffragan Marc Andrus visited the Diocese and spoke at St. Stephen’s, Birmingham in March of 2015, he said that three things stood out to him about the diocese from his four-year tenure here: the heart-warming of Cursillo, the mind-development of Education for Ministry (EfM), and the soul-expansion of Joe Howell’s teaching of the Enneagram.

Dr. Howell has presented spiritual topics about the Enneagram at International Enneagram Association conferences in San Antonio, Cincinnati, Oakland, and Egypt, and is scheduled for another one in Stockholm in September. Lark and members of the faculty or trainees accompany and assist Joe on these excursions. The faculty has been on retreat in Italy and is planning a pilgrimage to Iona, Scotland in 2021.

The Institute also offers courses for certification in selected studies which put into practice the Enneagram and other tools for discerning higher consciousness, and have graduated over 75 people. Currently, they have 38 people in the Scholars program and 21 in Masters training, all of which is held at Camp McDowell.

Another way ICB reaches audiences is through weekly podcasts that began in January 2019. With over 1,500 weekly listeners, The Real Enneagram program has reached 57,900 listens since it was created a little over a year ago. While ICB is inclusive of all conscious pathways to God, Christianity is its formation and container. The primary principle upon which the Institute is built is this: True spiritual consciousness is born of alignment with the love of God. In such alignment, the person exists primarily in their soul state rather than in their ego state. This principle forms the basis of the ICB teachings.

To learn more, visit theicb.org or www.facebook.com/therealenneagram.
News from our Parishes

St. Andrew’s Birmingham hosts Eucharist for the Feast of Absalom Jones

On February 15, a Feast of Celebration of Absalom Jones was held at St. Andrew’s in Birmingham. Bishop Kee Sloan celebrated and Bishop Santosh Marray, Bishop of the Diocese of Easton, served as the preacher. Other visiting clergy included Deacon Carolyn Foster, St. Mark’s Birmingham, Deacon Pearl Slay, Trinity Demopolis, Heager Hill of St. Mark’s Birmingham and Adel Hamilton of Good Shepherd Montgomery served as lectors.

The propers for the service were of Blessed Absalom Jones, whose feast day is February 13. Jones was a founder of St. Thomas’ African Episcopal in Philadelphia, and in 1804 was the first person of African descent to be ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church. Jones was born into slavery in Delaware in 1746. While still enslaved, he married Mary King, who was also enslaved, in 1770. He worked for eight years to buy his wife’s freedom so that their children would be free, and seven years later, he was able to purchase his own freedom.

In 2018 the Dioceses of Alabama and the Central Gulf Coast joined to found the Rev. Canon Robert E. DuBose, Jr. Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE). DuBose was a native of Birmingham, AL, and served churches in Alabama and Pennsylvania. He was an honorary canon of the Cathedral Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Accra, Ghana. In the 1960’s, DuBose participated in the Montgomery bus boycott and sit-ins, and was the plaintiff in a court case which led to desegregation of Alabama restaurants. The officers of the joint chapter are the Rev. Dr. Tommie Watkins, Jr. (President), Deacon Carolyn Foster (Vice President), and Mr. Joe McDaniels, Jr. (Secretary/Treasurer). The 52nd Annual Business Meeting and Conference of the Union of Black Episcopalians will be held in Montgomery, AL, on June 28-July 3. To learn more about this event, visit ube.org.

To view Bishop Marray’s sermon, visit vimeo.com/391896235. To view the full photo gallery, visit bit.ly/2wnCyGM.

News from our Parishes

2020 Saint Stephen’s Spring Lecture, Faith leader Workshop, and Contemplative Outreach Retreat all featuring the Rt. Rev. Marc Andrus

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aint Stephen’s Episcopal Church in partnership with Contemplative Outreach Birmingham is excited to announce the Saint Stephen’s spring lecture with the Rt. Rev. Marc Andrus, 8th Bishop of California, a workshop for faith leaders, and a contemplative outreach retreat. On Thursday, April 2, Saint Stephen’s will host a lecture where Bishop Andrus will be addressing the question, “Why is the climate and environmental crisis a spiritual crisis? And why is the Episcopal Church a good place to help meet the climate and environmental crisis?” On Friday, with the Diocesan Task Force for Stewardship of Creation, a workshop will be hosted for ministry leaders: “Leading Faithful Conversations about the Climate Crisis.” On Saturday, Contemplative Outreach Birmingham will host a Centering Prayer Retreat with Bishop Andrus.

Andrus has led The Episcopal Church’s annual delegation to the U.N. Climate Change Summit and has led the Episcopal delegation in joining, “We are Still In,” an ongoing commitment to the Paris Agreement. Bishop Andrus also serves as co-chair of The Episcopal Church’s Advisory Council on Stewardship of Creation. He has attended UN Climate Conferences in Paris, Marrakesh, Bonn, and Katowice, Poland. Andrus is one of the most prophetic and important voices for Christianity and the Episcopal Church in understanding our connection to creation in light of the environmental and climate crisis.

Prior to being elected as Bishop of California, Andrus served as the Bishop Suffragan for the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama. He is married to Sheila Andrus, Ph.D., former director of the Sparkman Center at the University of Alabama at Birmingham’s School of Public Health.

The Lecture is free and open to the public. The Friday lunch and Saturday workshop require registration. All events will take place in the Parish Hall of Saint Stephen’s.

Saint Stephen’s is committed to recognizing the sacredness of all of creation. Our care and nurture of the environment is a critical way we live out our faith in Jesus Christ. In addition to lectures and formation opportunities, Saint Stephen’s has an ambitious program to remove invasive species from the grounds, an apiary, a partnership with a local farm, a plan to reduce and affordable carbon consumption and energy costs, and monthly Holy Hike.

Thursday – April 2
7:00pm – 8:00pm

“Why is the climate and environmental crisis a spiritual crisis? And why is the Episcopal Church a good place to help meet the climate and environmental crisis?”

Friday – April 3
12:00pm – 1:30pm

Leading Faithful Conversations Around the Climate Crisis for ministry leaders hosted by the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama’s Task Force for Stewardship of Creation.

- $15 – Includes Lunch. For tickets, visit http://bit.ly/2SBx43W.

Saturday – April 4
9:00am – 2:00pm

A Centering Prayer retreat with Marc Andrus. The cost is $40 and includes lunch. Registration begins. At 8:30am. To register, please visit www.centeringprayeralabama.com.
Clergy Transitions

- The Rev. Don Smith accepted a call to serve as rector for Grace Church, Monroe, LA. His last Sunday at Grace, Sheffield was November 24.
- The Rev. Dr. Andy Anderson accepted a call to serve as Interim Rector of The Falls Church Episcopal in Falls Church, the Diocese of Virginia, beginning December 1, 2019.

In memoriam

The Rev. Maggie Taylor died on November 20, 2019. The funeral was December 17 at Holy Apostles, Hoover. Born in Pasadena, CA, she was an Episco-palian most of her adult life. She graduated from Colorado College in 1967 with a degree in religion and went to Taiwan with her first husband in 1973. She returned to the United States in the early 80’s to earn her master’s degree in counseling from Fairfield University and returned to Taiwan in 1982. She worked as a multicultural counselor until returning to New York City in 1987 to attend General Seminary. She graduated from General Seminary and was ordained an Episcopal priest in 1990. After spending four years as a priest associate at Nativity Episcopal Church in Huntington, Long Island N.Y. He graduated University of Lynchburg, Lynchburg, VA, and School of Theology, University of the South Sewanee, Tennessee. Williams served churches in Virginia, Arkansas, Georgia and Alabama.

The Rev. Jim Williams died on November 26, 2019. The funeral was held December 7 at Christ Episcopal Church in Fairfield. Williams was born in Huntington, Long Island N.Y. He graduated University of Lynchburg, Lynchburg, VA, and School of Theology, University of the South Sewanee, Tennessee. Williams served churches in Virginia, Arkansas, Georgia and Alabama.

The Rev. Arnold Bush died on January 10, 2020. Services were held on January 18 at St. James, Fairhope. He was a graduate of Milligan College in 1959, and the School of Theology at the University of the South (Sewanee) in 1962. He was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church in 1963 and served parishes all over the southeast for more than fifty years, including work as Province Coordinator for Evangelism and Renewal.

The Rev. Katie Rengers appointed Episcopal Church staff officer for Church Planting

The Rev. Katie Rengers has been appointed staff officer for Church Planting for The Episcopal Church, a member of the Presiding Bishop’s staff. Rengers has been offering her gifts to this work on an interim basis for the last six months; networking new ministries, developing resources and organizing trainings to support the development of new ministries of all kinds, across the Episcopal Church. In the previous triennium, she served on the Taskforce on Church Planting and discovered a passion for supporting innovative leaders in the creation and nurture of joyful and sustainable missional communities.

“IT’s a joy to welcome Rev. Rengers to the church planting and redevelopment team. She is a strategist, a practical thinker, an entrepreneur and a pastor, and I look forward to seeing the Episcopal church planting movement grow from strength to strength under her care.” said the Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, canon to the Presiding Bishop for evangelism, reconciliation and creation care.

The Rev. Tom Brackett, manager for church planting and ministry redevelopment, said, “Rev. Rengers brings her personal experience with planting ‘The Abbey’ in Birmingham to this role. She is inspired, in love with Jesus as well as with the power of the Gospel to change lives and whole communities. She brings all of the gifts and motivation to expand on the work that Rev. Mike Michie invested in developing support and infrastructure for church planting, over the last couple of years.”

Reflecting on the position, Rengers said, “I’m looking forward to supporting leaders in dioceses across the Church who are spreading the Gospel of Jesus by establishing new faith communities. This work is wild, risky and ultimately, I believe, vital to moving our denomination into what God is calling us to be in the 21st century.”

Rengers began her new position on January 6, 2020.

This article includes content from the January 28, 2020 press release from The Episcopal Church.

Clergy News

Ordinations

- November 9 - The Rev. Mark Likes was ordained to the priesthood at Trinity Episcopal Church, Clanton.
- November 23 - The Rev. Polly Robb was ordained to the priesthood at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Scottsboro.
- December 21 - The Rev. Paul Goldman was ordained to the priesthood at Christ Episcopal Church, Fairfield.

The Rev. Randy Sellers was ordained to the priesthood at the Episcopal Church of the Incarnation in West Point, MS.

Bishop’s Visitation Schedule

March 1, 10 am, St. Mark’s, Prattville
March 8, 10:30 am, St. Joseph’s, Mentone
March 15, 8:30 & 11 am, All Saints’, Birmingham
March 22, 10:30 am, St. Andrew’s, Montevallo
April 5, 10 am, Ascension, Birmingham
April 11, 7 pm, St. Andrew’s, Birmingham

April 12, 10 am, St. Paul’s, Selma
April 19, 9 & 11 am, Holy Trinity, Auburn
April 19, 4:30 pm, St. Dunstan’s, Auburn
April 26, 10:30 am, St. Luke’s, Birmingham
May 3, 10:30 am, St. John’s, Montgomery
May 6, 5 pm, Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham

 dioala.org | 29
Upcoming Events

March 6-8 Vocare 20
Vocare is a weekend retreat for college students and young adults (18-30 years old) at Camp McDowell. To learn more, please visit www.dioala.org/vocare.

March 7 A Lenten Reflection Day
Join us for a day to learn and experience a variety of Spiritual Practices at St. Stephen’s Birmingham. Registration opens at 8:30 am. Program is 9 am–1 pm. $20, lunch included. Register at bit.ly/LentReflectionday.

March 20-22 Rites of Spring
Rites of Spring will be held in Bethany Village at Camp McDowell for youth grades 9-12. This event doubles as a spring retreat at Camp and as our annual EYC Convention, where our Youth Department for the upcoming year will be elected. You do not have to be running for Youth Department to come to this event, it is open to any and all youth, grades 9-12. If you have questions about the requirements to run for Youth Department or how to be a delegate, or have any other questions about this event, contact Kathleen Lynch, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Coordinator at klynch@dioala.org. Registration can be found at dioala.org/youthevents.html.

March 28 Daughters of the King Spring Assembly
The Spring Assembly will be held at the Church of the Nativity in Huntsville, and the Rev. Mary Bea Sullivan will be the speaker. A day of reflection, fellowship and growth is planned with Rev. Kaki O’Flinn, Deacon, leading the program, “HIDE and SEEK—Finding God’s Love in Life’s Challenges.” Please contact Kathy Whately, President, at 205-999-8920 or 205-874-6127 for more information.

April 18 Gumbo Gala
The 15th Annual Episcopal Place Gumbo Gala will be held at Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham. To learn more, please visit www.episcopalplace.org/gumbogala.

April 25 Plan Well – Life is a Journey
The Diocese of Alabama Commission on Aging will offer this seminar from 8 am – 12:15 pm at St. Francis of Assisi Indian Springs. The Rev. Dr. Malcolm Marler will speak on “The Journey of Intentional Living,” the Rev. Dr. Robert Serio will present on “Staying Fit in 2020;” and Shannon Atchenson, LCSW, will present on “Leaving Home Again – Preparing for Senior Communities, Assisted Living and Long Term Care.” There is no cost, but to help in planning please register at bit.ly/39Jfhxn.

April 30 – May 3 Cursillo #222
Cursillo is an opportunity to grow in faith and in spirituality. Cursillo begins with a three-day weekend at Camp McDowell where lay people and clergy share their experiences and perspective on a variety of topics related to the love of God, the Christian life, and Christian community. To learn more, please visit www.alabamacursillo.org.

June 5-12 Special Session I
June 14-21 Special Session II
Special Session is a summer camp for adults with disabilities at Camp McDowell, staffed by volunteer counselors (ages 16-24) and support staff (24+). Staff will arrive for their assigned session on June 5 or 14. Campers will arrive for their assigned session on June 7 or 16. More information at specialsessionalabama.org.

June 7-16 United Kingdom Pilgrimage
The Rev. Scott Arnold is leading a pilgrimage to the United Kingdom. 2020 marks 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower, and this pilgrimage will visit places associated with the Puritan leaders. For more information contact the Rev. Arnold at frscottt@smarksal.org or visit http://bit.ly/2Vz3Jkg.

July 20-24 Young People Paint Birmingham
Young People Paint Birmingham is an event held for rising 7-9 graders with the opportunity for rising 11-12 graders to serve at CITs, July 20-24 at St. Stephen’s, Birmingham. This event is a work week in Birmingham, where youth will serve low-income residents of the Greater Birmingham Area by scraping, priming, and painting the homes of those who need the service in order to live in their homes. If you have questions about this event, please contact Kathleen Lynch, Youth & Young Adult Ministries Coordinator at klynch@dioala.org. Registration is open and can be found at dioala.org/youthevents.html under Summer Opportunities.

April 27-29 Awakenings
Spiritual renewal retreat for 7th & 8th with all the fun of traditional camp activities.

April 27-29 Folk School: Bluegrass & Gee’s Bend
One of our most popular workshops is back with great Bluegrass music classes and Gee’s Bend quilting. This four-day workshop provides a truly immersive experience with a fun and enthusiastic community of musicians and artists.

April 17-19 Mother/Daughter Retreat
Quality time and camp activities for all combinations and interpretations of mothers & daughters. Recommended for 1st grade & up.

May-August Summer Camp Sessions
For a complete listing of Summer Camp Sessions and to register, please visit campmcdowell.com/upcoming-events.

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May 27-30 Youth Folk Camp
This unique and popular Folk School session is designed just for youth! Youth Folk Camp is a unique combination of summer overnight camp that takes place in Bethany Village, community, and folk school instruction in a variety of classes, chosen by the camper. You entering 5th to 12 graders.

June 4-5 Growing Roots
You and your family are invited to attend one of McDowell Educational Program’s best events. “Growing Roots” features The Farm and the Environmental Center classes. Come explore the woods, milk a goat, take our Farm to Table class and watch the Black Vulture soar over your head. All ages are welcome. Questions or register: maggie@campmcdowell.com.

July 25-28 Bethany’s Kids
Bethany’s Kids is a 3-night summer camp for typical kids and kids with physical challenges and/or intellectual differences that fall within Camp McDowell’s scope of care. Open to rising 4th-8th grades/10-13 years of age.

CAMP MCDOWELL RETREATS, SUMMER CAMP, EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, AND THE FOLK SCHOOL
Visit campmcdowell.com/upcoming-events for more information and registration.

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Website & Social Media
Website & Social Media is updated regularly. Please like/follow us on social media for updates on events and news around the diocese. If you have an event, job/volunteer opportunity, or other announcement, please submit it via email, including appropriate links you your content. Photos or artwork should be submitted as separate files at the highest resolution possible. Please include information for captions and photographer/artist credit. For more information about submission requirements and style guides, visit dioala.org/communications.

For questions, or to submit an article, email kkhudlow@dioala.org.

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Share Your Stories & Events!

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The Dioala News Update is published semimonthly on the first and third Monday of the month and features current news and events. The deadline for submission is the Friday preceding publication. Submissions should be sent via email, and should include links to the event, job/volunteer posting, or announcement hosted on submitting organizations web or social media site.

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For questions, or to submit an article, email kkhudlow@dioala.org.
SAVE THE DATE

June 27, 11 am
St. Luke’s Birmingham
Ordination & Consecration of
the Rev. Dr.
Glenda S. Curry
as Bishop Coadjutor