



Joined Together by God:

**Our Shared Mission
and Ministry**

What is the Diocese of Alabama?

30,875 parishioners,
196 clergy
88 congregations,
and **one** Bishop,



➔ **Joined Together by God.**



“That’s why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.” Romans 8:28, *The Message* translation

Dear Friends:

This past year as your Bishop has been an extraordinary adventure in every way. The year has been filled with holy moments of blessing, unexpected challenges, heartbreaking losses, and disappointments alongside a delightful hospitality that’s joyfully rolled out by every worshipping community and parish I visit. Every conversation with parish members, or vestry, or clergy is filled with stories of how God’s people are flourishing, reaching out, recovering, nourishing and offering the Gospel to each other and the world. They’re eager to tell me, “We’re doing good Bishop. Now, let us tell you what we’re thinking of doing next.” Every Sunday I wish I could take

everyone in the Diocese to each place I go to see God’s creative work.

Here’s an example: St. Francis of Assisi in Indian Springs received a \$2,500 outreach grant to build a Blessing Box. Several churches have one. It’s a container erected in front of the church that’s perpetually filled with groceries and anyone who is hungry is welcome to take food. Their rector, Jamie McAdams, says, “It’s going like crazy.” The Blessing Box has led St. Francis to an immigrant population that needs vaccinations, so St. Francis is teaming up with St. Luke’s volunteers and are now vaccinating 100-200 people who live between Homewood and Pelham each week. Flyers about the Blessing Box are shared and that sends people full circle back to church. Food and health care are yoked together in a circle of love. Jamie is now being asked to baptize and plan weddings with families identified by the Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice. God is turning hunger into trust, hope, and love.

There are hundreds of healing stories brought about by faithful people heeding the call of Jesus to follow, love, and serve. The Diocesan staff has worked hard to use every dollar given to us by parishes to stimulate new ministry and support existing ministry. We also provide leadership, guidance, and encouragement while allowing each parish to create and respond in its own unique way to God’s call. We reach out and represent the Diocese of Alabama to the wider church and world, and have supported our partner relationships in the Virgin Islands, Haiti, and Honduras as they struggled with hurricanes and COVID-19. We’ve initiated Parish Partners to test and develop mutually beneficial relationships between small groups of parishes. Ministry at Camp McDowell, Sawyerville and Special Session continued strong this summer, and we’re planning for continuing recovery.

Our education for bi-vocational ministry added five new students to the Alternative Clergy Training School at the University of the South, and in addition, we support those already in full-time seminary. This year the diocese doubled the number of matching grants awarded to outreach ministries. We supported vaccine clinics and hurricane relief.



Our 2021 Diocesan Budget: \$3,443,739

Our work in reimagining campus ministry has continued to develop a vision for moving forward as COVID abates.

At the end of October we welcomed The Rt. Reverend Brian Prior, former Bishop of Minnesota, to help me conduct a leadership retreat with our Diocesan Council members, Standing Committee, Trustees and Officers. We are working to be strong and vibrant as we navigate the future and emerge from this past eighteen months.

Living through the pandemic has challenged our hope, our courage, and our generosity. Sometimes we've all been afraid about the future, and we can't forget many have endured devastating, painful losses. We've had lots of reasons to view the world through a lens of scarcity. But in reality, the stories our parishes tell reveal that we've responded instead by seeing our life together through the lens of God's abundance.

In Romans, Paul tells us the Spirit helps us in our weaknesses and even when we aren't sure what to pray, the Spirit will pray for us, even as God searches our hearts. Then he goes on to proclaim, "... we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good." As I look at the gifts we've received this year, I can see God bringing forth good in our common life. Our annual covenant appeal is a request for your help to continue and nourish the work we're about. Each gift is important, and each will be used to make the love of Jesus visible, tangible, and real.

If you or your vestry would like to talk with me about your gift, I welcome the opportunity. You can reach me at gcurry@dioala.org. I ask you to please prayerfully consider this request as you consider how God is calling you to respond. As always, I am grateful to the people of the Diocese of Alabama and to God for the honor of being your Bishop. I give praise and thanks to God for our ministry and life together. I am grateful for you and for the love of Jesus we share.

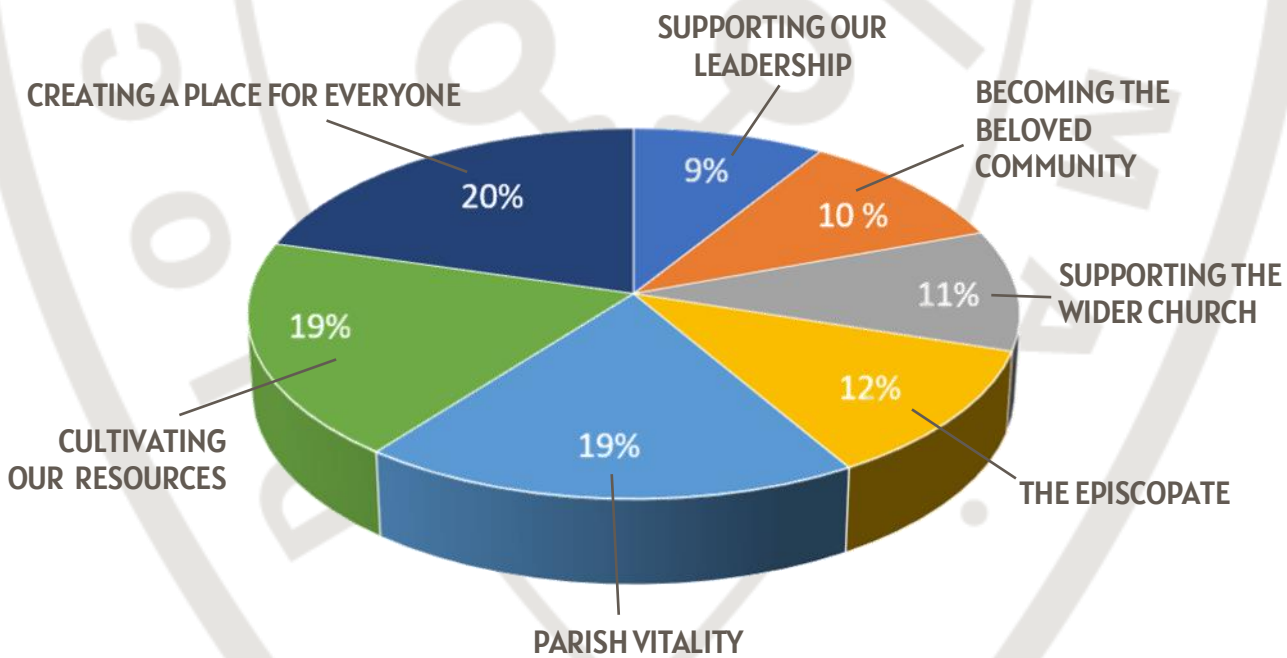
As always, I hope I see you at church!

Bishop G

How did we use your generous gifts this year?

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Our 2021 Diocesan Budget: \$3,443,739



CREATING A PLACE FOR EVERYONE

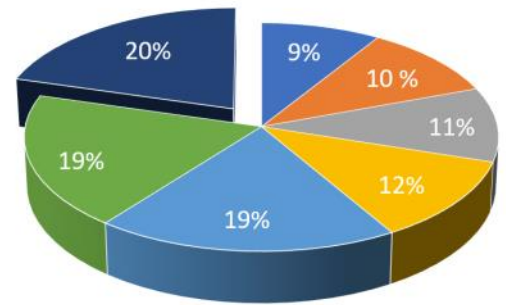
Camp McDowell, Summer Camp, Conference Center, Folk School, Environmental Center, Farm School, Sawyerville, Special Session, Grace Works

Camps as a ministry are in the DNA of the Diocese of Alabama.

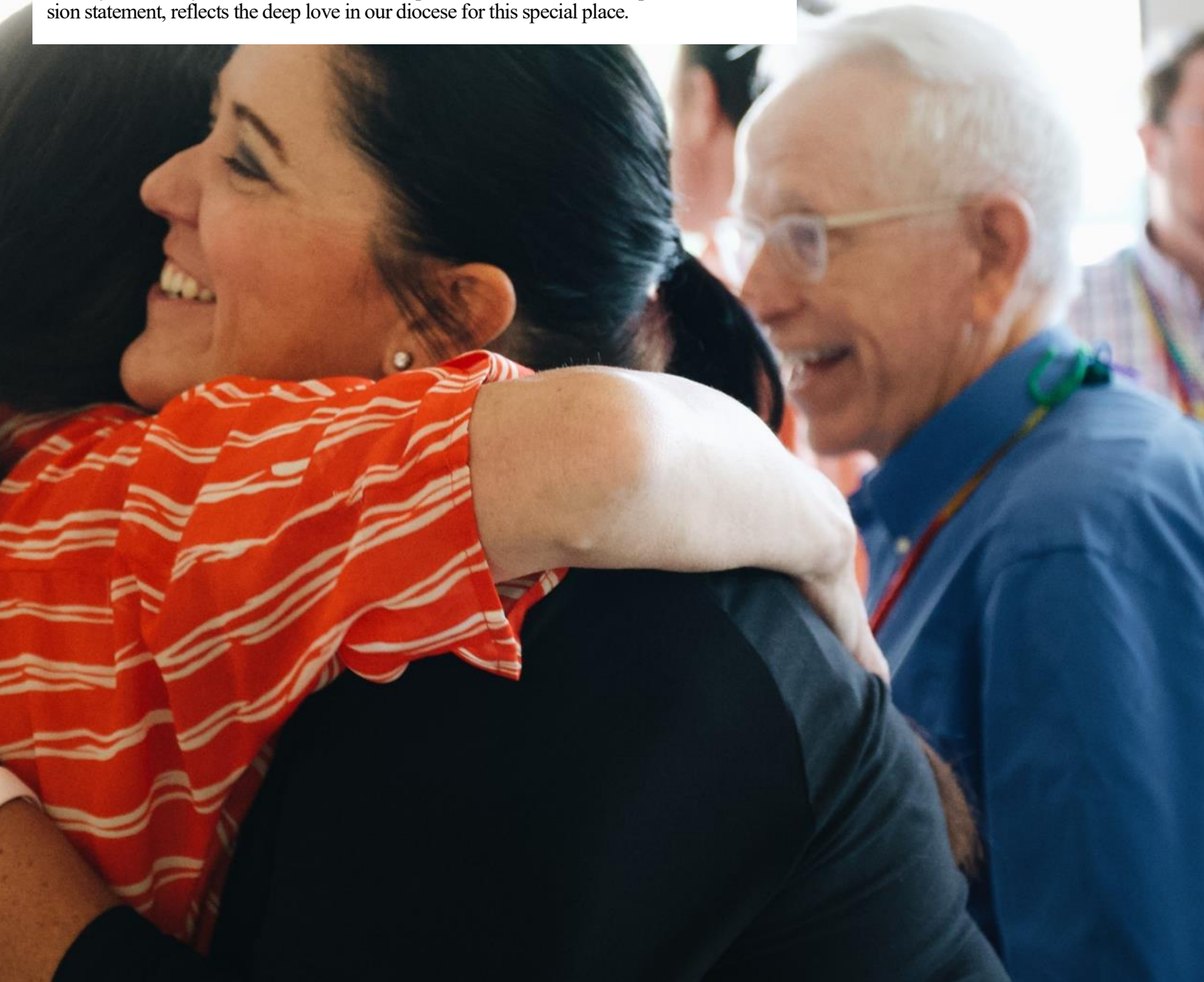
Sawyerville Day Camp is a major outreach program of the Diocese for children in the Black Belt, and offers youth across the Diocese an opportunity to serve. Lodged at Camp McDowell, Special Session provides a camp experience for adults and young people with intellectual and physical disabilities. All camp programs combined, the Diocese of Alabama serves roughly 2,200 campers each summer between Camp McDowell, Bethany, Special Session, and Sawyerville. Campers range in age from two years-old to eighty-five years-old and come from a wide range of backgrounds.

A ministry of our diocese, Camp McDowell is one of the largest Episcopal camps in the country. The Environmental Center program provides outdoor learning experiences that can't be found in a classroom for school groups, and the Farm School teaches students about sustainable agriculture, team-work, and hands-on caring for the gardens and farm animals. McDowell Educational Programs offer teachers exciting and adventurous ways to acquire their continuing education credits.

In addition, Camp McDowell hosts Convention, parish retreats, Cursillo gatherings, choir retreats, recovery weekends, family reunions, and various groups from across the country. "The way the world could be." This phrase, taken from the Camp McDowell mission statement, reflects the deep love in our diocese for this special place.



**This portion totals
\$705,508,
or 20% of our budget.**



2021 Diocesan Budget: \$3,443,739

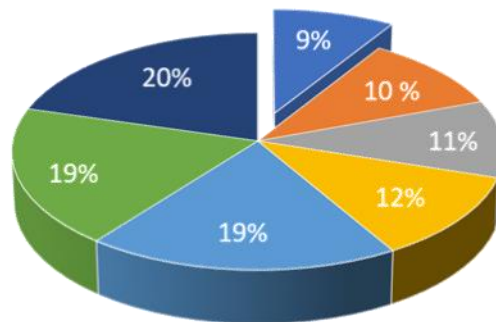


SUPPORTING OUR LEADERSHIP

Clergy and lay development, Diocesan Convention

The calling and nurturing of priests, deacons, and lay leadership forms a significant portion of the work of the Diocesan office. There is a very thorough process for calling new priests and deacons, and we provide support for them as we prepare them for ministry through training, financial support and otherwise. We also support parishes when their clergy retire or depart.

Diocesan Convention gathers the diocesan family together once a year for worship, fellowship, business, and trainings.



This portion totals \$306,474, or 9% of our budget.

SUPPORTING THE WIDER CHURCH

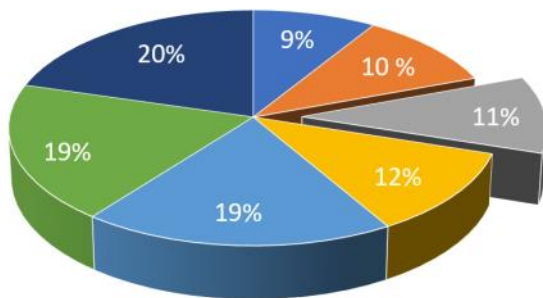
Episcopal Church in the USA, Province IV, General Convention

This section of our budget includes the contribution of this Diocese in support of the world-wide ministries of the Episcopal Church.

What are some of those ministries? The visual on the right shows many ways the Episcopal Church supports ministries all over the world. Here are a few specific examples of what our contribution helps support:

- ◇ Armed Forces: supporting chaplains to those serving members in the military.
- ◇ Creation Care: forming and restoring loving, liberating, life-giving relationships with all of Creation.
- ◇ Evangelism: through the spiritual practice of evangelism, seeking, naming and celebrating Jesus' loving presence in the stories of all people.
- ◇ Young Adult Service Corp: a ministry for Episcopalians ages 21-30 who are interested in exploring their faith in new ways by living and serving in communities around the worldwide Anglican Communion.

More information about the ministries of the Episcopal Church can be found at www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries.



**This portion totals \$362,844,
or 11% of our budget.**



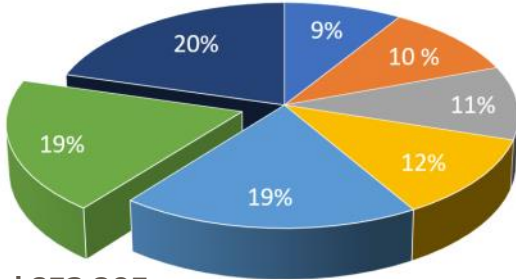
CULTIVATING OUR RESOURCES

Safeguarding God’s Children, accounting, database, tech support, insurance

The staff at Carpenter House provides consistent, informed oversight of financial operations and physical facilities. Their work allows the ministry of the diocese to flourish.

This portion of our budget supports accounting, technology, insurance, and Carpenter House, the diocesan office. ACS, the diocesan database, and Safeguarding God’s Children, our sexual misconduct prevention web-based training, are two forms of technology that support both the diocesan office and all parishes. We also manage the financial resources of the diocese and the endowment that is held in trust for many of our smaller congregation.

Insurance costs are part of an overall program of risk management. During 2021, the Diocese insured properties in Jefferson, Madison, Montgomery, and St. Clair counties. Carpenter House remains an excellent value in terms of the cost of on-going maintenance because of the initial investment during construction. Significant upgrades downstairs in 2020 have contributed to its continued usefulness.



This portion totals \$653,825, or 19% of our budget.



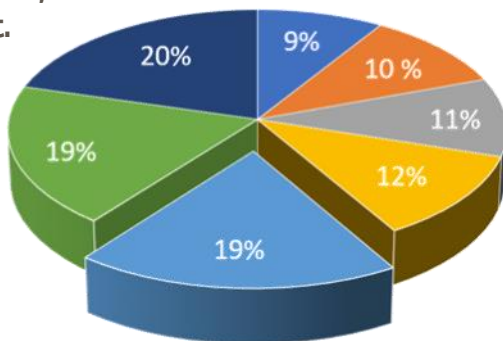
How did we use your generous gifts this year?



PARISH VITALITY

Lifelong Christian formation, nurturing spirituality, recovery ministries, evangelism, stewardship

This portion totals \$653,825, or 19% of our budget.



The Diocese supports congregational life and ministry by providing resources including stewardship training, Christian formation consultation and curricula, youth events, and recovery ministries. The Diocese revitalizes congregations in growing communities and assists parishes in need of financial support.

In 2021, as in 2020, support of parishes also included providing communication resources for live-streaming services and classes. In addition, we shared tools for life-long Christian Formation, and programs for our youth and college students. A new pilot program called “Parish Partners” is taking place right now, and is designed to create, develop, and strengthen relationships between two or more parishes.

In August 2022, youth ministers will meet for a new training retreat, empowering them with new skills and a renewed understanding of their calling. In 2022, our Young Adult Ministry hopes to receive a grant for a program called Life is Calling. This will allow parishes to create more robust young adult ministries that will engage new members and help young adults grow as Christians.

OUR EPISCOPATE

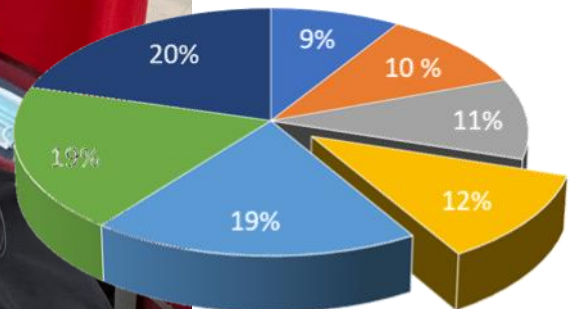
Bishop Diocesan, Bishops' travel, and staff support

When Bishop G was consecrated on June 27, 2020, one of the first goals she made was to visit every parish in the Diocese before the end of 2021. Between January and October of this year alone she has made 49 visits! In addition to preaching, confirming, and celebrating, many of those visits included meetings with vestries and social gatherings with parishioners.

In addition to visiting parishes, here are some of the things Bishop G has been up to this year:

- ◇ Officiated at five Celebration of New Ministry services
- ◇ Presided over Diocesan Convention
- ◇ Served at Sawyerville
- ◇ Served as Province IV Chaplain to the Daughters of the King
- ◇ Conducted three staff retreats
- ◇ Participated in two ECW conferences
- ◇ Presided over Diocesan Council, Standing Committee, and Commission to Ministry meetings
- ◇ Served as a trustee for Sewanee

She also has regular House of Bishops duties, meetings, and conferences. Through the House of Bishops, Bishop G connects us all to the broader Episcopal Church and to the Anglican Communion as she “share(s) in the leadership of the Church throughout the world” (Book of Common Prayer, p. 517).



This portion totals \$398,383, or 12% of our budget.

Our 2021 Diocesan Budget: \$3,443,739

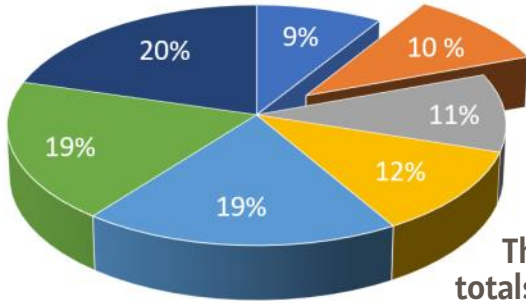


Our programs and ministries are manifestations of the Diocesan response to the Gospel imperative to spread the Good News of God's redeeming love. Central to all the programs is the task of reconciling the world to God and bringing people into relationship with God.

In 2022, the Diocese will expand its work with racial reconciliation. The Commission for Truth, Justice, and Racial Reconciliation is conducting a diocesan-wide parish survey that will help us discern where parishes are and where they would like to be in this regard. Bishop G has appointed a new Task Force for Developing the Beloved Community. This group will create a set of recommendations for how the Diocese can improve race relations in our church in Alabama and beyond.

CREATING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

Supporting food security, healthcare access, stewardship of creation, and racial reconciliation



This portion totals \$361,653 or 10% of our budget.

Here are some of the exciting things happening in the Diocese of Alabama in 2022:

January 2022:

The Department of Liturgy and Music, along with a planning team, are hosting an Acolyte Festival for all acolytes and acolyte masters on January 22nd at the Cathedral Church of the Advent. This is a fun way to bring acolytes from across our diocese together to learn, play (acolyte Olympics!), and worship together. Lunch is included.

For more information contact Kathy Graham, Lifelong Christian Formation Coordinator, kgraham@dioala.org.



February 4-5, 2022

2022 Convention at Camp McDowell

Keynote Speaker: The Reverend Dr. Samuel Wells,
author of *A Future That's Bigger Than the Past*

Reverend Dr. Sam Wells has been Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, since 2012. He has served as a parish priest for 20 years – 10 of those in urban priority areas. He also spent seven years in North Carolina, where he was Dean of Duke University Chapel. He has published 35 books, including works on Christian ethics, mission, ministry, scripture, liturgy, and preaching. Sam is married to Jo Wells, who is Bishop of Dorking. They have two children.

March 2022:

The Commission on Spirituality is partnering with Contemplative Outreach Birmingham and Metagem Institute to present “Becoming Prayer: Incarnation Makes Mystics of Us All” on March 12, 2022. Our guest presenter will be The Rev. Dr. Vincent Pizzuto. For more information contact Kathy Graham, Lifelong Christian Formation Coordinator, kgraham@dioala.org.



May 14, 2022 | 2:00-4:00pm
Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, Preacher
Bill Battle Stadium
Birmingham Southern College

We are excited to announce that we will hold a revival next year. The Revival committee is reaching out to all parishes across the diocese to help tell the story of what God is up to in the Episcopal Church in Alabama. Please mark your calendars and plan to “Come and see, go and do”!



May 6-8, 2022

The Office of Young Adult Ministry is offering monthly gatherings on the second Monday of the month in your local Convocation. As a way to gather all those who have participated in the gatherings and any young adult interested in becoming more involved, there will be a Young Adult Retreat at Camp McDowell May 6-8, 2022. Our time will be spent in community growing in faith through conversation and connection. Registration will open March of 2022. For more information contact Kathleen Franklin, kfranklin@dioala.org.



August 2-5, 2022

The Office of Youth Ministries is excited to announce a new training retreat called the Youth Leader Summit for anyone who works with youth, August 2-5, 2022. With the theme, Purposeful Leadership, we will all explore the call to youth ministry and develop spiritually, personally, and professionally in community. Youth work is not for the faint of heart and with voices like Lisa Brown from Membership Vision, our own Rev. Susan Oakes, and with Purposeful Leadership Development from Rev. Bill Blackerby, we will be sure to have an experience like no other growing in faith and love for God's youth. Registration will open January 2022. We hope to see you there! For more information contact Kathleen Franklin, kfranklin@dioala.org.

The Department of Christian Formation is working with parishes to serve as group cohorts on intergenerational ministry (ministry to all ages) with *GenOn Ministry*. We are also encouraging parishes to be a part of *Renewal Works* from Forward Movement as a diocesan-wide project to deepen parishioners spiritual lives.

The Department of Recovery Ministry is looking ahead to Journey 2022 and making plans for what area of the diocese will host this event in September 2022, and who our presenter will be.

The Department of Liturgy and Music will offer workshops at convention on:

1. Chanting
2. Crafting a contemplative service
3. Ways technology can enhance your online presence. This will include a tutorial on inexpensive tools for online worship.

The Commission on Aging will offer a workshop on respite care at convention and will host a workshop day in the spring on "Wellness: mind, body and spirit".

For more information about any of these programs contact Kathy Graham, Lifelong Christian Formation Coordinator, kgraham@dioala.org.

Upcoming dates for Sawyerville programs:

Person2Person:

January 14-17, 2022

JumpStart:

June 6-10

June 13-17

June 20-24

June 27-July 1

Summer Camp:

June 6-9

June 20-23

June 27-30

Summer Learning:

June 13-17

June 20-24

June 27-July 1

July 5-8

For more information contact Crystal Jones, cjones@dioala.org.



The Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

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