

REPORTS FROM GENERAL OFFICERS

STANDING COMMITTEE

Who is the Standing Committee?

President **The Rev. Richard Proctor | Christ the King, Santa Rosa Beach | 2023

Secretary Carole Lea Johnson

Members

Class of 2023

The Rev. Christie Hord | St. John's, Pensacola

Terri Moore | St. James, Fairhope

Bruce Partington | Christ Church, Pensacola

*Carl Walters | Grace Church, Panama City Beach

Class of 2024

*The Rev. Rian Adams | St. Andrew's by the Sea, Panama City

Anne Gill | Trinity, Mobile

*Carole Lea Johnson | Nativity, Dothan

The Rev. Will Lowry | Holy Spirit, Gulf Shores

Van Fuller | St. Simon's on the Sound, Ft. Walton Beach

Class of 2025

*Michelle Crawford | St. Jude's, Niceville

*The Rev. Bob Donnell | All Saints, Mobile

The Rev. De Freeman | St. James, Fairhope

Robbie Runderson | Good Shepherd, Mobile

Mark Waddell | St. Augustine's, Navarre

*nominated by the bishop

**completing term vacated by the Rev. Linda Suzanne Borgen | St. Thomas, Greenville | 2023

What is the Standing Committee? What do we do? The Standing Committee shall:

- a) Be a council of advice to the Bishop and shall fulfill, and in no manner be contrary to, the General Constitution and General Canons.
- b) Act as a planning committee for the Diocese and shall advise the Bishop and/or the Diocesan Convention of procedures or actions which it deems wise to be taken under consideration.
- c) Establish a Commission on Finance which shall give effect to the standard business methods in Church affairs, and which shall fulfill such other duties as may be given to it from time to time by the Convention.
- d) Have no legislative authority of its own except such as may be provided by the General Canons, and such as may be given to it from time to time by the Convention.

What were the highlights of our year together?

- We met on Feb. 19 at the Diocesan Convention and elected our officers: Richard Proctor (President) and Carole Lea Johnson (Secretary).
- We had several candidates come before us as part of their process of discerning ordination to the diaconate and priesthood. Candidates came to us after having been interviewed by the Commission on Ministry. We have a lot of excellent candidates in both our Diocesan School for Ministry and various residential seminaries. Our diocese is raising up a diverse group of faithful, talented persons to serve the Church.
- We approved diocesan loans to a couple of parishes for maintenance/repairs.
- Success and implementation of initiatives related to the Go Forward capital campaign (i.e.: Beckwith projects)
- The diocese called the Rev. Ashley Freeman to serve as our Canon to the Ordinary/Missioner for Discernment
- Diocesan School for Ministry moved to Milton, FL and has a new class of participants on various tracks.
- Approval of several Bishop elections throughout TEC.

It has been my pleasure serving on the Standing Committee. My favorite part has simply been getting to know more people from around our diocese. As a clergyperson, I get to know my fellow clergy via retreats, etc. So, it was nice to get to know more lay people from beyond the walls of my own parish. We have a tremendous group of servant leaders on the Standing Committee, as well as on our diocesan staff.

Submitted with gratitude,
The Rev. Richard G. Proctor, OA
President

REGISTRAR – HISTORIOGRAPHER

Canon 8 sets forth the duties and responsibilities of the Registrar-Historiographer: upon nomination by the Ecclesiastical Authority and elected annually by the Diocesan Convention, to “gather, receive and safeguard all materials of historical significance in the diocese and the several Parishes and Missions, and shall present to each Convention a report of all such events as may be deemed to be of permanent interest and importance.”

The man who drafted the language of our diocesan canons and who presented them to our 1970 Primary Convention for adoption, the Hon. Albert J. Tully, became a parishioner and friend of mine a few years later. I was a lay delegate to the Primary Convention which adopted the canons. In the 53 years since then, during thirty of which I have served as Secretary and then Registrar-Historiographer, I have learned that my friend wrote large and expected much. His ideals and the ideals of The Episcopal Church regarding the safeguarding of materials of historical significance are worthy of remembering and of constant striving.

Within these ideals, the relatively modest work of the Registrar-Historiographer in our Diocese has continued and begun to emerge from the strictest closure of the Covid pandemic.

My work in 2022 included one day working in the archives room of the Duvall Center. With the help of my wife, Nancy, we continued to move materials from open shelves into the safer drawers of recently acquired water/safe, fire/safe file cabinets. We also continued the work of making identifying labels more visible and useful.

Additionally, I worked from home responding to requests from persons doing individual, parish, or agency inquiries into the history of St. Paul’s Church, Whistler; St. John’s Church, Wewahitchka; St. Paul’s Church, Daphne; and Wilmer Hall Children’s Home, Mobile. More recently, I received inquiry from member of the Church of the Good Shepherd, Mobile, and a member of St. Augustine’s Church, Gary, Indiana, about the designation of “Colored Episcopal Missions” in Episcopal dioceses. Response and research for the projects are still in progress.

All these inquiries represent the interest of Episcopalians to know the stories of our faith lived by their ancestors, either of blood or of baptism.

I responded to members of one of our parishes who have taken on the task of caring for its archives – a task left by a former parish archivist who has departed this life. They have taken on a noble task, and I gave them a morning trying to help them on their way. In this, I was assisted by my friend and predecessor, Registrar-Historiographer Emeritus, Kit Caffey.

A few days ago, I received on behalf of our archives, the personal journals of a priest who was perhaps the longest serving parish priest in our history. These documents will require a long time for reading, but they may shed light on the story of the Gospel in our part of the world.

I like to think that the bits and pieces of our story in the Episcopal Church in south Alabama and the Florida panhandle take their place within the pages of the great big Bibles once common place on our lecterns, visible and verbal embodiments of our sacred story, and from which our folks knew how to read.

As I write this, I am 80 years old. From being the first postulant of our then-new Diocese to have been ordained, I am living the years of our diocesan story. And yet, I know only a small part of it. Our archives tell us much more of our story and should tell us more. I am honored and blessed to take my turn in caring for the records of our precious story.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. S. Albert Kennington, Registrar-Historiographer

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Commission on Ministry has two primary responsibilities. The first is to assist individuals in their response to God's call to ministry. In particular, the Commission seeks to support those who are discerning a call to ordained ministry. The second responsibility is to advise the Bishop, when requested, in matters concerning discernment and formation.

COM Mission Statement

The COM seeks to prayerfully ascertain, discriminate, and discern a sense of God's call in a person's life and in the life of the church for his/her *lay or ordained vocation and ministry*.

The Commission on Ministry will

-be a resource for aspirants for ordination

-be an advisor to the bishop concerning aspirants, postulants, and candidates

-be a shepherd and advocate for those being prepared for ordination, providing pastoral care and guidance on an individual basis

-assist the bishop in developing and furthering continuing education for the clergy of the Diocese.

In this diocese, individuals called to ordained ministry may follow one of two separate paths. One path is for those who are called to the Priesthood and the other for those called to the vocational Diaconate.

Ordinations: In April, we ordained two (2) individuals to the Transitional Diaconate (Amanda Doshier and Kenneth White-Spunner). In November, Kenneth White-Spunner was ordained to the Priesthood and placed appointed as Priest-in-Charge of St. John's, Monroeville. Amanda Doshier was scheduled for Ordination to the Priesthood in January 2023.

Seminary: We had two (2) individuals accepted as Postulants to attend Seminary (Drew Downey and Ellen Huckabay) At present, seminarians from this diocese enrolled at Virginia Theological Seminary (Jen Leahey and Stephen Pecot); at Seabury (Pam Christian); and at Seminary of the Southwest (John Fountain and Ryan Lee).

Diocesan School for Ministry: We had two (2) individuals accepted as Postulants in the Priesthood track (Ted Kirchharr and Leanne Whalen-Beaumont) and one (1) individual accepted as a Postulant in the Diaconate track (Kay Dennis). At present, we have five (5) individuals enrolled in the Priesthood track (Brad Clark - was transferred from the Diaconate track, Ted Kirchharr, Salem Saloom, Mark Waddell and Leanne Whalen-Beaumont) and three (3) individuals enrolled in the Diaconate track (Kay Dennis, Deborah Knight-Epps, and Pratt Paterson).

Discernment for those called to the Priesthood and for those called to the Diaconate requires participation by many from the community, as the individuals prayerfully seek God's direction for their lives. The Commission is grateful for the willingness of so many within this diocese to support and assist those who are examining their call to ordained ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Eugene Johnston, Chair/mrp

BECKWITH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Things are alive and well in God's front yard!! The Beckwith staff is ready to serve you in 2023 so I encourage you to pick up the phone and give Rhona a call to book your parish retreat, youth retreat, or parish picnic.

Mark your calendars for **Beckwith Sunday, April 30, 2023**. This is a wonderful time to celebrate with camp liturgies, to pray for Beckwith, our Executive Director, and staff.

Save the date for Bay Lights 2023: September 29 – October 1st. BayLights is the last weekend in September each year. This is the perfect opportunity for a fun filled weekend with your family and friends in God's front yard. I encourage you to participate in some part of the weekend – there are activities for the entire family.

Summer Camp 2022 had another successful year, serving over 650+ campers. Beckwith gave out \$12,350 in scholarships and discounts, received \$10,000 in grants and donations, and completed the summer with enthusiasm and excitement. Rachel said the summer was magical complementing her leadership team and camp staff. She is gearing up for summer 2023 and is currently hiring staff and making plans for another wonderful summer season.

I am happy to report that the desire to be at Beckwith continues to grow. For the third year we are poised to post revenue numbers reflecting our pre-pandemic demand. January was an extremely busy month which is always a great way to start the year. As we prepare for 2023 our team is stronger than ever. We are planning and preparing for a fabulous season of retreats and summer camp.

We are truly blessed and looking forward to the opportunities to serve you this year.

Respectfully submitted,
Jubal Hamil Board Chair

MURRAY HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Murray House Board of Directors is pleased to announce the addition of Ms. Angela Powell as Executive Director effective August 2022. Ms. Powell is a licensed administrator for both Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing facilities.

Murray House, a ministry of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, is a not-for-profit level 1 Assisted Living Facility which means that the residents must be able to have the cognitive abilities and physical wherewithal to direct their own care. Currently, there are 23 residents who meet this requirement.

Like nursing homes and health agencies, assisted-living facilities like Murray House have found it hard to retain and hire staff during the pandemic. In addition to attrition caused by natural death, the census at Murray House decreased in 2020-2022 due to restrictions placed on the facility by the State of Alabama and the CDC. Historically, financial sustainability requires a minimum of 33-35 residents.

To offset the resulting financial deficit, Murray House applied for and received two Payroll Protection Program grants in 2021 for a total of \$262,000. The PPP was established by the CARES Act and implemented by the Small Business Administration to help small businesses and not for profits keep the workforce employed and offset financial losses during the COVID-19 crisis.

In March 2022, the Murray House census was 22 residents and the PPP funds exhausted. The Diocese began to support the monthly financial deficit with a \$25-30,000 per month supplement. Without this additional income Murray House would not be sustainable.

Due to the lack of memory care units in the Mobile Metro area and to provide continuity of care to our residents, Murray House made application for sixteen Specialty Care Assisted Living Facility beds for a new memory care unit. This much needed expansion would result in an increase in residents and revenue. After an extensive study of Alzheimer/Dementia care in Alabama, we conclude that the need for memory care units is increasing approximately 15% per year.

The application has been approved by the State Health Planning and Development Agency. Plans are in place to convert one wing of the existing building to a memory care unit. We expect the sixteen Specialty Care Assisted Living Facility beds to open sometime in late 2023.

The Murray House Board of Directors approved the following resolutions in 2022:

Resolution 1: Whereas the Mobile Female Benevolent Society (MFBS) began a 200 year old history of faith based care for the elderly and Whereas Murray House is the present day legacy of the MFBS and Whereas the Murray House Board of Directors wishes to preserve all documents concerning Murray House to further a written history of this legacy, the Board of Directors resolves to secure the records of Murray House in the event that Murray House is no longer an agency of the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.

Resolution 2. Whereas Murray House contains many artifacts, specifically but not exclusively furniture, photographs, etc. dating from the days of the Mobile Female Benevolent Society and Whereas these artifacts are part of the legacy of Murray House, the Board of Directors resolve to produce a photographic catalogue of these tangible artifacts.

The Murray House Board of Directors (July 21, 2022)

In conclusion, the ministry of the Diocese at Murray House continues to be positive and life giving! Murray House is a unique and much needed ministry to older adults. Pursuing a healthy lifestyle of nutritious food, daily exercise, supportive social connections, and opportunities for spiritual growth means thriving is an achievable goal for every resident.

With the addition of a new Executive Director, the ongoing passionate work of the Board, the approval of a 16 bed Memory Care Unit, and the financial assistance of the Diocese, the ministry of Murray House will continue to provide a loving, safe, and supportive home for older adults.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Ken Cumbie, Board President

WILMER HALL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wilmer Hall, an agency of the Diocese located in Mobile, Alabama, has been serving young people in need since 1864. It was founded by Bishop Richard Hooker Wilmer, the second Bishop of Alabama. We currently have six programs: Residential, Transitional Living (TLP), Transitional Family (TFP), Education4Life, the Philippa Stirling Hamilton Education Center, and the Max Miller Education Program.

In 2022, we had a total of 56 residents in our three residential programs (Residential, TLP, TFP). We served 58 students in our on-site Education Program and 50 students in our two community-based education programs (the Hamilton Education Center and the Max Miller Education Program). **Our total number of children and young adults served in 2022 was 164.**

We currently serve 58 students in our on-campus education program, called Education4Life. In the 13 years since its inception, the students in the program have a 100% graduation/promotion rate. We expanded our successful education model into other areas of our community in 2018 and 2019. The Hamilton Education Center serves students in the Maysville Community at Williamson Prep Middle School, and the Max Miller Education Program serves students at Mobile County Training School. All of our tutors are local college students, supported by our education staff.

We launched a delivery-based food pantry in 2019. In 2022, we delivered groceries to roughly 400 individuals and families.

Our staff and board continue to be good stewards of our resources as we recently passed a balanced budget as we care for our historic campus. We charge no fees for our services, of course, and receive funding from the Diocese, the United Way, and from many donations and grants.

We greatly appreciate the support from the Diocese, its churches, and their congregants as we carry out our Mission in helping the homeless, the poor, and the needy.

We welcome visitors from around the diocese for a visit to campus, and we are also happy to come talk to your parish or group about our mission and ministry. Please contact Pratt Paterson (ppaterson@wilmerhall.org).

Respectfully submitted,
D. Pratt Paterson, Executive Director

William J. Gamble, Jr., Board President

The mission of Wilmer Hall Children's Home is to provide a safe home and educational resources for children and young adults in need due to poverty, abuse, neglect, and homelessness. We serve all children and young adults without regard to race, ethnicity, or religion.

Wilmer Hall extends warm and nurturing care to every child and young adult in its care, ensuring they are surrounded by people who love and support them. Our goal is to help children succeed in four areas: physical health, emotional stability, academic achievement, and spiritual maturity.

Wilmer Hall serves children and young adults through five programs: the Residential Living Program, the Transitional Living Program, the Transitional Family Program, the on-campus Education Program, and the Community-Based Education Programs.

REPORTS FROM CANON MISSIONERS

CANON TO THE ORDINARY AND MISSIONER FOR DISCERNMENT

As your new Canon to the Ordinary and the Missioner for Discernment (COMD), when I think about our theme for convention this year, it is pretty clear to me what my story is at this moment. Unlike my predecessor, Massey Gentry, who served in our diocese as the Canon for over a decade and served in similar roles across the church for more than thirty years, I have just finished my sixth month as your Canon Missioner. In many ways at the moment, my story feels a lot like trying to drink from a fire hydrant.

That does not mean I am not enjoying this new call. On the contrary, I am having an absolute blast. In my time as your canon missioner, I have had the pleasure of meeting search committees, vestries, priest, and countless others. In addition, I have had the opportunity to lead worship and preach across our diocese; something I am honored and blessed to do regularly. In all my visits, meetings, and other engagements around the diocese I have been inspired and impressed by the people I have meet and the ministries I have witnessed. Our diocese is comprised of many talented, spirit filled people and churches and it has been an honor and pleasure to begin this new ministry with you.

One of the chief duties I carry out as your COMD, is that of the Transition Officer for the diocese. In other words, I work with the vestries and search committees of the parishes looking to call new priests. When I arrived in August we had six parishes in the search process, five of which had been in the process well over a year. At this time, I am happy to report we have filled four of the six openings:

St. Jude's, Niceville has called the Rev. Blake Hutson (started in January)
St. Mary's, Andalusia has called the Rev. Eric Mancil (started in January)
St. Francis, Gulf Breeze has called the Rev. Christian Rabone (starts March 5)
St. Paul's Magnolia Springs is poised to announce a call before the end of February

In addition to these new calls, the search committee at Grace and St. Thomas, Panama City Beach, faithfully continues to do their work of prayer and discernment and Trinity, Apalachicola, is currently receiving names of candidates.

As I stated earlier, my story at this time is very busy with lots of new experiences and many opportunities for learning. However, I am beginning to hear my new song. As I work with the vestries and search committees across our diocese, it is an incredible experience to watch the relationship between a church and a new priest blossom. From the first time they meet via zoom until the new priest has moved and started his/her new ministry, the entire process is one filled with excitement, enthusiasm, and limitless possibilities. As these new chapters of ministry begin, I hear a new song of God's grace, hope, and love in these communities, and I look forward to continuing my work as the sound of this new song grows in our diocese.

Faithfully Submitted,
The Rev. Ashley Freeman
Canon to the Ordinary & Missioner for Discernment

MISSIONER FOR DEVELOPMENT

Some the best stories we get to live and tell and the ones that point us towards God's goodness. In my work as your Missioner for Evangelism and Development I have gotten to hear and see stories of God's goodness as I consult with parishes about programming and evangelism, as I visit for supply, and collaborate with people around the diocese. I have been encouraged as I have witnessed lay leaders who stepped into new leadership roles as worship leaders, preachers and pastoral care givers and helped breathe new life into their churches through our grant work with the Episcopal Evangelism Society. As the teacher in the School for Ministry I have seen God's goodness as students tackle assignments, learning curves, and learn and grow with such grace. Some of the most joyful stories I heard took place as served as a summer camp dean and again as dean for Winter Woods as Camp Beckwith. Behind the scenes, I had the delightful pleasure of getting to touch base with all of seminarians who took the General Ordination Exams (GOEs) by sending them a "good luck" gift of snacks and cheer from the diocese.

A key piece of our story I see is that our diocese is full amazing people who are faithfully seeking to know and love God. God is working among us.

Out of our stories, flows our song which highlights the heart at work in the world. Our song helps us invite others to see and experience God's goodness together. I hear our song being sung each month as we gather for our Evangelism Brainstorm Zoom. We share ideas of how to point one another toward God's goodness, offer space to celebrate it and invite each other to more. I love hearing everyone's ideas and seeing eyes light up when they become inspired to take on an evangelism experiment. I heard our song in the diocesan Advent devotional materials we put together about waiting. Those memories woven together made a song of hope and community. Our song was sung as parishes opened their hearts and doors to allow me to officiate funerals for strangers. The continued growth and experimentation of the Beloved Community Outreach Center in Mobile, AL faithfully sings our song by forging new partnerships and offering creative opportunities for community and worship. I am excited to hear what new verses emerge as we prepare to receive \$4000 from the Young Adult and Campus Ministries Grant awarded to BCOC and Lamppost to experiment with outdoor worship and holy hikes. I look forward to hearing new melodies when we take a small cohort to the Church Redevelopment Retreat and Episcopal Parish Network Conference.

The song is beautiful. I am grateful for the opportunity to listen to it and to sing along.

Faithfully submitted,
The Rev. Lydia Johnson
Missioner for Evangelism and Development

MISSIONER FOR DISCIPLESHIP & SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY DEAN

Our convention theme this year is one that strikes close to my heart as Dean for our School for Ministry and as your Missioner for Discipleship. Last year we had two dynamic storytellers with us, Presiding Bishop Curry and Dr. Bertice Berry. This year, we have the dynamic Rev. Becca Stevens who embodies what it means to move from story, stories that threaten to annihilate our very dignity and worth, to songs of purpose and resurrection in people's lives.

Because that is essentially the crux of our life together, our bonds of common community, some of the familiar words and phrases we have used in past year's conventions. As we well know with church or business mottos, vision statements, etc., it can become all too easy to forget who we are and what we are truly called to be doing. And, while it is tempting to think there is perhaps one definitive answer to these questions, I will argue that there is not. We are here in an entirely different space than last year, with a vast array of different experiences and encounters which have changed us, forged us in fire, and invited us to this moment, this now. That's all we have in actuality.

So, without veering too far into the abstract, let me get down to some particulars. This year I have been grateful to become full time as Dean and Missioner and to attend to the various expansions in our School for Ministry. As most of you are well aware, we now have a Lay School, a School to raise up priests and deacons, and a newly formed track to officially "Anglicize" those ministers who come to us from other traditions and want to join us in helping to realize God's Kingdom here on the beautiful Gulf Coast. We are also working on developing a path to train and develop spiritual directors in our Diocese.

My vow to you as Dean has remained fairly singular: to do my best to stay abreast of the most recent developments in seminary education and pedagogy and to balance that knowledge with a commitment to excellence and integrity in all of our formation programs. Being full time has allowed me a greater balance in fulfilling the administrative responsibilities inherent in these programs while also immersing myself in academic study, participation in professional societies, and representation at designated conferences and panels that nourish our mission and dreams.

The School for Ministry for those seeking ordination currently has 8 people enrolled: six priests and two deacons. The new challenge and gift is that we have people studying together who are in their first, second or third years. We look and pray for the ordination of two of these candidates this year and will add a new one to join us this fall.

Our Lay School is continuing to raise up leaders who are licensed as worship leaders, preachers, catechists, and pastoral care leaders. I remain grateful to Bishop Kendrick, Sue Rollins, Anita Ford, and Joe Taylor for their gifts in leading the various tracks in this program. Again, we have a dynamic group of people who are dedicating their time to pursuing further gifts and resources in expanding ministry not only in their contexts but beyond as well.

I hope to lift up some of these voices at the end of this presentation so that you can see and hear what the Lord is doing.

I think so many of us are still grappling with our stories—how they have changed over the last three years, grieving what seems gone, daring to hope for what may be born, trying to see things through entirely different lenses. In a sense, that is why

Nicodemus is such a role model for our time together. He comes to Jesus undoubtedly with questions, maybe some accusations, maybe even a warning that Jesus was upsetting the status quo. And, in that encounter, under that cloak of darkness, Nicodemus found something that changed him, impelled him, all the way to the light of day and the foot of the Cross.

We all bear similar stories. We can't forget that in our highly digital world. We cannot be forced into a false narrative that breezes past the darkness nor one that shines an unnatural light on all that seems to glitter and shine but is really empty. My story, my witness serves to stir the witness in you: narrative begets narrative.

The story of my life has been knit together by a love for education, for formation, for questions that have no easy answers. This is where I am at home. Together with my colleagues, the Bishop and you, I will continue to dream of ways in which each and every person in our Diocese feels supported, encouraged, and invited to exercise their gifts in ministry. We still have much work to do; to break through the tough red clay in places, to trudge through the swamps of our own making, to transform our stories of isolation, despair, disappointment or fear into a song of liberation, of healing, of hope, of restoration, and of renewal.

To echo a prophet we lost too soon, Rachel Held Evans: *One of the most destructive mistakes we Christians make is to prioritize shared beliefs over shared relationship, which is deeply ironic considering we worship a God who would rather die than lose relationship with us.*

I share with you now the voices of two of our candidates for ordination this year. They will tell you what it has been like to start their formation in the middle of a pandemic, to come into relationship from drastically different backgrounds, and to branch out into community as we admitted new students into the program. [Brad Clark, Deborah Knight-Epps]

I pray their witness, your witness, becomes our witness. This is my story, this is our song.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Joy Blaylock, PhD
Dean, School for Ministry Missioner for Discipleship

REPORTS FROM THE COMMISSIONS

AFFIRMATIVE AGING

Members of the Commission are The Rev. Sara D. Phillips, Mendy Henderson, PhD, Elaine Estafan, Kay Cruthirds, Susan Bridges, and Cris Turnage.

The Commission met three times in person during 2022, and frequently over email. We discussed the upcoming second annual C on AA workshop, "Adventurous Aging: How To Stay Young At Heart." Part of the Mission Statement for this Commission states that our goal is "...an ideal aging experience for all..." Thus, we again decided to host this workshop for a nominal fee and as a service to the community. The goal was to provide participants with information on how to age as well as possible in body, mind, and spirit.

The workshop was held on Saturday, October 29 at St. Paul's Episcopal High School in Mobile. Over fifty people attended.

Mendy Henderson, PhD, spoke on "Concepts and Theories of Aging." Grant Zarzour, M.D. spoke on Orthopaedic Health and Joint Replacement Surgery. Aimee Walsh, M.D. spoke on Adult Pain Management. Natalie Smith of St. Mary's by the Sea led us in low impact Cardio Worship. Matthew Quin, M.D. spoke on Cardiovascular Health and Heart Rhythm. A healthy and delicious lunch was served then followed with Chair Yoga led by Anne Falkenhagen of Theodore.

The evaluations were overwhelmingly positive, and we believe a good time was had by all.

The Commission plans to meet in person early in the New Year. Plans for another "Adventurous Aging" workshop will be discussed and hopefully held next fall in the Pensacola Area.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Sara D. Phillips, Chair

CURSILLO

Cursillo is Back! After a 30-month absence due to the pandemic, the Commission on Cursillo hosted its first Cursillo weekend at Camp Beckwith in March 2022. The return of the ministry required the Commission and staff to dust off supplies, relearn procedures, rely on the experience of seasoned staff, and rekindle friendships and relationships to provide a spiritual weekend for the pilgrims of #166. The weekend was exciting and reminded everyone of the power of God’s love through the Holy Spirit. Cursillo #167 following in September 2022 and the participation grew with a 33% increase in participation over #166. Future Cursillo weekends are currently scheduled twice/year in the months of March and September. Special thanks to the Lay Rectors and key staff for the weekends:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Cursillo #166</u>	<u>Cursillo #167</u>
Lay Rector	Kelley Fuller	Diane Voors
Head Cha Cha	Bryan Whitehead	Tonye Frith
Head Logistics	Van Fuller	Eleanor Reeves
Head Music	John Talbert	David Adams
Head Spiritual Advisor	Rev David Knight	Rev Ken Cumbie

Cursillo Music Program. The Commission will host a music workshop this Spring, inviting musicians who have been to Cursillo who are interested in being on a music team. In a parallel effort, the Commission is developing a base music “setlist” of songs for the weekend. The intent is to provide an expected flow of memorable songs, with appropriate alternatives, that are easy for pilgrims to learn and remember without limiting creativity by a music team.

Rev Mark H. Wilson Scholarship. In memory of the late Fr Mark, and in honor of his inspiring wife Beth, a one-time \$2,500 seminary scholarship is available for a first-year postulant enrolled in an accredited three-year Master of Divinity program or a one-time \$1,000 scholarship for a first-year postulant enrolled in the CGC School for Ministry. Candidates must have been active in the Cursillo Ministry in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast and anticipate continuing to serve as Cursillo weekend clergy upon ordination. Unfortunately, the fund is nearly exhausted. To sustain and replenish the fund, the Commission used the Cursillo emblem designed by Samantha Bates, daughter of Rev Steve and Lori Bates, to adorn clothing and accessories. The items are for sale at [Cursillo Merch | Official Merchandise | Bonfire](#). A donation can also be made any time, for any amount, with a check made out to the Duvall Fund and note in the memo line: MHW Scholarship and mail your check to: Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, PO Box 13330, Pensacola FL 32591-3330.

Ultreya is a Spanish word that means “Onward.” In 2022, the Commission conducted two Ultreyas – one at St. Simon’s Fort Walton Beach and one at Camp Beckwith as part of Baylights. And 2023 is already off to a good start with an Eastern Convocation IV Ultreya at Nativity Dothan on Jan. 21 with 25 people in attendance and the question asked by many “When are we doing this again?” At the same time, St Simon’s Fort Walton Beach held a parish Ultreya with 12 people in attendance. These are examples of Diocese, Convocation, and Parish forums to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ. Plans are in the works for an Ultreya at St. Paul’s in Daphne in April, and September at Camp Beckwith. The Commission is also working to schedule additional dates and locations to host ‘regional’ Ultreyas around the Diocese.

Cursillo #168 is on March 9th, just a few days after the Convention! There still may be space available for more pilgrims too! Please remember this weekend and Lay Rector Leslie Talbert in your prayers. Cursillo #169 is scheduled on Sep 14th. Registering prospective pilgrims is easy with [this online form](#). Before submitting the form, sponsors should talk with clergy about the suitability of the prospective pilgrim. When the form is submitted, the clergy will get an email asking them to official approve the registration.

GLOBAL MISSION ENGAGEMENT

In 2022, after three years of COVID hindering our mission ministry, we were able to resume some of our mission efforts. Following is a report of those activities and a preview of some of our plans for the coming year.

1. Baluba, Zambia, Africa

With our assistance the Baluba, Africa Healthcare and self-sufficiency programs are now well underway. Thanks to the “boots-on-the-ground” help of Baluba’s minister, Victor Chimfwembe, and his ability to get local government programs involved Baluba is now having monthly medical clinics that care for approximately 200 men, women and children each month.

Part of our commitment to Baluba has been to help them establish a building for clinics and a local pharmacy. Previously medicines were not locally available and the people of Baluba had to travel many miles, often on foot, to receive medical care. The medical building as well as a school building are now completed. The people of Baluba made all of the bricks for these buildings and are now working to enlarge the school.

Seeing that Baluba was making progress on its own initiative the Zambian Ministry of Health (MOH) became involved and has provided Covid19 vaccinations, along with all other relevant vaccinations to the majority of the clinic's patients. The MOH has also provided monthly health education lectures and medications for some of the more prevalent diseases such as malaria.

Partnering with others we have helped provide a monthly stipend of \$1000 sent in combination by the Commission and St. Simon's church. As part of our commitment to assist locals to become self-supporting this monthly stipend was reduced to \$500 in March 2022 with plans to discontinue this financial support in July 2022. However, we were able to continue this support through September 2022.

Baluba “chicken and pigs” Project: To compensate for this planned decrease in financial support, Victor Chimfwembe, the community's pastor and clinic organizer, began a project of raising chickens in 2021 with a goal of selling roasters. In 2022 he also started similar project with pigs. He also planted a significantly large crop of soy. These projects are going along well and Victor's goal was that by October, 2022 this project would provide sufficient funds to independently continue the clinic and its pharmacy.

Helping Educate a Local Nurse: Rachael, Victor's wife, has now graduated from a four-year nursing school. Her tuition of \$1500/year was funded by the Commission. With additional tuition support from the Commission she is now attending a graduate course in mid-wifery. Her objective is to donate her time as a nurse and mid-wife to the Baluba community.

2. **Rio Grande Borderland Ministries**

In September 2021, the Diocese formalized a three-year partnership agreement with the Rio Grande Borderland Ministries (RGBM), a program of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande. This partnership commits the Commission to a three-year contract in which we will offer a stipend of \$2000/year to support the RGBM activities at a shelter in Juarez, Mexico. Additionally, it commits the Commission to developing pilgrimages of youth and adults to travel to the border to hear stories and to experience first-hand the lives lived by immigrants attempting to enter the US for safety and well-being. It is hoped that these pilgrimages will result in the transfer of stories from returning pilgrims to others in the diocese with the intent to further educate congregations about the lived experiences of those who have been forced to flee their homes as a result of violence, discrimination, etc.

A first pilgrimage had been planned for May 2022, however, had to be postponed. An on-site visit by two of the Commission members is scheduled for early 2023.

In 2022 we also offered financial support to the Diocese of the Rio Grande to provide winter clothing to those migrants being sent to northern climates.

3. **Dominican Republic Church Furniture Mission**

Our Church Furniture mission to the Dominican Republic (the DR) has been on-going since 2006. In that time we have furnished many Episcopal churches in the DR with pews, pulpits, lecterns, baptismal fonts, altars, clergy chairs, bishop's chairs, alcolyte benches, credence tables and other furniture necessary for them to have a comfortable, attractive and functional house of worship.

We will resume this ministry with a team going to the DR in March 2023. Plans are made, the team has been formed and as of this time all systems are go.

4. **Education Mission to the Dominican Republic**

In 2022 we were able to resume our Education Mission to the Dominican Republic. We have partnered with an Episcopal church in Lincoln, Nebraska and sent two teams in 2022 to hold workshops and seminars for the teachers and administration of the Dominican Episcopal church parochial school system.

We have plans to continue to support this ministry in 2023.

5. Scholarships to the University of South Alabama

Now that COVID has slacked off we have resumed our discussions with the staff of the University of South Alabama for them to offer an annual scholarship for a promising high school senior graduating from the Episcopal school system in the Dominican Republic. An essential requirement is that the scholarship recipient be sufficiently fluent in English to understand the course work. Our team is working with the Dominican staff to ensure that English classes are offered as a first step toward obtaining these scholarships.

6. Internal Difficulties in Haiti:

Due to internal unrest in both the church as well as local and national governments in Haiti we have not been able to follow-up on our mission ministries there.

We prayerfully hope that the COVID and travel difficulties are now over and that we will be able to resume these and other ministries as they were before COVID.

Respectfully submitted,
Geary Gaston, Chair

PRISON MINISTRY

The prisons in Florida and Alabama are recovering from the pandemic as are most. Both states are having man-power issues and causing volunteer activities to be slowed and in some cases stopped. There is movement with Kairos weekends at Century Correctional and Kairos in the planning stages at Santa Rosa Correctional, Santa Rosa Correctional has called Florida National Guardsmen to help with manpower issues, as several other prisons in Florida. Alabama prison have similar issues. Holman is still having retreats twice a year for those on Death Row. Fountain, St Dismas is in a temporary holding pattern because they don't have a fulltime Chaplain, these are some of the activities currently active in the prisons in our diocese.

There are other activities going in the diocese such as Kairos Outside in Alabama and Northwest Florida and Kairos Reunions at Reception Center in Panama City and weekly service in the planning stages at Santa Rosa Correctional.

Our Goals for 2023 is to bring on board a new and user-friendly website that will be with our Diocesan website to help those who are looking to explore opportunities and contacts to explore prison ministry. We are looking to recruit new commission members as well.

I ask all congregations to pray for our brother and sisters incarcerated.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. John Kendall, Deacon, Chair

RACIAL JUSTICE & RECONCILIATION

Mission Statement

As members of the Jesus Movement, our mission is to dismantle individual and institutional racism by sharing resources and creating opportunities that inspire and empower faith communities and the larger community, resulting in reconciliation and restoration of all God's People.

In furtherance of our stated mission, the Commission engaged in a wide range of activities in 2022, despite the difficulties that lingered because of the recent pandemic.

Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration. We began the year with a celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, participating in and co-sponsoring a Community Worship Service at St. James Episcopal Church. Our own Bishop Russell Kendrick delivered a stirring and motivational sermon, calling upon everyone to live into the meaning of Beloved Community, which Dr. King spoke of so eloquently before he was tragically assassinated. Prior to the service, St. James hosted an ecumenical clergy dinner, which was widely attended by ministers, rabbis, and priests from the Baldwin County community.

The Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee. The Commission followed up its outreach work in March by hosting a trip to participate in the Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee, the annual commemoration of Bloody Sunday. The event is held annually to keep alive the memory of what happened on March 7, 1965, when state and local police used billy clubs, whips, and tear gas to attack hundreds of civil rights activists who were marching from Selma, Alabama, to the state capitol in Montgomery. The horrifying images of

violence were broadcast on national television, shocking many viewers, and helping to rouse support for the civil rights cause. The event is widely credited with spurring passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 three months later.

Pilgrimage to The Whitney Plantation. The Commission continued living into its mission statement by sponsoring a pilgrimage to the Whitney Plantation, in Edgard, Louisiana. The plantation is the only former plantation site in Louisiana with an exclusive focus on the lives of the enslaved. Generations of Africans were enslaved there to establish and maintain indigo, rice, and sugar crops. The pilgrimage was financed through a Becoming Beloved Community Grant from The Episcopal Church. In addition to the trip itself on Saturday, March 19, the pilgrimage experience also included two meetings, one two weeks in advance of the trip and one two weeks after the trip. The first meeting involved discussions on the nature of the pilgrimage and preparation for trauma that might arise; the second offered opportunities for sharing and reflection by pilgrims after they had had time to reflect on what they saw and experienced at the plantation. The Commission hired a licensed mental health counselor who specializes in dealing with historical trauma, and she was present and available at both meetings and on the trip. The Commission felt this was important because of the harsh realities that the pilgrims would confront by visiting the plantation. Mindful of the need for ecumenical outreach, the pilgrimage was widely advertised, and the preparation meeting took place at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Daphne, and some of its members were included as pilgrims. It is noteworthy that the final gathering took place on the same day as and in connection with the Diocesan Service of Repentance (see “Service of Repentance” below), at Christ Church Cathedral, which was originally constructed using labor of enslaved people.

Service of Repentance. A Service of Repentance, held on Saturday, April 2, at our cathedral, was the headline event for our Commission for the year and was the culmination of many years of work and planning. The holding of Services of Repentance in the dioceses was envisioned by the General Convention of 2006 where it was resolved that the Episcopal Church should formally repent of its collusion in the institution of slavery. In our Diocese, the service was conducted by The Rt. Rev. Phoebe A. Roaf, Bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee, and our own Bishop Russell Kendrick. Response to the service was overwhelmingly enthusiastic, with many attendees, both black and white, expressing gratitude for a long-overdue and very poignant and cathartic worship experience.

Before and after the service, participants were welcomed to explore an exhibit hall where community service organizations had set up informational tables. This was a way to help answer the question, “What are the next steps?” Community organizations that participated in the exhibit fair included:

ACLU of Alabama Alabama Arise

Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice Alabama Coalition For Immigrant Justice Alabama Institute for Social Justice

Black Voters Matter

Commission on Prison Ministry (Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast)

Commission on Racial Justice & Reconciliation (Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast) Community Remembrance Project of the Equal Justice Initiative

Dora Franklin Finley African-American Heritage Trail Faith in Action Alabama

Freedom School Pensacola Just Pensacola

Mobile Area Interfaith Council NAACP

Path to Peace (Community Building Initiative) Poor People’s Campaign

Pilgrimage to the Jonathan Myrick Daniel Memorial. The Commission participated in the planning and execution of the annual remembrance of Jonathan Daniel and the Martyrs of Alabama. The Commission also took a group of pilgrims in St. James’ (Fairhope) van to attend the pilgrimage in Hayneville, Alabama, on August 13. Jonathan Daniel, was killed in Hayneville in 1965 by a county deputy, while in the act of shielding 17-year-old Ruby Sales from gunfire and saving her life. They were both working in the nonviolent civil rights movement in Lowndes County to integrate public places and register Black voters after passage of the Voting Rights Act that summer. Daniels’ death generated support for the civil rights movement. Daniels, an Episcopal seminarian at the time of his death, is one of only two American martyrs commemorated by a monument at Canterbury Cathedral in England (The other is Martin Luther King, Jr.).

Pilgrimage to the Equal Justice Initiative’s Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace & Justice. The Commission chartered two buses to Montgomery on November 12 to visit the Equal Justice Initiative’s Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice, which tells the story of the more than 4,400 African-American men, women, and children who were hanged, burned alive, shot, drowned, and beaten by white mobs between 1877 and 1950. After visiting both sites, the pilgrims gathered at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Montgomery, for reflections on what they had encountered.

Visit to Poarch Creek Indian Pow-Wow. Commission members and guests attended the annual Thanksgiving Day Poarch Creek to watch and engage in dancing, music, crafts, and other cultural practices of the Creek Native Americans and to learn of their history.

Commission's Speaker Series on Truth-Telling. In 2022, the Commission's ongoing Speaker Series hosted some notable figures.

J. Chester Johnson. J. Chester Johnson is a poet and nonfiction writer who has written extensively on race and civil rights. He composed the Litany for the Day of Repentance (October 4, 2008), when the Episcopal Church formally apologized for its role in slavery and related evils. He and W. H. Auden were the poets on the drafting committee for the retranslation of the Psalms for the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Mr. Johnson's most recent book, *Damaged Heritage: The Elaine Race Massacre and A Story of Reconciliation*, was released in May 2020. He spoke to our audience about the Elaine Race Massacre, which occurred in his native area of eastern Arkansas and in which his grandfather participated. Mr. Johnson narrated the process of his healing through a relationship with Sheila L. Walker, a descendant of African-American victims of the massacre, and the reconciliation work they embarked upon.

Elizabeth Ackford. On September 25, 1957, Ms. Eckford and eight other black students sought to test the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, by integrating their public high school in Little Rock, Arkansas. Ms. Eckford, now 82 years old, shared her experience as a member of the Little Rock Nine and explained how those events not only impacted the course of her life, but how they also impacted the national discourse of race relations and their lingering impact today. As she herself said, "Under extraordinary circumstances, ordinary people can do extraordinary things." Our Speaker Series event was attended by over 300 individuals and will serve as a template for the Commission to partner with other community-based organizations to bring national speakers to our area.

The Rev. Rachel Taber-Hamilton. The Rev. Rachel Taber-Hamilton is an indigenous ordained priest in the Episcopal Church. As a Shakan First Nation person, she represents the Episcopal Church on the Board of the Anglican Indigenous Network. She served on the Episcopal Church delegation to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and served on the Presiding Bishop's delegation to United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26). Rachel has 30 years of experience in cross-cultural communication, specialized ministry, social justice advocacy, and environmental advocacy. She shared with our audience a thorough and detailed recounting of American history as it relates to and affects indigenous peoples. She offered advice on recognizing inaccurate histories, adopting corrective narratives that we should all know about, and understanding how the Episcopal church can be a participant in the process of healing and reconciliation with our indigenous brothers and sisters.

Cynthia Tucker and Frye Gaillard. A native of Monroeville, Alabama, Cynthia Tucker was born during the early years of the Civil Rights Movement, in an era of racial segregation; She spent more than three decades as a reporter and columnist for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, where she won the Pulitzer Prize and was named Journalist of the Year by the National Association of Black Journalists. She is currently Journalist-in-Residence at the University of South Alabama. Frye Gaillard is Writer-in-Residence at the University of South Alabama. He is the author of more than thirty books and, for several decades, was an editor of the *Charlotte Observer*.

Together, they brought their journalistic experience and historical insight to discuss their book, *The Southernization of America: A Story of Democracy in the Balance*, published in February 2022. The book is an examination of the last four decades of American history and an exploration of why and how the rest of the country has become more like the South, rather than vice versa.

Racial Reconciliation Workshops: The Commission schedules four to six workshops each year in which attendees can gain insights into the causes and effects of racism, unconscious bias, prejudice, white privilege, and ways to work together to Become Beloved Community. This offering qualifies for eight hours of clergy continuing education for those who complete the full-day course. The Racial Reconciliation Workshops constitute a central component of our ministry.

In 2022, we were forced to cancel several of our workshops due to inadequate numbers of registrants. While we were disappointed in the number of workshops that we conducted for the year, we anticipate a return to at least four workshops for 2023. This expectation is based on several factors. First, the Commission is engaged in ongoing work to revise and update the workshop curriculum and to enhance the workshop experience for participants. Second, under the diocesan Anti-Racism Training Policy, approved in 2022 by the Standing Committee, all those in leadership positions, including parish leadership (such as vestry members) and at the diocesan level (including those serving on commissions, committees, agencies, or boards) are now required to take the training. Finally, the Commission has committed to increased and

enhanced publicity regarding the workshops and to holding them at a variety of locations around the Diocese, particularly in some of our less populous areas.

It is through the exercise of the forgoing actions that the Commission has sought to fulfill its mission statement. We look forward to continuing our sacred work in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Your Commission on Racial Justice and Reconciliation
Nancy Bolton Beck, St Paul's Daphne
The Rev David R Chatel, St Stephen's, Brewton
Jill Showers-Chow, Christ Church Cathedral, Mobile
Ozie Christian, Christ Church, Pensacola
The Rev. Jim Flowers, All Saints, Mobile
Michael Foote, St Paul's Chapel, Magnolia Springs
The Rev. John C George, Good Shepherd, Mobile
Laura Gilliam, St. Christopher's, Pensacola
James Holcomb, Epiphany, Enterprise
Andrew P. Howard, Good Shepherd, Mobile
The Rev. Clyde Jones, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Daphne
Nichelle Jones, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Daphne
Elizabeth King, Holy Cross, Pensacola
Antwon Lewis, Epiphany, Enterprise
Joe McDaniel, Jr., Christ Church, Pensacola
Susan Miller, St. Stephen's, Brewton
Valerie Mitchell, All Saints, Mobile
Gary Moore, St Paul's Chapel, Magnolia Springs
Dent Neilson, St Thomas, Greenville
Donnis Norman, Trinity AME Church, Bay Minette
Christopher Norman, Trinity AME Church, Bay Minette
Mary Mullins Redditt, St. James, Fairhope
Robbie Runderson, Good Shepherd, Mobile
Pam Smith, St. Jude's, Niceville
Ken Thomas, Nativity, Dothan
The Rev. Lydia Knizley Johnson, Bishop's Staff Advisor

For more information, go to: www.diocgc.org/racial-justice-and-reconciliation

REPORTS FROM DIOCESAN COORDINATORS

CHAPLAINS TO RETIRED CLERGY & CLERGY SPOUSES

Chaplains to retired clergy, spouses, and surviving spouses are appointed by the Bishop, and they serve at his call. Throughout The Episcopal Church, these chaplains are coordinated and supported by the Church Pension Group although this ministry began in a number of dioceses, including the Central Gulf Coast through the care of the Rev. Bob Graves, well before the participation of CPG. Presently, our diocesan team of chaplains has nine members: The Rev. Albert and Nancy Kennington are coordinators of the team. Members include the Rev. Ken Cumbie for Convocation I, the Rev. Bill and Millie Ericson for Convocation II, the Rev. John and Ann Phillips and Sheila Campbell serve Convocation III, the Rev. Joe Hagberg serves Convocation V, and members serve Convocation IV.

At this writing, there are 145 retired clergy, spouses, and surviving spouses who live within our diocese. There are 60 others who reside beyond our diocese – from border to border and coast to coast.

Beyond the Bishop's basic call, chaplains serve to contact our retirees by various means, to respond helpfully in times of crisis, and to help with occasional opportunities for fellowship. Such opportunities were curtailed during the Covid-19 pandemic, but they began to resume in 2022. With assistance from chaplains, the Bishop was host for luncheon gatherings of retirees at Beckwith on November 10, 2022, and on January 12, 2023, at the St. Andrew's Bay Yacht Club in Panama City for Convocation V.

On May 3-6, 2022, Bill and Millie Ericson and Sheila Campbell attended the Triennial Chaplain's Conference in St. Paul's, Minnesota. For the Province IV Chaplain's Conference in Savannah February 14-17, 2023, Johnny and Ann Phillips, Sheila Campbell, Bill and Millie Ericson, and Joe Hagberg are scheduled to attend. In the provincial and national conferences, chaplains get to know each other, share ideas for their ministry, attend informative and encouraging seminars, spend time in worship, and enjoy fellowship. Through the year, our team members stay in touch by emails, phone calls, and occasional get-togethers.

Special for our diocese this year is the Enriching Your Retirement day together which will be led by the Rev. Laura Queen and Sean Scheller of the New York Church Pension Group staff. All retired clergy, spouses, and surviving spouses are invited to St. Christopher's Church, Pensacola, for this luncheon day together. More information will be forthcoming.

At this writing, all members of our team of chaplains have agreed to continue serving in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Albert+ and Nancy Kennington, Diocesan Coordinators

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EFM)

Education for Ministry (EfM) invites participants into small, mentored groups that provide the framework for understanding life and shaping actions as Christian faith is deepened. EfM seminar groups meet in local settings and online, providing a four-year curriculum that develops a theologically informed, reflective, and articulate laity. The program is administered by the Beecken Center in the School of Theology at the University of the South (Sewanee).

Innovation has been the key for EfM in the diocese since the start of the Covid pandemic. With concerns about meeting face-to-face in small groups for up to two-and-a-half hours each week, three churches offered EfM via Zoom during 2021-2022, Trinity-Apalachicola, St. Paul's Chapel-Magnolia Spring, and St. Fames-Fairhope. Due to health concerns, Christ Church-Pensacola restarted in January 2021, while St. Christopher's-Pensacola, was the only group that met face-to-face during the traditional September-May term.

Christ Church-Pensacola continued this past year with a January start, and will meet through May, take the summer off and continue September until December. Pam Tanner and Annie Christina Wimer are mentoring the group at Christ Church. The group that was based in Magnolia Springs continues to meet via Zoom and includes participants from several area churches. Elizabeth Kennington is mentoring this group.

St. Christopher's group was able to recruit five new participants in addition to five who continued in the four-year program, Mari Abbate and MaryAnn Bozeman are mentoring this group.

The EfM group at Trinity Apalachicola also continued into the new year, mentored by Martha Harris and Penny Marler. The School of Theology at Sewanee is in the midst of developing a series of what it is calling "short courses" based on the EfM program. It is being designed for those who are not interested in the intensity of study found in the four-year program. Sewanee also no longer includes textbooks in its tuition, meaning participants must acquire these textbooks on their own. To help those who find this a financial burden, current and former EfM mentors were contacted to find those willing to either donate or lend their textbooks to those needing them.

Finally, after serving as the director for the EfM program for the past 12 years, Karen Meredith will retire at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year at Sewanee. Under her direction, the EfM program has undergone many changes. It will be interesting to see what direction the new leadership will take the program in the future.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. David M. Clothier, Diocesan Coordinator

UNITED THANK OFFERING REPORT

There is a lot of good news to report on behalf of UTO this year. First, the St. Francis of Assisi Senior Center received a grant for \$18,720 to encourage and assist members to volunteer with the various environmental agencies in the area. I am excited about this project not only because it encourages seniors and provides them with meaningful activities, but it also increases awareness of environmental concerns related to pollution and climate change. Congratulations to the people of St. Francis!

The next piece of good news is that our diocesan ingathering total increased from \$5,118.89 in 2021 to \$6,935.28 in 2022. We are going to the right direction, and I encourage everyone to continue to practice gratitude daily and make your offerings to UTO in the future. Remember, all ingathering funds go towards funding new and innovative ministries around the world.

If anyone is interested in UTO, I am available to come and speak at your congregation. All supplies including boxes, prayer books, grants lists, and brochures are at [Shima of Navajoland](#). You can find coordinator materials at [coordinator materials](#). If you register your parish, you will receive a welcome box from UTO that will help you get started.

I am so grateful for your continued participation and support of UTO. You will find the breakdown of parish contributions below.

St. Pauls	Mobile, AL	\$3,656.20
Christ Church	Pensacola, FL	\$1,002.00
St. Marks	Troy, AL	\$667.36
St. Marys	Coden, AL	\$342.40
St. Andrews	Mobile, AL	\$260.00
St. Thomas	Greenville, AL	\$230.00
St. Judes	Niceville, FL	\$215.00
St. Johns	Mobile, AL	\$209.45
Holy Trinity	Pensacola, FL	\$76.15
St. Thomas	Laguna Beach, FL	\$27.46
Church of the Epiphany	Crestview, FL	\$20.46
St. Pauls	Daphne, AL	\$3.80
Individual donors (parish not identified)		\$225.00

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Landers, Diocesan UTO Coordinator
UTO VP

REPORTS FROM CONVOCATION DEANS

CONVOCATION V

Convocation V of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast comprises Florida's Bay, Walton, Okaloosa, Washington, Gulf, and Franklin Counties.

The clergy of Convocation V convene several times throughout the year as *Clericus*, which is an opportunity to meet over lunch for fellowship, the sharing of mutual concerns, and occasionally a program or speaker beneficial to the ordained ministry.

In January 2022, the clergy and their spouses were invited to the customary Epiphanytide luncheon, this time at the Saint Andrew Bay Yacht Club in Panama City.

Clericus that had been scheduled for March at Saint Thomas', Laguna Beach and for May at Holy Nativity, Panama City unfortunately needed to be canceled due to a number of scheduling conflicts among the clergy.

In September, the clergy gathered for a meet-and-greet Oktoberfest luncheon with Canon Ashley Freeman at Grace Church, Panama City Beach; Bishop Kendrick was also present.

In November, the clergy were the guests of Saint Andrew's, Panama City.

On January 12, 2023, clergy and their spouses once again enjoyed an Epiphanytide luncheon at the Saint Andrew Bay Yacht Club in Panama City. This year, Bishop Kendrick graciously offered to be our host, and the surviving spouses of clergy who reside in our Convocation were also invited to join us that day.

Also in January, and in consultation with the clergy of Convocation, Ginny Leebrick, a communicant of Holy Nativity, Panama City, was appointed Youth Delegate to this convention.

Due to Diocesan Convention, Clericus is not planning to meet in March of 2023, but we look forward to gathering at Holy Nativity, Panama City in May.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Joseph Hagberg, Dean