

REPORTS OF THE GENERAL OFFICERS

STANDING COMMITTEE

President Van Fuller | St. Simon's on the Sound, Ft. Walton Beach | 2024

Secretary *Carole Lea Johnson | Nativity, Dothan | 2024

Members

Class of 2024

*The Rev. Rian Adams

Anne Gill | Trinity, Mobile

The Rev. Will Lowry | Holy Spirit, Gulf Shores

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

Class of 2026

*John Griffing | St. Francis, Gulf Breeze

Lolly Holk | St. Paul's Chapel, Magnolia Springs

Brad Moore | St. James, Eufaula

The Rev. Sara Phillips | St. Mary's by the Sea, Coden

*The Rev. Randy Sellers | Nativity, Dothan

*nominated by the bishop

The Standing Committee is a council of advice for the Bishop. In addition, it discerns, reviews, consents, and/or approves Diocesan policies, property actions, and planning/financial execution actions. The Standing Committee also interviews, discerns, and approves postulants and candidates for progression through the ordination to orders process.

In 2023, the Standing Committee:

- Monitored trends and changes across the Episcopal Church and our Diocese and advised the Bishop on potential issues and courses of action
- Reviewed and approved changes to Diocesan policies, Church Pension Group benefits, and the Diocese endowment fund
- Reviewed and transmitted the 2023 operating budget to the Diocesan Convention for approval
- Reviewed medical/property insurance cost drivers and upcoming property/liability insurance premiums to help prepare parishes to better understand options in 2024 and beyond
- Approved a minimum standard for the "All Other Peril" insurance deductible for parishes
- Approved policy changes for employee medical/dental plans
- Reviewed and approved the Diocese annual financial report
- Approved and monitored the sale of St Marks Church Mobile and Murray House
- Studied Florida's Immigration Law to advise parishes on potential impacts to outreach programs
- Monitored contract with Stewardship Realty to identify potential real estate actions to financially support 3 parishes into the future
- Completed the consent process for the election of 9 Bishops across the Episcopal Church
- Monitored the Go Forward Campaign
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Thank you Bishop Russell and Dwight Babcock for your trust and mentorship. Thanks to the entire Diocesan staff for your help hosting and preparing for meetings. Thank you Rev Rian Adams (St Andrews Church, Panama City), Rev Will Lowry (Holy Spirit Church, Gulf Shores), Ann Gill (Trinity Church, Mobile), and Carole Lea Johnson (Nativity Church, Dothan) for completing your 3-year term of faithful service on the Standing Committee, which reflects positively on you and the whole Body of Christ.

Faithfully submitted,

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 March, five (5) individuals were ordained to the Transitional Diaconate (Brad Clark, John Fountain, Jen Leahey, Ryan Lee, and Stephen Pecot) and one 1 person to the Diaconate (Deborah Epps). Amanda Doshier was ordained to the Priesthood in January; Ryan Lee in September; Stephen Pecot, Brad Clark, and John Fountain in October; and Jen Leahey in November of 2023.

Seminary: At present, seminarians enrolled from this diocese at Virginia Theological Seminary (Drew Downey) and at Seminary of the Southwest (Ellen Huckabay).

Diocesan School for Ministry: We had four (4) individuals accepted as Postulants in the Priesthood track (Jen Rice, Salem Saloom, Mark Waddell, and Jessica Walker) and one (1) individual accepted as a Postulant in the Diaconate track (Pratt Peterson).

This brings our total enrollment for 2023 to six (6) individuals enrolled in the Priesthood track (Ted Kirchharr, Jen Rice, Salem Saloom, Mark Waddell, Jessica Walker, and Leanne Whalen-Beaumont) and two (2) individuals enrolled in the Diaconate track (Kay Dennis 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

MURRAY HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Murray House Board of Directors wishes to express appreciation for the outstanding leadership of Ms. Angela Powell, Executive Director. 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, 23 residents meet this requirement. Murray House continues to be the most affordable Assisted Living facility in the Mobile Metro area.

The Board is pleased to announce the following major accomplishments in 2023:

Murray House's application for the addition of a 16-bed Specialty Care Assisted Living Facility, also known as a Memory Care Unit, was approved by the State Health Planning and Development Agency in July 2023. This much-needed expansion will

result in an increase in residents and revenue. More importantly, current residents will be able to continue living at Murray House even if they decline cognitively.

A grant application was submitted to the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission for a new 12 plus 2 ADA-accessible van and was notified in April that the grant had been approved. The total cost of the van is approximately \$130,000. The new van was delivered to Murray House in December. What an exciting Christmas gift!

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 for 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 dedicated and effective leadership of our Executive Director, Angela Powell, the compassionate care of the Staff, the passionate work of the Board, an amazing cadre of Volunteers, 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: Transitional Living (TLP), Transitional Family (TFP), Education4Life, the Philippa Stirling Hamilton Education Center, the Max Miller Education Program, and the Food Ministry.

In 2023, we had a total of 55 residents in our three residential programs (Residential, TLP, TFP). We served 59 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 2023 was 164.**

We currently serve 59 students in our on-campus education program, called Education4Life. In the 14 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 2023, 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 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.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Christ Church Cathedral Prayer

Gracious God, today we give thanks for the ministry you have entrusted to us as the cathedral church of our diocese. Help us to be faithful in answering the sacred calling to be ministers of hospitality for your people and leaders of worship to your honor and glory. May this place be a beacon of your light and love for the world. All this we ask through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

On Sunday, November 5, 2023, Christ Church Cathedral celebrated the Bicentennial of its founding. This All Saints' Sunday was a special day of thanksgiving for the generations of faithful Christians who have gathered in community on the corner of Church and St. Emanuel Streets in Mobile, Alabama. The first Protestant church in Mobile to meet outside the grounds of Fort Charlotte was begun in 1822, and the first building was completed, and the congregation organized, welcoming all Protestants, in 1823. Parish records indicate that the parish was officially organized and known as Christ Church in February 1828 and admitted to the Diocese of Alabama at its founding in Mobile in 1830. The cornerstone of the present building was laid in fall 1838 (with the building to be completed in a year) and was consecrated by Bishop Leonidas Polk on the Second Sunday in Lent 1840.

These basic facts, recorded in varying (and sometimes contradictory) detail by historical sources, do not, however, amount to the true history of Christ Church. That story rests with the lives of the saints who worshiped and served here. Some of them were prestigious personages of their time. Some were missionaries and organizers of good works and Sunday School teachers. Some were slaves and free people of color. All of them were children of God, members of the Body of Christ, and ordinary human beings trying to be faithful followers of Jesus. We acknowledge that we walk with them, each of us taking up our cross to follow and serve. The closing sentences of the history of Christ Church given at the centennial celebration of the Diocese of Alabama in 1931 capture our calling:

...it can be truthfully said that Christ Church has always had the vision to look beyond its own boundaries and consider the work of the Church as a whole...and not merely its own parochial welfare. It has passed through ups and downs, as any downtown parish will in the course of years; it has lived more than a hundred years because it has lived usefully; and it will continue to live as long as it continues to serve.

Now Christ Church has lived more than two hundred years, and our continued living continues to depend on how well we serve.

Dean Beverly Gibson recorded the history of Christ Church as part of the StoryCorps project in mid-November. The StoryCorp trailer was parked in Mardi Gras Park, across the street from the Cathedral this fall.

The Cathedral Foundation was founded in 2006 as an endowed fund whose interest is used to pay for Diocesan events at the Cathedral. The Cathedral Agreement specifies that diocesan events such as ordinations, diocesan meetings, and choir and acolyte festivals held at Christ Church Cathedral will be funded by the Cathedral. The Foundation was created to provide those financial resources for the Cathedral's mission and ministry and to promote investment of gifts by members and friends of the Cathedral for its ministry to the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. Thank you to all of the parishes who contributed to the Cathedral Foundation in support of Diocesan Cathedral events. The Foundation Trustees met on August 29, 2023 to review the balance statements. The balance in the Cathedral Foundation as of December 31, 2023 was \$417,921. The distribution for 2023 was \$ 18,827.

The following is a brief account of Cathedral functions over the past year.

- The Ordination to the Diaconate for Bradford Leon Clark, Deborah Theresea Knight-Epps, John McCorvey Fountain, Jennie Miller Leahey, Ryan Maurice Lee, and Stephen Douglas Pecot was held on Saturday, March 25, 2023.
- On April 23, Bishop Russell Kendrick joined us for the Cathedral Celebration Eucharist celebrating our 18th year as the Cathedral of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.
- The Reverend Marshall Craver meets with local clergy at the Cathedral on Mondays in his role as Diocesan Clergy Spiritual Director.
- Christ Church concluded its Baptized for Life (BFL) initiative with a MOB Pacers Walk/Run on Saturday, April 29, 2023. More than 200 participants registered for the event. Our support of the MOB Pacers, an organized walk with a purpose, was a large part of our BFL project. The MOB Pacers have continued to prove that walking with others can

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keep you motivated, make you accountable, and help you meet new people with similar goals. BFL was sponsored by the Lilly Foundation and administered through Virginia Theological Seminary.

- The Diocesan Acolyte Festival was held on Saturday, August 19. Bishop Russell Kendrick welcomed over sixty youth and adult acolytes from 12 parishes to enjoy the day. It was an informative and fun-filled day that culminated with Celebration of the Eucharist. The opening procession included all of the participants, quite a sight to behold. We give thanks for the presenters: Lee Dorsey, The Rev. Lydia Johnson, Meghan Johnson, John Lee, The Rev. Dr. Brent Norris, The Rev. Forbes Sirmon, and The Rev. John Talbert. Their work that day and in the planning stages helped make the day a success. We also thank The Reverend Eric Zubler and all of the Cathedral volunteers who acted as hosts for the day. We will see you again for the Acolyte Festival in August 2025.
- Christ Church Cathedral hosted the Province IV Transition Officers Meeting held September 11 and 12, 2023.
- The Betty Coale Young Musician Scholarship grants financial awards to promising middle and high-school instrumentalists and singers. Recipients of this scholarship are featured during Christ Church Cathedral's summer services. Betty Coale was a cherished member of the Cathedral choir, and we are grateful that her memory lives on in the support of education & performance opportunities for Mobile-area music students. It is our hope that young musicians and singers from parishes across the diocese will apply for the scholarship in future years.
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Cathedral leaders continue to serve in a number of capacities within the diocese. Ron Snider serves as Treasurer of the Diocese, and as Chair of the Commission on Finance. Jill Showers Chow has been elected to serve as a Lay Deputy to the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church in Louisville, Kentucky. Laura Rutherford serves on the board for Murray House. Douglas Kearley, Sr. serves on the Wilmer Hall board. Carl Cunningham, Jr. serves on the Beckwith board. Jill Showers Chow serves on the Commission on Racial Justice and Reconciliation. We are grateful for the diocesan representatives who serve on the Cathedral Chapter; The Rev. Mary Jane Ledgerwood, Trinity, Mobile, David Quittmeyer, Trinity, Mobile, and Phyllis Findley, St. Andrew's, Mobile.

Dean Beverly F. Gibson was away from parish duties on sabbatical from May 1 through August 1, 2023. She participated in three programs that speak to some deep and abiding elements of her calling as a priest. The first was to deepen her life-long love of writing by exploring its spiritual dimensions through an intensive writing workshop. She attended the Haden Institute Spirituality Conference at Kanuga to explore creative expressions of spirituality. In July she joined a Shalem Institute pilgrimage walking a part of the Camino de Santiago in Spain. These plans are woven together for her as a fabric of pilgrimage.

As we continue to grow into our ministry as Cathedral, it remains a joy for us as we serve the diocese.

Cathedral Mission Statement

Christ Church Cathedral lovingly welcomes all people to traditional Episcopal worship, to deepen our relationships, serve our community, and grow closer to God.

Institution Statement for the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast

The Cathedral is the spiritual center of the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast. The Cathedral is a dynamic and evolving church that serves as a liturgical, educational, and pastoral center for Diocesan life. It serves as a visible symbol of unity and promotes growth, hope, and a deepening trust in the Lord. The Cathedral is a place where the Gospel of Jesus Christ will be faithfully preached and responded to, and it will model new concepts and ideas for education, evangelism, and outreach to which the Gospel calls us.

Respectfully submitted,

The Very Reverend Beverly F. Gibson, Dean
Carolyn S. Jeffers, Provost

MISSIONER FOR DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the past year, I have witnessed countless individuals across our diocese engaging in transformative processes, and I am excited to celebrate our work together.

A central question guiding my work is: How do we support the ministry of all the baptized? This inquiry drives me to explore and expand our perspectives and re-imagine the scope of our ministry.

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As the Missioner for Development and Evangelism, I teach Contextual Education classes and Licensed Lay Evangelists classes in the School for Ministry. These platforms allow individuals to embrace the challenge of personal and communal transformation. It is thrilling to see our students grow and thrive! Education and empowerment are central to supporting the whole of baptized ministry.

In exploring transformation throughout the church, I had the opportunity to attend the Diocese of Northern Michigan's visitor's weekend. This visit led to our diocese hosting its very own Mutual Ministry workshop; giving us new perspectives and possibilities for ministry. Participating in the national Church's Redevelopment gatherings has invigorated our approach to congregational development, emphasizing innovation and resilience. Such workshops and initiatives foster collaboration and shared learning which lead to transformation.

In addition to these transformational opportunities, in the past year, we have offered workshops for lay worship leaders, including a successful Ash Wednesday workshop. We have continued to develop services like Communion Under Special Circumstances; equipping worship leaders to meet the needs of members across the diocese. Even our supply clergy are in on the work of transformation. We organized an inaugural Supply Priest workshop, aiming to support clergy as they travel and visit congregations across the diocese. Each of these offerings is geared toward empowering the baptized body to more faithfully live into God's call for us individually and as a diocesan church family.

Our journey towards transformation is multifaceted and dynamic. Through education, collaboration, and innovation, we are growing together as a church that embraces change and empowers its members to receive the gifts that God abundantly offers. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside each of you on this transformative journey.

With gratitude and anticipation for the journey ahead,
The Rev. Lydia Knizley Johnson
Missioner for Development and Evangelism

MISSIONER FOR DISCERNMENT & CANON TO THE ORDINARY

Be Transformed! This year's convention theme is fitting. In the past year, across the diocese, I have witnessed transformation in many forms. I have had the distinct pleasure of walking with vestries and search committees across the Central Gulf Coast as they engaged in earnest and faithful discernment.

The work of discernment invites us to imagine and dream the future to which God is calling us. This invitation to infuse our imagination with grace and hope is filled with excitement and anticipation. However, discernment does not end there. To faithfully move toward the future God has in store for us, we must also honestly examine and assess our gifts, strengths, and weaknesses. In the last year, eight of our churches and their search committees and/or vestries have done the exciting and challenging work of discernment. This discernment has resulted in eight new priest assignments and two deacon assignments.

Ken White-Spunner	Rector – St. John's, Monroeville
Carrie Wright	Priest in Charge – St. Stephen's, Brewton
Justin Boyd	Rector – Grace & St. Thomas, Panama City Beach
Brad Clark	Curate – St. Paul's, Mobile
Ken Cumbie	Priest in Charge – Good Shepard, Mobile
Stephen Pecot	Priest in Charge – Trinity, Apalachicola
Amanda Doshier	Curate – St. James, Fairhope
John Fountain	Curate – St. Christopher's, Pensacola
Deborah Knight Epps	Deacon – St. Cyprian's, Pensacola
Rachel Iversen	Deacon – St. Monica's, Cantonment

Two clergy have also discerned God's call to retirement. Steve Bates, from Holy Nativity, Panama City and Mary Jayne Ledgerwood, Trinity, Mobile. Steve and Mary Jayne have both announced their retirement later this year. Steve will serve until May and Mary Jayne until June.

In addition to these clergy transitions, we have several churches that have started the transformational work of discernment, in the form of a priest search, in the past year.

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St. Paul's, Mobile
Trinity, Mobile
Holy Nativity, Panama City
St. Mary's, Milton
St. Monica's, Cantonment
Redeemer, Mobile
Holy Trinity, Pensacola

As I work with the vestries and search committees across our diocese, it is apparent to me, that the faithful work of discernment is the first step toward transformation. As clergy begin new chapters of their ministries and lives, God's transformational grace and love can be observed as they develop meaningful relationships in their new churches and communities. As churches engage in the search processes, their work of discernment fosters self-discovery and growth, which empowers these congregations to pursue the future God is calling them toward. In the coming year of our life together, may these examples of faithful discernment, equip and enable all of us to Be Transformed!

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

MISSIONER FOR DISCIPLESHIP

This has been a fruitful year in our embrace of the mission of discipleship. We have several commissions and new pursuits underway that aim at expanding our resources and impact in our communities.

Mental Health Alliance

Recognizing the often raw and chaotic world in which we live, we discerned a need to better serve our communities by becoming dedicated safe spaces for advanced pastoral care situations that fall under the umbrella of mental health. We gathered those interested in this initiative via Zoom and began to delineate our goals. We sought the guidance of various professionals in our diocese to help provide better crisis care, education, and congregational resources that will equip and form us in the following ways:

1. **Crisis Care:** dealing with suicidal ideation; de-escalation strategies for those who are angry or combative; domestic violence awareness; conflict management for individuals, families, and systems; and death/dying/grief resources.
2. **Education:** to provide forums that assist clergy and lay leaders in better understanding the power of language; recognizing mental health crises and knowing what resources are/are not available; LGBTQ concerns; dealing with anxious systems/transition, conflict strategies/communication; depression/anxiety in adolescence; drug use/abuse/overdose
3. awareness.
4. **Resources:** discerning and training designated persons in each parish who are willing to provide a touchpoint for individuals in need of resources like counseling, crisis hotlines, housing/clothing assistance, financial tutoring, etc.
5. Our current goal is to make the goals of this alliance known throughout the diocese and to arrange for Emergency Mental Health Training for those on our alliance and any other leader interested in being educated about these matters.

Commission on the Integrity of Creation (see Commission report for more details)

The Commission on the Integrity of Creation (CIC) recognizes that humans, being an embodiment of the divine image, are interconnected with all of creation. Our mission is to help churches in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast celebrate and heal all of creation in ways that fit their own congregation. As environmental crises accelerate and threaten all life along the Gulf Coast, especially those on the margins who bear the brunt of rising seas, extreme heat, more severe storms, and biodiversity loss, this mission could not be more urgent. If you are interested in this Commission, please contact Joy Blaylock.

Pastoral Care Training by Sue Rollins and Anita Ford

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Anita Ford (703.795.1840; anitagford703@gmail.com) and Sue Rollins (251.583.6018; sue.rollins49@gmail.com) are pastoral care instructors/leaders in our diocese. They are available to present the various programs/workshops together or individually to local parishes and diocesan groups.

Please make sure to visit their table and pick up the course listings and descriptions which include topics such as:

- Better Questions Deliver Better Pastoral Care Results
- Create a Lay-led Pastoral Care Strategy
- Hospitality When It's Hard: Overcoming Fear and Stigma Under the Steeple
- Increase Pastoral Care of Staff and Lay Leadership
- Better Listening For Pastoral Care
- End-Of-Life Doula
- Mourning Loss Together

About the presenters:

Anita Ford - Born in Atlanta and raised in Columbus, Georgia, Anita Ford is a graduate of the diocesan lay school for ministry, a licensed pastoral care leader, and a trained Mourner's Path facilitator. She is the pastoral care minister at St. Christopher's in Pensacola and a pastoral care instructor/leader for the School for Ministry. Anita lives with her husband and their four-legged canine child, Charlotte Ann.

Sue Rollins - Sue is a retired Registered Nurse and a member of The Redeemer Episcopal Church in Mobile, where she serves on the pastoral care team. She is a member of the first Pastoral Care Leadership class in 2020-2021, a licensed pastoral care leader, a trained Mourner's Path facilitator, a pastoral care instructor/leader for the School for Ministry. She holds certification as an End-of-Life Doula from the University of Vermont.

Episcopal Preaching Foundation Lay Preaching Initiative

I have had the great privilege for the past two years to work with five dedicated lay preachers from across our Diocese. We are one of six dioceses that were chosen for this pilot program administered by the Episcopal Preaching Foundation and funded by a grant from Trinity Wall Street. The goal of this program is to raise up well-trained lay preachers who can then become teachers themselves in their various contexts as they are led and needed.

Our candidates met and studied dutifully for two years and were graduated from the program this past year at Washington National Cathedral. We extend congratulations to these outstanding lay preachers: Necie Borroni, Dr. Salem Saloom, Haden Tirey, Jessica Walker, and Debbie Waldrop.

If you are interested in these lay preachers or any of our other diocesan-certified lay preachers, please see the index of lay leaders on our website: <http://tinyurl.com/diocgclayleaders>

Anglican Studies

Theological Education for Anglican Ministries (TEAM) is a leadership formation process designed for those who are currently serving or have served in a ministry context and have been identified as candidates by the Bishop. Students complete academic and practical ministry requirements in conjunction with The Seminary of the Southwest's Iona Collaborative division. The School for Ministry provides coursework, contextual education, and mentorship in collaboration with the Bishop and Commission on Ministry.

Rationale

TEAM enables ministers from other denominations or seminary educations other than Episcopal/Anglican to read and study for Holy Orders. These ministers come from a variety of backgrounds and will likely serve congregations that often have a hard time finding priests or supply clergy. The critical factor is that candidates are identified and vetted by the Bishop and Commission on Ministry as this option is not for those seeking a short-cut to ordination in any way.

Assessment

The following criteria are used in assessments:

1. Biblical knowledge, understanding, and hermeneutic lens
2. Understanding of theology/ethics/sacraments from an Anglican viewpoint

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3. Knowledge of Christian History with an emphasis on prominent Anglican developments and the Episcopal Church in the United States
4. Ability to understand and communicate the teachings of the Episcopal Church
5. Proficiency of Anglican evangelism, stewardship, and worship practices
6. Proficiency in pastoral care skills
7. Knowledge and application of ECUSA church polity and ecclesiology

The required competencies herein form the outline of study for candidates. The course of study chosen for the candidate will embrace the literary and religious contributions from the candidate's own culture as well as reflect the rich diversity that exists in the Anglican Church today.

Respectfully submitted,
Joy H. Blaylock, PhD

SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY DEAN

It has been six years since our local formation began as The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast School for Ministry. In 2020, we graduated our first eight students (six priests, two deacons) and in June of 2023 we graduated two more (one priest, one deacon). We currently have seven students enrolled in the School for Ministry: two for the diaconate and five for the priesthood.

We underwent a significant move in 2022 when we were welcomed into the rectory at St. Mary's in Milton, Florida. We moved the School from St. Agatha's, DeFuniak Springs, so as to better accommodate and expand our mission of providing both lay and clerical formation in an accessible location. We have been blessed to conduct School weekends in the rectory at St. Mary's along with retreat weekends for the Episcopal Preaching Foundation (EPF) preachers. The EPF preachers (five total) graduated in a special ceremony at Washington National Cathedral in October of 2023.

We now have students combined in a "one-room schoolhouse" type of situation (some in their first year, second year, or final year). Our scheduled weekends follow a basic pattern: we gather on Friday afternoon for fellowship and any needed one-to-one time with the Dean. Then, the students prepare and eat dinner together and then have a session in pastoral care or a liturgical practicum.

Saturday is a long day of study and discussion on the primary subject for the year. This year we have the Rev. Steven Campbell teaching the students Church History. The students prepare and eat all meals together and then close the day with vespers. Sunday mornings are set aside for contextual education with The Rev. Lydia Johnson or attendance at worship with the St. Mary's community. Some of our students will be providing assistance in worship as the St. Mary's community goes through a period of ministerial transition.

Our certified Lay School offerings have expanded as well. Bishop Kendrick teaches Lay Worship Leaders, I teach Lay Preachers, Sue Rollins/Anita Ford teach pastoral care, Joseph Taylor teaches the Catechist/formation track and The Rev. Lydia Johnson teaches the Evangelist track. Our Lay Leaders continue to flourish especially in areas where smaller churches do not have access to regular celebrations of the Eucharist or in areas where supply clergy are not available. We have branched out in offering the classes in areas where our students can best access the location. We remain grateful to those churches who allow us to use their space for teaching.

We have another avenue we are pursuing: finding a way to partner with the Metagem Spiritual Direction Institute in Alabama to raise up those who feel called to be a spiritual director. This avenue is being developed by The Rev. Marshall Craver and Joseph Taylor who are faithfully moving this initiative forward.

The nature of formation and education for ordained and lay ministries is changing at a rapid pace. All seminaries now offer a hybrid type of model of learning with varying degrees of residency requirements. We remain connected to the Iona Collaborative and The Seminary of the Southwest and are considering ways in which to better serve those persons who come to us from other faith traditions seeking ordination. We are now offering an Anglican Studies course through our local School for Ministry and a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) option for those who do not have reasonable regional access to such programs.

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It is rewarding to see and learn with those who love our church and are committed to being faithful witnesses in their context and communities. With deep gratitude for the funding provided to the School for Ministry by way of the Diocesan Capital Campaign, I anticipate the fruits of this effort to continue and be manifest in many sectors of our diocese.

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

REPORTS OF 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 during 2023. We discussed the third annual Commission on AA workshop, “Adventurous Aging: How To Stay Young At Heart.” Part of the Mission Statement for this Commission 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, November 4, 2023 at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Gulf Breeze, FL. Melinda Henderson, PhD, spoke on “Concepts and Theories of Aging.” Salem Saloom, M.D. spoke on “Stewardship of Mind, Body, and Spirit.” Two pharmacists, Madison Holmes, PharmD, and Amy Renaud, PharmD spoke on “Safe Medication Practices.” Dennis Mayeaux, M.D. spoke on “The Grandmother Rules.” Jennifer Edwards of West Florida Area Health led us in two practice sessions of Tai Chi.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

In the fall of this year, our Commission received an invitation from the Diocese of Louisiana, Baton Rouge Deanery, to offer this workshop there. Clergy and lay leaders in this diocese have reached out to the Commission with their greetings and some suggestions. Physician speakers are being contacted, a host church is in conversation with us, and we are working out other logistics.

The Commission plans to meet early in the New Year. Plans for another “Adventurous Aging” workshop will be discussed and hopefully held in the Diocese of Louisiana, Baton Rouge Deanery, in 2025.

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

CURSILLO

The purpose of the Cursillo Ministry in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast is to help individuals understand and respond to their calling to Christian Leadership, whether in their parishes, social lives, or in the workplace. Join us!

Cursillo Ministry. The Commission on Cursillo hosted two weekends at Camp Beckwith, with #168 in March 2023 and #169 in September 2023. As expected, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, the weekends were extremely successful. 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 #168</u>	<u>Cursillo #169</u>
Lay Rector	Leslie Talbert	Van Fuller
Head Cha Cha	Selah Dryer	Jeb Arington
Head Logistics	Lauren Arington	Necie Borroni

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Head Music	Rev John Talbert	Clay Rankin
Head Spiritual Advisor	Rev Keith Talbert	Rev Thack Dyson

Cursillo Newsletter - there are currently 1,010 online subscribers and approximately 50% of subscribers read each email.

Pilgrim Application Process - Most pilgrim applications are not being submitted via the online form. Using the online process will automatically add each applicant to the Cursillo mobile application pilgrim list, an email distribution list, and sends an email to their clergy for approval.

Cursillo PrivateNet - continuing to identify and implement ways to make Cursillo policies, standards, procedures, and music available on the internet, while restricting access.

Cursillo Music Program. Talented musicians have included new additions to the Cursillo Music program, most recently with an online database available through Google Drive. The purpose of developing these resources is to help guide music team leaders in a similar way that the Lay Rector Handbook helps Lay Rectors know what to do when and where. This work started with the music staff of Cursillo #169 with special thanks to Clay and Anita Rankin, Helen Pedigo, Scott Shamburger and Sharon Bertschi. A very special thanks to Sharon who organized all the material. Special thanks go to Charlie Roose who had already done the Music Team Leader Handbook. The music database also includes collections from The Reverends John Talbert and Stephen Pecot, as well as the Cursillo songbook.

Rev Mark H. Wilson (MHW) 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 Diocese 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 <https://www.lbonfire.com/store/cursillo-merch>. 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. During 2023, we received \$105.00 from 24 items sold. The Commission on Cursillo will continue to work to replenish and sustain this important scholarship fund.

Cursillo #170 weekend will be held between March 9 – 10. There still is space available for more pilgrims too! Please remember this weekend and Lay Rector Stuart Ibberson from Church of the Nativity, Dothan in your prayers. Cursillo #171 will be led by Lay Rector Necie Borroni, St Paul's Church, Daphne and is scheduled to begin on Sep 12th. Interested staff and prospective pilgrims can apply online at coastalpilgrims.com. Before submitting the pilgrim 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

INTEGRITY OF CREATION

A group of creation care enthusiasts began talking about re-forming the diocesan commission on the environment in June, 2023. The group began meeting via Zoom on June 19, 2023 and then held two additional meetings to craft a mission statement and goals for the commission. The group was notified at the September meeting that the commission name, mission and goals had been approved by Bishop Kendrick.

Mission Statement:

The Commission on the Integrity of Creation (CIC) recognizes that humans, being an embodiment of the divine image, are interconnected with all of creation. Our mission is to help churches in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast celebrate and heal all of creation in ways that fit their own congregation. As environmental crises accelerate and threaten all life along the

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Gulf Coast, especially those on the margins who bear the brunt of rising seas, extreme heat, more severe storms, and biodiversity loss, this mission could not be more urgent.

What the CIC does:

- Educate and encourage the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast and individual parishes to make choices and take actions that are congruent with our mission statement.
- Provide help getting an Environmental Stewardship/Green Team started at each parish.
- Serve as a resource hub to promote creation-focused worship and prayer.
- Celebrate congregational successes and provide networking opportunities among parishes to learn and grow their creation care ministries.
- Offer spiritual formation opportunities as vehicles for lament, confession, supplication, healing and hope.
- Network with other faith and environmental groups to share information and learn of community needs and advocacy opportunities.
- The CIC will create task forces to accomplish these goals, including Green Teams, Spiritual Practices, and Community Advocacy.

CIC members:

The Rev. Joy Blaylock, Canon Missioner for Discipleship

Sonja Crawford, St. Christopher's, Pensacola

The Rev. Bob Donnell, All Saints, Mobile, St. Thomas, Citronelle, St. Peter's, Jackson

Frank Gilliam, St. Christopher's, Pensacola

Lella Lowe, Chair, Redeemer, Mobile

Salem Saloom, St. Stephen's, Brewton

Carrie Stevenson, Christ Church, Pensacola

Gene Strickland, St. Christopher's, Pensacola

Mark Waddell, St. Augustine's, Navarre

The Rev. Ken White-Spunner, St. John's, Monroeville

The Commission has met monthly since its formation.

Creation care activities in the Diocese:

- Bishop Kendrick approved use of a special creation care liturgy throughout the Season of Creation, September 1 – October 4.
- A webpage was created on the diocese's website for the CIC. Resources for churches will be added.
- Lella Lowe presented break-out sessions at Discipleship Day on "Creation Care Is Discipleship in Action."
- The group completed the Episcopal Church's survey on creation care activities in our diocese.
- The commission prepared and submitted two resolutions for action at 2024 Diocesan Convention.
- A subcommittee collaborated with Gulf Coast Creation Care to produce a Creation Care calendar for Lent.
- The Commission is hosting an exhibitor booth at convention to build awareness about the new commission.
- Commission members are available to travel to churches within the diocese to speak about forming green teams and doing the work of creation care at each parish.

Respectfully submitted,

Lella Lowe

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.

After an overwhelmingly active year in 2022, the Commission spent much of 2023 as a time of evaluation, introspection, and regrouping, with an eye to revising some of our most important programs to better carry out our mission. Nonetheless, the Commission engaged in a wide range of activities in 2023.

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Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration. We began the year with a celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, participating in a Community Worship Service at Union Baptist Church in Bay Minette, Alabama, and the MLK Day March in Fairhope, Alabama.

The Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee. In March, the Commission hosted 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 Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965, when state and local police attacked hundreds of civil rights activists who were marching from Selma, Alabama, to the state capitol in Montgomery.

Commission Inservice. Each year, the Commission holds an inservice to deepen our own members' knowledge and understanding on some specific aspect of racism. In April 2023, the Springhill Avenue Temple in Mobile and Rabbi Robert Boraz hosted Commission members for an all-day workshop to learn about the Holocaust, its antecedents, and its aftermath. The facilitator of the event was Dr. Donald Berry, retired professor at the University of Mobile and current Chair of the Gulf Coast Holocaust Center; he is a highly regarded scholar of Jewish Studies. Dr. Alex Ruble of Spring Hill College and Dr. David Meola of the University of South Alabama were the featured speakers. Together, they led our group on an exploration of the historic roots of antisemitism and factors leading up to the Holocaust, as well as discussions of things that can be done in our own time and in our own communities to combat hate speech and actions. We also joined in a worship service with the Temple's cantor, Mollie Adams, and enjoyed a kosher lunch with members of the Temple's congregation.

Trip to Alabama Shakespeare Festival. In May, as part of its efforts to explore how the visual and performing arts can help (or hurt) the cause of racial and social justice, the Commission sponsored a trip to the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, where participants viewed a performance of the play "Clyde's." The Tony-nominated play focuses on the struggles of ex-convicts attempting to reenter and live in society.

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. Participants from our Diocese carpooled to attend the pilgrimage in Hayneville, Alabama, on August 12. 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 Mississippi Civil Rights Museum. On September 9, the Commission hosted a pilgrimage to the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum in Jackson, Mississippi. The Museum's eight galleries chronicle the events of the national Civil Rights Movement that took place in the state. Approximately 30 people toured the Museum and then participated in a guided meditative experience, led by The Rev. Canon David Johnson, to reflect upon what **they had seen and felt**.

Pilgrimage to the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace & Justice. A small group traveled to Montgomery in October 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.

Visits to Parishes in the Diocese. The Commission has determined that by visiting the parishes throughout the Diocese, participating in Sunday morning worship, and taking the opportunity to talk to congregants about what the Commission does, we can spread the word of our work. On Sunday, August 13, a group of Commission members visited All Saints, Mobile. They attended the 10:30 Eucharist and stayed for lunch with the congregation. Visits to as many other churches around the Diocese as possible will be scheduled for 2023.

Racial Reconciliation Workshops. In 2023 the Commission held its Becoming Beloved Community workshop twice, in May at St. John, Robertsedale, and in August at Redeemer, Mobile. At the workshop, 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. The Racial Reconciliation Workshops constitute a central component of our ministry.

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Beginning late in 2022 and continuing throughout much of 2023, a committee of the Commission undertook a major evaluation and revision of the workshop program, schedule, and curriculum. Under the chairmanship of Millie Ericson, a former Commission member, the committee members spent countless hours looking at what has been done well at the workshops during the five years they have been offered, as well as questioning what could be done better. The end product was a new workshop format and updated and revised content. The revisions were partially implemented at the May workshop and fully implemented at the August workshop.

Coastline Articles. A Commission member is assigned to write an article for the Coastline each month on a topic related to racial justice. An informative and thought-provoking article was published in the Coastline every month in 2023.

Change in Leadership. Early in 2023, Gary Moore, who, along with Joe McDaniel, had co-chaired the Commission since its inception in 2018, announced that he was retiring as Co-Chair. Gary and Joe had midwived the Commission into existence and had been the driving force in all it did for the next five years, tirelessly working to make the Commission's goals ever closer to reality. Joe chaired the commission alone for most of 2023. In late 2023, Valerie Mitchell took over Gary's position as co-chair.

The Commission looks forward to 2024, when it will seek to expand its programs, and participation in them, particularly in parishes and parts of the Diocese where we have not yet had the opportunity to bring our efforts. We are also planning to evaluate the structure of the Commission and the ways in which we operate, seeking to improve our measures to further God's kingdom for all persons in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.

Respectfully submitted,

Commission on Racial Justice and Reconciliation

Nancy Bolton Beck, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Daphne, Alabama*

The Rev. David Chatel, St Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Magnolia Springs, Alabama

Jill Showers Chow, Christ Episcopal Cathedral, Mobile, Alabama*

Ozie Christian, Christ Episcopal Church, Pensacola, Florida

The Rev. Jim Flowers, All Saints Episcopal Church, Mobile, Alabama

Michael Foote, St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Magnolia Springs, Alabama,

Treasurer Laura Gilliam, St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Pensacola, Florida

James Holcomb, Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, Enterprise, Alabama

Andrew Howard, Good Shepard Episcopal Church, Mobile, Alabama

The Rev. Lydia Knizley Johnson, Bishop's Staff Advisor

The Rev. Clyde Jones, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Daphne, Alabama*

Nichelle Jones, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Daphne, Alabama

Antwon Lewis, Episcopal Church of The Epiphany, Enterprise, Alabama

Joe McDaniel, Jr., Christ Church Episcopal Church, Pensacola, Florida, Co-Chair*

Susan Miller, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Brewton, Alabama

Valerie Mitchell, All Saints Episcopal Church, Mobile, Alabama, Co-Chair*

Gary Moore, St. Paul's Episcopal Chapel, Magnolia Springs, Alabama*

Dent Neilson, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Greenville, Alabama

Donnis Norman, Trinity AME Church, Bay Minette, Alabama

Christopher Norman, Trinity AME Church, Bay Minette, Alabama

The Rev. Christian Rabone, St. Francis of Assisi,

Robbie Runderson, Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Mobile, Alabama*

Ken Thomas, Nativity Episcopal Church, Dothan, Alabama

Beth Wilkinson, St. Christopher's, Pensacola

*Members of the Executive Committee

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

REPORTS OF THE DIOCESAN COORDINATORS

BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW

CHAPLAINS TO RETIRED CLERGY & CLERGY SPOUSES

DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

ECUMENICAL & INTERFAITH OFFICERS

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 was developed and is administered by the Beecken Center in the School of Theology at the University of the South (Sewanee).

In 2023, the Rev. Kevin M. Goodman took on the role of executive director of EfM upon the retirement of Karen Meredith from the position. During her time as executive director, Meredith made significant changes in the program, including the use of published textbooks rather than learning material from the school of theology, a more challenging curriculum and the introduction of online training as a result of Covid restrictions.

Quite honestly, the “more challenging curriculum” has been a challenge for some mentors and participants. However, Sewanee recently noted, “EfM is and intends to be a community in which diversity is honored, but where the issues caused by that diversity are not politely ignored, but civilly and passionately engaged.”

Obviously, as most participants meet in small in-person groups, the pandemic had a negative impact on EfM. However, efforts are underway to revitalize the program at churches in the diocese where it is currently dormant and introduce it to congregations where it has never been utilized. The first step is to identify and train mentors who will lead each group.

Sewanee has restarted in-person onsite mentor training. Six regions have been identified for the reintroduction of onsite training. These will be made known soon. As the Central Gulf Coast is a sponsoring diocese, the cost of mentor training is \$225, plus room and board if the training is onsite. Online training will continue to be offered at \$225.

There are currently two EfM groups in the diocese, one each at St. Christopher’s and Christ Church Pensacola. There is interest in about a dozen other congregations. The goal is to have at least eight EfM groups starting with the new school year in September.

We are putting together a team of past and current EfM participants and mentors to achieve that goal.

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

EPISCOPAL RELIEF & DEVELOPMENT

Episcopal Relief & Development is still feeling the effects of the shutdown of the COVID Pandemic, but the needs still abound. Natural disasters continue to occur more often and are stronger than in the past. Episcopal Relief & Development continues work with Women, Children and Climate.

In the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, the Parish Ministry Partners across the diocese urged parishioners to use the ever-popular Lenten Meditation. These daily meditations allow one to deepen one's faith with thought-provoking meditations. In May 2023, the diocesan coordinator hosted a Zoom call for Parish Ministry Partners. The call included two experts. Sean McConnell is a member of the Episcopal Relief & Development staff. Sean has been with the organization for 10 years. The second expert was Nick Moga from the Diocese of Southwest Virginia. Nick is also the coordinator for Province II. Diocesan Ministry Partners from other dioceses in Province IV also participated. The discussion included:

1. Thousand Days of Love Campaign

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2. Upcoming Episcopal Relief & Development activities
3. U S Disaster Programs and Response

The Zoom call would not have been possible without the assistance of Jenn Johnson from the Diocesan Office.

It is hoped that more activities will occur to Episcopal Relief & Development in 2024.

Submitted
Eugene Johnston
Diocesan Coordinator for Episcopal Relief & Development

UNITED THANK OFFERING REPORT

The United Thank Offering Board has been very busy this past year. We released new Thanksgiving based materials last year and created new Lenten materials for this year. Our biggest news is the release of our gratitude-based vacation bible school program called Waves of Gratitude. This program includes science and art projects as well as music and spiritual materials. All of these materials, plus more, are available for a free download on our website: <https://unitedthankoffering.com/resources/>. Our diocesan ingathering total for 2023 was \$7,947.78 which is an increase of \$2416.70 from last year. Our ingathering totals are slowly increasing each year and I am grateful for your generosity and participation in UTO. If you have any questions or would like me to visit your parish, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address can be found at the end of this article. UTO has a memorial trust fund that pays for our materials and board costs so 100% of all funds collected goes toward funding grants. Your contributions last year will be used this year to fund projects that welcome strangers and people who live on the margins into our Christian family.

I am grateful for everyone who faithfully continues to support this important ministry. There are ministries all over the world as well as across our diocese that exist because of UTO. Those grants sites send their gratitude as well. Please find the list of contributions from our diocese below.

St. James Episcopal Church	Eufaula, Al	\$594.50
St. Peters Episcopal Church	Jackson, Al	\$100.00
St. Marys Episcopal Church	Milton, Fl	\$619.54
St. Thomas By The Sea Episcopal Ch.	Panama City, Fl	\$95.21
St. Pauls Episcopal Church	Mobile, Al	\$4,661.88
St, Peters Episcopal Church	Bon Secour, Al	\$421.60
Christ Church Episcopal Church	Pensacola, Fl	\$170.00
St. Simons on the Sound Episcopal Ch.	Fort Walton Beach, Fl	\$75.00
St. Marks Episcopal Church	Troy, Al	\$613.48
St. Monicas Episcopal Church	Cantonement, Fl	\$404.30
St. Thomas Episcopal Church	Greenville, Al	\$377.50
St. Johns Episcopal Church	Monroeville, Al	\$518.11
Unidentified individual donors		\$598.86

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Landers, Diocesan UTO Coordinator
UTO VP

CONVOCATION DEAN REPORTS

CONVOCATION V

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

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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.

On January 12, 2023, clergy and their spouses enjoyed an Epiphanytide luncheon at the Saint Andrew Bay Yacht Club in Panama City. 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.

On May 4, 2023, the clergy gathered for lunch at Holy Nativity, Panama City. The Reverend Joy Blaylock was our guest and spoke with us about the Diocesan School for Ministry.

On September 14, 2023, the clergy enjoyed an Oktoberfest luncheon at Saint Thomas', Laguna Beach and welcomed the Reverend Stephen Pecot, Rector of Trinity, Apalachicola to our Convocation.

On January 4, 2024, the clergy and their spouses and the surviving clergy spouses were once again the guests of Bishop Kendrick for lunch, this year at the Triple J Steakhouse in Panama City Beach, and welcomed the Reverend Justin Boyd, Rector of Grace, Panama City Beach and Vicar of Saint Thomas', Laguna Beach to our Convocation.

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. Joseph Hagberg, Dean