

**THE MINUTES OF THE 118<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN - DIOCESE OF ALABAMA  
HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AUBURN, ALABAMA  
OCTOBER 11-12, 2007**

The East Alabama Convocation hosted the 118<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Alabama at Holy Trinity Church and St. Dunstan's on October 11-12, 2007. The speaker was The Rev. Dr. Julia Gatta.

Alleen Cater, Diocesan ECW President, called the Opening Session to order at 1:03 p.m., and gave a warm welcome to everyone. Alleen announced that Bishop Parsley will be joining us for dinner tonight. The new Bishop Suffragan, Kee Sloan will not be able to be with us today, but all wish him congratulations and a wonderful new ministry. Alleen introduced the clergy attending: The Rev. Deacon Katy Smith, The Rev. Alison Carmody, The Venerable Louise R. Thibodaux, The Rev. Marianne Stephens, The Rev. Liston Garfield who led us in Noonday Prayers, The Rev. Wells Warren, and The Rev. Drake Whitelaw, The Deaf Interpreters were, The Rev. Marianne Stephens and Vicky Wood. Past ECW Presidents were recognized: Jo Walton, Lucy Ware, Tora Johnson, and Olivia Weingarten. All 2006-2007 Board members and committee members were asked to stand. There were 49 Board and committee members from 36 different parishes which is more than 1/3 of the parishes in the diocese. The East Alabama Convocation was thanked for hosting the Conference and for the very special gift of a hand knit scarf to all who attended the Conference.

The President called for the Secretary to certify that a quorum was present. Following the Secretary's certification, the minutes of the 2006 Annual Meeting were approved as presented on a motion by Dee Buzby.

The Treasurer's Report by Brenda Mayhall was presented on the screen so all could see how the ECW money is spent. The Proposed Budget for 2008 was presented and it was approved as recommended by the Board.

The ECW has made a pledge of \$65,000.00 for ACTS 2 to go to the sacristy of the new chapel at Camp McDowell. To date, \$5,194.21 has been given. The Treasurer stressed the importance of everyone contacting her if their

parish ECW has made a pledge to ACTS 2 so she can check to be certain the ECW is getting credit towards their goal. Included in the Treasurer's Report is a listing of the giving of every parish in the diocese. It is important to get all congregations involved in making an annual contribution to the ECW budget to fund things like Fall Conference with great speakers.

Dee Buzby encouraged everyone to pick up and use the new 2008 Calendar Handbook. The theme is, "Blessed Is She Who Believes" adapted in the present tense from Luke 1:45. Dee asked all presidents to fill out and mail in the orange Parish President's Information Sheet.

The President reviewed materials concerning the proposed Bylaws changes which she mailed to all the parishes this summer. The revised Bylaws 5 would read: "Whenever financial support is requested to fund a proposed project, written or email notice and explanation will be sent to the parishes, with instructions to respond with votes within 90 days of receipt of notice. Email responses are preferred but not necessary. The Corresponding Secretary will send such notice via email to all parish ECW presidents for whom she has email addresses; for all other parish presidents, notice will be sent via US Postal Service. Notice will specify the calendar date certain on which voting will close. Each parish is entitled to two delegate votes; delegates' names must be included with votes." The delegates approved the change to Bylaws 5.

The revised Article 10 would read: "The Episcopal Church Women, Diocese of Alabama, shall be divided into seven Convocations. Each convocation shall select a coordinator to serve on the Board. Her term of office shall be for two years; she may succeed herself, provided that she has first made a good-faith effort to secure a successor, but that effort has been unsuccessful. Coordinators shall take office in January following their election with the responsibility to integrate the planning and work of the women of their Convocation with the program of the Episcopal Church Women." The delegates approved the change to Article 10.

The delegates ratified the Board's commitment to give \$65,000.00 over five years to ACTS 2 for the sacristy in the new chapel at Camp McDowell. The delegates also approved that the 2008 Corporate gift of \$2,000.00 go to ACTS 2.

Olivia Weingarten and Fiona Watts have agreed to plan a series of fundraising events for ACTS 2. The first will be in the Birmingham area in Spring 2008. Everyone is asked to be thinking of ways to contribute. A Brighton Purse was raffled off during Fall Conference.

Cathy Blackney has agreed to take a position on the Board as Women's Weekend Coordinator. She will organize a committee of women from throughout the diocese to host Women's Weekend 2008. This one-year trial, replaces the normal convocation rotation.

Nancy Thompson, Scholarship Chairman, reported that \$12,500.00 was awarded to 20 recipients with awards ranging from \$300.00 - \$1,000.00.

Gethryn Giles, CPC Chairman, reported that \$214.00 was awarded to 13 Seminarians.

Tora Johnson, UTO Chairman said that the Diocese of Alabama has received two partial grants. They are:

- \$6,400.00 to Jubilee Community Center, Inc. in Montgomery for Youth Program Expansion: To enhance a youth enrichment program serving at risk inner city African-American children providing stipends for teachers in dance, music, and drama, and a certified secondary teacher.
- \$7,500.00 to Safeplace, Inc., in Florence for P.E.A.C.E. Project (Prevention, Education and Counseling Extension): To update and expand the curricula for a school-based violence prevention program serving a six county area, adding units to educate 3<sup>rd</sup> graders about the topic of bullying and 11<sup>th</sup> graders on healthy relationships.

Tora Johnson added that the ECW has not received any applications for grants this year. Please encourage each parish to see if there is some organization in your area that would qualify. It must have an Episcopal presence. Applications are available from the Diocese and must be returned by Dec. 15, 2007.

St. Claire's needle arts guild is still in the formation stage. Volunteers are needed for leadership.

Alleen called attention to the display tables of things for sale by various ECW's. She thanked Cindy Funderburk for bringing the Episcopal Book Store to us.

The Alms committee will be Tana Branch, Sally Feuerlein, and Barb Carpenter. Please give your suggestions to them. The recipient will be announced immediately before the Memorial Eucharist service tomorrow.

Sally Sinclair and Lisa Gruner used a power point presentation to show us some of the ways we can all benefit from our internet setup. They have created a network for us to work together for more effective ministries. The website address is: [www.alabamaecw.org](http://www.alabamaecw.org)

Alleen thanked everyone who has participated in the ECW in some way. She said, "Serving as your ECW President has been a rich blessing. I have been received with warmth and hospitality all over our diocese. I ask you to offer your continued support to my successor as president, Dee Buzby; Dee, may you feel blessed in your work; You have my support and encouragement. Thank you."

Following a two minute slideshow from Diocesan Convention, the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m. After a 15 minute break, our speaker, The Rev. Dr. Julia Gatta talked about Julian of Norwich; who she was and her teachings about prayer.

At 4:45 p.m. everyone was invited to St. Dunstan's for a Wine and Cheese Social. A dinner banquet was held at the Auburn University Hotel and Conference Center. The Rev. Dr. Gatta gave her second talk on Julian of Norwich. The evening drew to a close with a sing-a-long and Compline led by The Rev. Wells Warren and a group from St. Dunstan's playing guitars and singing. Bishop Parsley offered the closing prayer.

**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN'S ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE  
OCTOBER 12, 2007**

The ECW Fall Conference reconvened on Friday, October 12, 2007 with a call to order by President Alleen Cater at 8:35 a.m. Alleen presided over the Parish ECW Sharing Session inviting each representative to share one particular thing that had special meaning for their parish.

**Canterbury Chapel, Tuscaloosa, Black Belt Convocation, Susan Windham -**

One project they find very rewarding is supporting the seminarians from Canterbury Chapel. They are committed to using the proceeds from their fundraisers for the seminarians. They also sent letters, care packages, notes and cards. Susan encouraged everyone to find a seminarian to support.

**Christ Church, Tuscaloosa, Black Belt Convocation, Kathleen Cramer -**

They are planning a Burger and Beer Bash which will include a bazaar on November 8. They are also selling a new rendition of a Gothic style cross, that was placed on the gables of Christ Church in the 1880's, in both pendent size for a necklace and a smaller charm size for bracelets. Be watching for them on the website.

**Holy Comforter, Gadsden, Mountain Convocation, Ethyl Austin -** Ethyl is the new president of the ECW. They have a bazaar coming up November 10 which will be a bake sale and crafts. They will be selling chicken lunches. Another project is raising money for a Haitian well through the Episcopal Relief and Development. Jane Elliott added that they have contributed to the Scholarship fund. They reactivated their ECW in February, 2006 and have about 38 active members. They also have a prayer shawl ministry. They have delivered over 100 prayer shawls to people throughout the United States. They also have a prayer quilt ministry and have given 20 quilts.

**Messiah, Heflin, Cheaha Convocation, Joyce Dryden -** They have had great success with a fundraiser that is held the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Last year they decided it would work best to take advance orders only and this year they are fine tuning it more and only offering those items which they sold the most of last year. The best selling and most money making item is cornbread dressing. Everyone brings the ingredients so there is very little expense involved and they make over \$2,000.00 each time.

**St. Matthew's, Madison, Tennessee Valley Convocation, Barb Carpenter -**

They now have two meetings a month, one in the morning and one at night to accommodate those who work and those who stay at home. Their largest fundraiser is an annual yard sale in November. They are now in their newly built sanctuary/nave. The big event this year was fixing food for over 300 people at their Consecration/Dedication Ceremony last month. They are growing and have a blended age group in their ECW.

**Church of the Ascension, Montgomery, Montgomery Convocation, Emily**

**Reid** - They have not had an ECW in several years, but are now back on board. They have 15 women signed up to come to a meeting next week and will be celebrating the fact that they have a new rector. They will be celebrating their Centennial in May and are having The Rev. Mary Earle speak at an ECW luncheon. Jon Meacham who is the Managing Editor at Newsweek and is also a very well known Episcopalian is coming as their guest speaker.

**Church of the Nativity, Huntsville, Tennessee Valley Convocation, Alyce**

**Smith** - They are getting ready for their annual bazaar November 15. This has been a tradition for over 50 years. They serve the traditional turkey dinner and are planning for about 600 this year. The money they make supports all the guilds, mission and outreach programs sponsored by the church.

**Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham, Birmingham Convocation,**

**Cynthia Shearer** - Their attendance was declining so they began using their own members as speakers at the meetings as well as their clergy. They also held joint ECW meetings with other groups in the Birmingham area. All these changes have boosted the attendance. They still serve lunch every day during Lent; the program has been called the "Lenten Lunch Series", however, the name was changed to the "Lenten Preaching Series" and with the emphasis on preaching, the interest has grown and the money generated has increased.

**Grace, Anniston, Cheaha Convocation, Jane Wood** - They are preparing

for their annual church outreach which is their Lobsterfest, October 20. In conjunction with this they have a huge bake sale. There will be several raffles for dinner gift certificates and other gifts donated by local

restaurants. They also support their Preschool and they'll be doing cheese balls again. Something new in the Spring is a White Elephant sale. Grace has just undergone major historical renovation and some of the money will be used to help with that. They have monthly meetings with speakers and will be having a wine and cheese party in December.

**St. Andrew's, Tuskegee, East Alabama Convo., Elaine Lett** - For many years they have had a huge success with a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. They used the proceeds to purchase tables and chairs for their undercroft last year. In addition they primarily sponsor their fellowship activities.

**Holy Comforter, Montgomery, Montgomery Convocation, Barbara Zdanis** - Two weeks ago they had their annual Cake and Barbeque event which included a big ECW bake sale at which they made over \$900.00. This past summer they had a great Tea luncheon inviting all the women of the church. They had seven different decorated tables. They served wine, baby sandwiches, fruits, sweets and a special cool drink. This was a big success.

**St. Stephen's, Birmingham, Birmingham Convocation, Janet Robertshaw** - Tazewell Morton is coming to Birmingham for their Fall Event November 27, at 7:00 p.m. He is a wonderful artist and ceramist. He does a theological presentation in conjunction with his art work. Everyone is invited. They are on their 12<sup>th</sup> year of their annual Tea which makes about \$20,000 each year and allows them to do a lot of inreach and outreach for the church. They have a CPC group which is an intergenerational mission team that goes to Mexico and in five days they build a home for a family. It is 21' by 21'. This is their 4<sup>th</sup> year to go to Mexico and this is what some of their money provides. Over 225 women participate in this tea to make it a success.

**St. John's, Montgomery, Montgomery Convocation,** - Alleen announced their annual ECW Bazaar and Bake Sale benefitting community outreach programs will be November 14, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Lunch will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Alleen reminded everyone to email all the information about their projects, fundraisers and parish events to Sally Sinclair at [Publicity@alabamaecw.org](mailto:Publicity@alabamaecw.org) and it will be posted on the ECW website. Good marketing helps maximize your efforts.

Alleen thanked everyone for their UTO, Scholarship fund and CPC fund contributions. While these segments are very important, it does not address the issues of putting on a Fall Conference, having a fantastic speaker, or our corporate gift. Please, when you do your parish ECW budgets, remember how much you learned at Fall Conference and send a contribution to us. We need it to keep our budget balanced and to give back to you as much as we can.

Sally Feuerlein announced that the Alms offering given at the Memorial Eucharist service will be used for supplies for a medical mission trip to Haiti in February.

Olivia Weingarten called on Bishop Parsley to draw names for the winner of the raffle and other items. All proceeds go to ACTS2. Olivia announced the raffle brought about \$400.00.

Alleen gave the history about the Women at the Well group that started a few years ago, has now disbanded and asked the ECW to manage a new fund for retreats. At our September Board meeting, the Board passed a resolution in appreciation and thanks to The Rev. Joy Phipps. Alleen invited Bishop Parsley to come forward and read the resolution.

Bishop Parsley offered words of welcome to all and his deep gratitude to Alleen for her ministry and superb leadership these past few years. The Bishop expressed his thanks to everyone for their contributions to the ACTS 2 campaign which has more than six million in pledges and gifts. The Bishop announced that we will break ground for the chapel at Camp McDowell a week from this Sunday, October 21, 2007 at 5:15 p.m. and everyone is invited to come. Bishop Parsley also commented on what a treat it is to have Dr. Gatta with us sharing her considerable wisdom and devotion. He thanked her for being here and turned the program over to Dr. Gatta for the third segment of her talk about Julian of Norwich.

Following Dr. Gatta's third presentation, Alleen presented her with a beautiful, hand knit white prayer shawl made by Ann LaBand of Auburn.

Thanks were expressed to Tana Branch and the East Alabama Convocation for hosting a wonderful Fall Conference.

Holy Trinity, Auburn - Lunch on Thursday  
St. James, Alex City - Wine and Cheese  
St. Barnabas, Roanoke - Decorations at the banquet  
St. Andrew's, Tuskegee - Lunch on Friday  
Emmanuel, Opelika - Welcome reception on Thursday  
St. Matthew's in-the-Pines, Seale - Snacks on Friday  
St. Dunstan's, Auburn - Wine and Cheese

Thanks to the Birmingham Convocation for inviting the ECW to Fall Conference, October 9 and 10, 2008 at St. Stephen's.

Closing Eucharist with Installation of the Officers  
The Right Rev. Henry N. Parsley, Jr. Celebrant  
The Rev. Allison Sandlin Liles, Preacher

Respectfully submitted,

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Marilyn D. Atkins, Secretary

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Alleen Cater, President

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Dee Buzby, President-Elect

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Brenda Mayhall, Treasurer

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Tora Johnson, UTO