

**THE MINUTES OF THE 120TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN – DIOCESE OF ALABAMA
ST. MATTHEW’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, MADISON, ALABAMA
OCTOBER 8-9, 2009**

The Tennessee Valley Convocation hosted the 120th Annual Conference of the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Alabama at St. Matthew’s Church on October 8-9, 2009. The ECW theme was “St. Anne, Grandmother of our Savior.” The speaker was Katerina Katsarka Whitley who is an author and speaker and has been a communication adjunct at Appalachian State University since 2001. The Conference began with Noon Day Prayers led by The Rev. Steve Gruman, Rector of St. Matthew’s. Father Gruman welcomed everyone on behalf of all those who prepared for this event saying, “We’re grateful you are here; it is our honor to have you.” Following Noon Day Prayers, lunch was served by St. Timothy’s, Athens.

Diocesan President Dee Buzby called the Opening Session to order at 1:09 p.m., October 8, 2009. Dee welcomed everyone to St. Matthew’s, her home church. Dee recognized Melissa Barton, ECW President and all ECW members at St. Matthew’s, Joan East, Tennessee Valley Convocation Coordinator and all the people in the convocation who have done a great job working tirelessly on the details of this conference.

Dee Buzby introduced past ECW Presidents, Lucy Ware, Tora Johnson, Olivia Weingarten and Alleen Cater. She introduced and thanked all 27 members of the Board. Members of the clergy present were recognized: The Rev. Bob Blackwell, The Rev. Judith Comer, The Rev. Fletcher Comer, The Rev. Ted Koelln, The Rev. David Basinger, The Rev. Deacon Lou Thibodaux and The Right Rev. Henry N. Parsley, Jr.

Jackie Robe, ECW Province IV President, sent a letter in her absence which was read by Gethryn Giles.

Joan East, Tennessee Valley Convocation Coordinator thanked the following:

St. Matthew’s, Madison - Thursday Breakfast Snacks and Altar Guild
St. Timothy’s, Athens - Thursday Lunch
St. Stephens, Huntsville and St. Matthew’s, Madison - Wine and Cheese Social
Ruth and Laura Moyers – Chamber Music during the Wine and Cheese hour
Karey Holcomb, Caterer and St. Matthew’s Madison - Dinner
Church of the Good Shepherd, Decatur - Friday Breakfast Snacks and Name tags
Church of the Nativity, Huntsville - Friday Boxed Lunches
St. Columba in-the-Cove, Huntsville & St. Barnabas, Hartselle – Home baked cookies
Grace, Sheffield, St. Bartholomew’s and Trinity, Florence – Table decorations
Grace, Cullman and St. Matthew’s, Madison - Printing
St. Columba in-the-Cove, Huntsville, St. Barnabas, Hartselle & St. Barnabas, Roanoke
Goody bags
Grace, Cullman - Speaker’s Gift Basket
Turner Beverage Company – All bottled water

Sally Sinclair - Website invitations
Carolyn Woodson - PayPal
Father Steve Gruman – Priest; Michelle Webb - Organist

Dee Buzby announced that Cindy Funderburk has set up the **Episcopal Book Store** with several new items available. She invited all to view the pictures on the poster from **Triennial**. She also called attention to the poster for **Jeremy and Penny Lucas, missionaries to Namibia**, saying there is a container on the poster for donations to help with the cost of the first Clergy/Spouse Conference held in August. There is also a table with items for sale from The Church of the Epiphany, Guntersville. Their proceeds will enable a nurse to join the medical mission team going to Haiti in January.

Most Honored Women in the Diocese of Alabama: Alleen Cater received a certificate and a pin for being selected “Most Honored Women in the Diocese of Alabama” at Triennial. Alleen thanked all the women in the diocese saying, “It is because of you and the work you did that I received this award. It belongs to all of you. Thank you”

Website and Newsletter Certificate: Sally Sinclair received a certificate from Triennial as Webmaster of an outstanding Alabama ECW website www.alabamaecw.org .

President Dee Buzby invited everyone to join in praying the ECW Prayer.

Marilyn Atkins gave the Credentials for the conference. There were 20 board members, 9 clergy, 38 delegates, and 63 visitors present with 36 parishes represented. The President called for certification that a quorum was present. The Secretary certified that there was a quorum.

Minutes: The minutes of the 119th Annual Conference were approved as presented on a motion by Bea Strong. The minutes are on the ECW website www.alabamaecw.org .

Treasurer’s Report: Carolyn Woodson reported the ending balance in the Operating Fund as of 9/30/09 is \$7,042.67. Donations to the Scholarship Fund this year were slightly less than \$6,500.00. The ECW hopes to increase that next year. To date, we have received \$15,808.00 in UTO contributions. The ACTS2 Fund has slightly over \$52,000.00 toward our pledge of \$65,000.00. The proposed budget for 2010 was accepted as presented on a motion by Barbara Carpenter. All financial statements are available on the website www.alabamaecw.org .

Constitution and By-Laws Revision: Copies of the revisions to the Constitution and By-Laws were sent to the parishes more than 90 days prior to this meeting and are also on the website and in the new calendar. The delegates approved the revisions to the Constitution and By-Laws as presented on a motion by Bea Strong. The revision committee was Dee Buzby, Gethryn Giles and Fiona Watts, chaired by Alleen Cater, Parliamentarian.

Corporate Gift: Barbara Carpenter moved the 2010 Corporate Gift of \$2,000.00 go toward the ECW ACTS2 pledge of \$65,000.00 for the sacristy in the new chapel at Camp McDowell. Motion carried.

Calendar Handbook: The theme for 2010 is “Serving Others in Christ: Mission and Ministries in the Diocese of Alabama”. In the 2010 Calendar, Gethryn Giles has featured parishes in the diocese that are examples of the Millennium Development Goals that were adopted by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church as their major missions in 2006. Along with two free Calendar/Handbooks each parish in the diocese will receive a copy of the Directory of Churches which was revised and published by the ECW as the 1998 Corporate Gift to the Diocese. This book is often referred to as the Blue Book and contains sketches of each church drawn by the Rev. William P. McLemore.

Raffle at Fall Conference: Alleen Cater described the three items being raffled off to raise funds for the ECW ACTS2 pledge to the sacristy in the new chapel at Camp McDowell. 1) A beautiful pottery wall vase, hand crafted and donated by Lisa Gruner’s brother, Doug Smith; 2) A beautiful painting on canvas by Tora Johnson; and 3) A lovely golf gift box and cuff link set all adorned with the Episcopal Shield was donated by the ECW at The Church of the Epiphany, Guntersville. The raffle idea at Fall Conference, benefitting the ACTS2 pledge, originated with Olivia Weingarten donating a designer handbag in 2007. Since Alleen organized the raffle in 2008 (Bishop’s surprise gift from Lambeth) and 2009, she suggested this fund raiser be carried forward each year with the immediate past president organizing it. Dee accepted the responsibility.

Parish Sharing: The Parish Sharing time will be Friday morning at 8:30. There is a sign up sheet on the raffle table and a sheet to summarize your activities which will be attached to the 2009 Annual Conference minutes.

Women’s Weekend: Dee Buzby reported that Women’s Weekend held in May was a fun, meaningful time for the 40 people in attendance. However, due to the expense of Women’s Weekend and the low attendance there was concern that Women’s Weekend would again incur a financial loss. The Board voted that Women’s Weekend will no longer be an ECW sponsored event. Dee explained it is possible for a group or a parish to continue Women’s Weekend as long they organize it. She encouraged those who have enjoyed it for many years to sponsor it.

Webmaster Report: Sally Sinclair said that for the last three years, the ECW has used a web application called, Constant Contact that lets you create email campaigns to send out to a database. It is a very efficient way to get information out to everyone in the diocese via email; the cost is much less expensive than postage, paper and printing. To receive Constant Contact emails, put your email address in the box at the top left of the home page of the ECW website www.alabamaecw.org .

ECW College Scholarship: Nancy Thompson’s committee awarded \$10,400 in college scholarships this year to 21 applicants. Dee encouraged everyone to be faithful in supporting the ECW College Scholarship Fund.

Church Periodical Club (CPC): Brenda Mayhall reported there are seven seminarians this year and they will each receive \$355.00 from CPC funds.

United Thank Offering (UTO): Barbara Carpenter said she was very pleased to present a check for nearly \$109,000.00 to The Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop, at Triennial during the UTO Ingathering Eucharist Service. This check represented the total UTO Ingathering for the Diocese of Alabama for 2006, 2007 and 2008.

The National UTO Committee awarded a partial grant of \$15,000.00 to the Diocese of Alabama for one-half the cost of a 12 passenger van for the Boys and Girls Club of Morgan and Lawrence Counties and Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Decatur to use for transporting children and adults. Barbara Carpenter presented a certificate to The Rev. Ted Koelln, Rector of The Church of the Good Shepherd and CEO of the Boys and Girls Club. Father Koelln expressed thanks saying they feel blessed to receive this wonderful gift.

Dee introduced Zona Tounsley who is the new secretary of the UTO National Board. Zona thanked all who participate in United Thank Offering and encouraged others to begin as the need to fill grant requests is urgent. The Diocese of Alabama gave more money to UTO this past year than any other diocese in Province IV.

St. Clare's Needle Arts Guild: Alleen Cater said St. Clare's 'eguild' is a resource for people who knit, crochet and do needle point. There is a wealth of information on the website www.alabamaecw.org. Look for St. Clare's Needle Arts Guild on the 'Search' page.

Parish Leadership Training Event (PLTE): Gethryn Giles announced we will have another ECW leadership workshop at the PLTE event this spring.

Alms Committee: Barbara Carpenter, Pat Barnes and Elma Lewis will be the Alms Committee. Please give them your suggestions for the Alms offering.

2010 Fall Conference: Jane Wood, incoming Cheaha Convocation Coordinator, invited everyone to Fall Conference in October, 2010. Details will be forthcoming.

Dee thanked the Tennessee Valley Convocation and St. Matthew's Church for hosting this year's conference. She thanked everyone for the honor given her as president these past two years. She has enjoyed visiting the churches in our diocese and appreciates all the good work of the ECW. Dee thanked the people attending the conference, the board, her church and priest, and especially her husband for all the support. She said, "You have a special place in my heart."

There being no further business, President Dee Buzby adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Following a brief break, Katerina Katsarka Whitley gave her first talk on the ECW theme, “St. Anne, Grandmother of our Savior.”

A Wine and Cheese Social was held at 4:45 p.m. in the narthex of St. Matthew’s followed by a catered meal at the church. After dinner, 32 members of The Huntsville Spiritual Chorale gave a lively program of stirring gospel music.

Katerina Katsarka Whitley gave her second talk on women of the Bible. Following her address, Joan East presented Mrs. Whitley with a lovely basket filled with many gifts as a token of our appreciation. The evening closed with An Order for Compline with The Rev. Steve Gruman, Officiant.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN’S ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE CONTINUED – OCTOBER 9, 2009

Diocesan President Dee Buzby called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m.

Parish Sharing Session: The following representatives shared the highlights of their ECW activities. Alleen Cater was the time-keeper; each was given two minutes.

Black Belt Convocation

Bea Strong - Christ Church, Tuscaloosa

Cheaha Convocation

Jane Wood – Grace Church, Anniston

Montgomery Convocation

Jennifer McConnell – Church of the Ascension, Montgomery
Frances Steele - Holy Comforter, Montgomery

East Alabama Convocation

Jolai Jenkins - St. Andrew’s, Tuskegee
Bobbi Avsharian – St. Stephen’s, Smiths Station

Mountain Convocation

Joanna Brooks – Church of the Epiphany, Guntersville
The Rev. Judith Comer – St. Philip’s, Fort Payne

Birmingham Convocation

Alleen Cater – Cathedral Church of the Advent, Birmingham
Fiona Watts – St. Stephen’s, Birmingham
Beth Ensey – Grace, Birmingham

Tennessee Valley Convocation

Melissa Barton – St. Matthew's, Madison
Sally Marsh – St. Barnabas, Hartselle
Mary Garner & Lucy Ware – Trinity, Florence
Bobbie Ip – St. Columba in-the-Cove, Huntsville
Caroline Bright – Grace, Sheffield
Paula Poyner – Grace, Cullman
Judy Wilson – St. Timothy's, Athens
Arnedea Heath – St. Bartholomew's, Florence

Dee Buzby thanked everyone for sharing. Joan East announced that centerpieces on the lunch tables were for sale at \$6.00 each and may be taken after lunch. Katerina Katsarka Whitley gave her third talk about more women of the Bible.

Dee announced the raffle raised \$226.00 for our ACTS2 pledge. She asked Katerina Katsarka Whitley to draw the names of the raffle winners. Carolyn Woodson won the lovely hand crafted wall vase by Doug Smith, Zona Tounsley won the beautiful painting by Tora Johnson, and Joan East won the Episcopal Shield golf gift set donated by The Church of the Epiphany, Guntersville.

Barbara Carpenter announced the Alms offering will be divided with half going to the ECW College Scholarship Fund and half going to Jeremy and Penny Lucas, missionaries to Namibia, to help with costs for the first Clergy/Spouse Conference.

President Dee Buzby encouraged everyone to attend next year's Fall Conference October 7-8, 2010, hosted by Cheaha Convocation.

The 120th Annual Conference closed with the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist and installation of the 2010-2011 ECW officers and board. The Alms offering was \$884.00. The officers installed were:

President- Gethryn Giles
President Elect - Fiona Watts
Secretary - Nancy Thompson
Treasurer - Jill Whitten
UTO Coordinator - Brenda Mayhall

The participants in the Holy Eucharist Service were:

The Right Reverend Henry N. Parsley, Jr., Celebrant
The Reverend Steve Gruman, Assisting
Michelle Webb, Organist
Dee Buzby, Lector
Gethryn Giles, Lector
Joan East, Lay Eucharistic Minister/Acolyte
Barbara Carpenter, Lay Eucharistic Minister/Crucifer

Following the Eucharist Service, boxed lunches were available in the dining room.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn D. Atkins, Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Dee Buzby, President

Gethryn Giles, President-Elect

Carolyn Woodson, Treasurer

Barbara Carpenter, UTO Coordinator

ATTACHMENTS:

Letter from Jackie Robe, Province IV, ECW President
Treasurer's Report; Revised 2010 ECW Budget – Carolyn Woodson
Revised Constitution and By-Laws
Parish Sharing Summaries