



2026 COVENANT RENEWAL

GOOD NEWS
for a
NEW DAY

Dear friends in Christ:

I look forward to the year ahead with hope and confidence in God's unfolding work among us. 2026 will be a time of transition for our diocese as a new bishop steps into leadership, but the most important things will remain the same. We will always have this urgent, life-changing message to share: Jesus is alive, turning sorrow and loss into grace and hope. Death is conquered, and love wins!

We share this Good News through the vibrant ministry taking place in each of our parishes. As you continue in your ministry, remember that your diocesan staff is here to encourage, strengthen, and lift up the ministries God has already set in motion through you. We are ready to walk alongside you if you find yourself in any need or trouble. Big or small, we're here to support you.

The work of our diocese is made possible by parish covenants which are the annual financial pledges parishes make to support our work together. **I ask you to prayerfully consider your parish's covenant to the diocese for 2026.** Every contribution makes a difference and is deeply appreciated. If your vestry would like to discuss your covenant, I would be honored to connect with you. Please reach out to me at gcurry@dioala.org.

This document is a summary of the many ways we are working and growing. I'm so grateful for every part of the Episcopal Church in Alabama. With your help, we are building the Kingdom of God on earth. Thank you for your faithfulness, your leadership, and your witness, and I hope I see you in church soon.

Faithfully,

Bishop G



What is a parish covenant?

All parishes are asked to contribute this annual gift to the diocese to fund our shared mission and ministries. This contribution also enables the diocese to pledge to the General Convention's budget, allowing us to participate in the broader ministry of the Episcopal Church. This system of giving is foundational to the structure of our church: individuals give to their parishes, parishes give to their diocese, and the diocese gives to the wider Episcopal Church. Together, through our worship, service, and generosity, we unite as one church.

What are the covenant guidelines?

Just as the biblical tithe is set at 10%, there are guidelines for the parish covenant. Congregations with an income below \$150,000 are asked to contribute 10%, while those with income above \$150,000 are asked to contribute 15%. This percentage is calculated based on the "unrestricted and undesignated income" of each parish. These guidelines were established by our Diocesan Convention in 2000 and reaffirmed in 2003.

Why a voluntary, proportional covenant?

In the Diocese of Alabama, parish covenants to the diocese are designed to reflect an individual's tithe to their church. In many other dioceses, these contributions are mandatory and referred to as "assessments." By requesting a voluntary covenant, the Diocese of Alabama invites parishes into a relationship with the diocese. Throughout scripture, proportional giving has been the foundation of our response to God's gifts. Just like we ask parishioners to estimate their pledge in dollars, while emphasizing the importance of starting with a percentage of income, the same principle applies to funding our shared mission and ministry: each parish is asked to think of their gift as a proportion of income, then convert that figure into an estimated dollar amount. We encourage your parish to prayerfully consider this request for covenants and respond generously.

How and when does a parish make a covenant?

Parishes are invited to submit their covenant renewal online by January 9, 2025. Scan the QR code to access the online form. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Connie Bryson, Director of Finance, (205) 358-9225 or cbryson@dioala.org.



In 2024, the average covenant was 8.72% and \$37,851.
In 2025, 45 parishes increased their covenant amount.
In 2025, on average, parishes increased their covenants by 5.24%.



Eppes Hall at Camp McDowell



Service of Ordination at Clergy Conference



Renovated parish hall at Good Shepherd, Montgomery



Clergy and Lay Leaders Of Color Retreat



Newly ordained deacons

2025 In Review

Equipping the Saints Capital Campaign

We did it! The Equipping the Saints Campaign has surpassed its goal and will strengthen ministry across our diocese for generations to come.

Goal: \$7,500,000

Gifts and Pledges Received: \$8,600,000+

- **\$4,000,000 for Congregational Vitality** – Creating an endowed fund that will support parishes in perpetuity.
- **\$2,500,000 for Camp McDowell** – Renovating Eppes Hall, the pool bathrooms, and the septic system in Lower Camp.
- **\$1,000,000 for Racial Healing and Pilgrimage** – Restoring the parish hall at Good Shepherd, Montgomery, and supporting reconciliation efforts.

Donors: Over 400 households and 42 parishes

Thank you to everyone who donated, attended events, hosted gatherings, championed the campaign, and prayed for this work and for our beloved church.

Camp McDowell

1,073 children and youth attended Summer Camp on Clear Creek.

82 bookings with Episcopal groups including parish retreats, the House of Bishops, and Daughters of the King.

The septic system in Lower Camp has been fully restored! The system will sustain over 100,000 flushes per year for many years to come.

Work on the pool bathrooms is nearly finished. We anticipate a toilet paper ribbon cutting in 2026.

The roof of Eppes Hall has been replaced for the first time since it was built in the 1950s. The new roof maintains the hall's historic look while eliminating leaks. Architects and contractors have finalized plans for the building's interior, with construction scheduled to begin early next year and finish in time for Summer Camp on Clear Creek 2026.

Leadership Development

9 People in diocesan discernment

54 People are known to be in the process of either personal/parish discernment, diocesan discernment, or in active formation for ministry

15 People in formation for ordained ministry

7 Applicants for the new Lay Ministry Pathways

Racial Healing & Pilgrimage

350+ people attended the Jonathan Daniels Pilgrimage in Hayneville where the Most Rev. Michael Curry preached.

13 people participated in the inaugural Clergy And Lay Leaders Of Color Retreat.

18 people completed Beyond Diversity, a two-day seminar that teaches a protocol for discussing race in ways that are productive, insightful, and generative.

We expect that the renovation of the parish hall at Good Shepherd, Montgomery will be completed by the end of 2025! As of October 31, they are installing the handrails on the exterior ramp, unloading new cabinets for the kitchen, and beginning to sand the original wood floors. Good Shepherd looks forward to welcoming pilgrims from across the country who travel to Montgomery for racial healing and reconciliation.

Sawyerville

589 campers registered for Sawyerville Summer Camp led by **208** staff members.

113 students attended Sawyerville Summer Learning and received **60** hours of instructional reading and **50** hours of instructional math from **16** certified teachers.

22 youth and adults participated in the Person2Person conference on racial healing.

22 former campers and counselors from Hale County received a Leslie Manning Scholarship of \$1,000.

14 high school students participated in the mentoring program.

Youth & Campus Ministries

5 diocesan-wide youth events welcomed **295** attendees.

78 college students attended **2** diocesan-wide campus ministry events.

24 parishes joined in the diocesan professional development program for youth ministers.

Even More Good News

16 youth and adult chaperones from our companion diocese of Honduras attended Summer Camp on Clear Creek at Camp McDowell for the second year.

Riverside Episcopal Church, our newest worshipping community, saw its Sunday attendance rise from **25** to **35**. They also baptized **2** adults and confirmed **8**. They have almost outgrown their current location.

50 people joined in the second-annual retreat for members of the LGBTQ+ community. The diocese received a grant of \$7,000 to bring in a national speaker and provide more scholarships to attendees in 2026.

42 parishes launched new diocesan-supported websites.



Jonathan Daniels Pilgrimage



Sawyerville Summer Camp



Youth Department's Dio Day



Riverside Episcopal Church

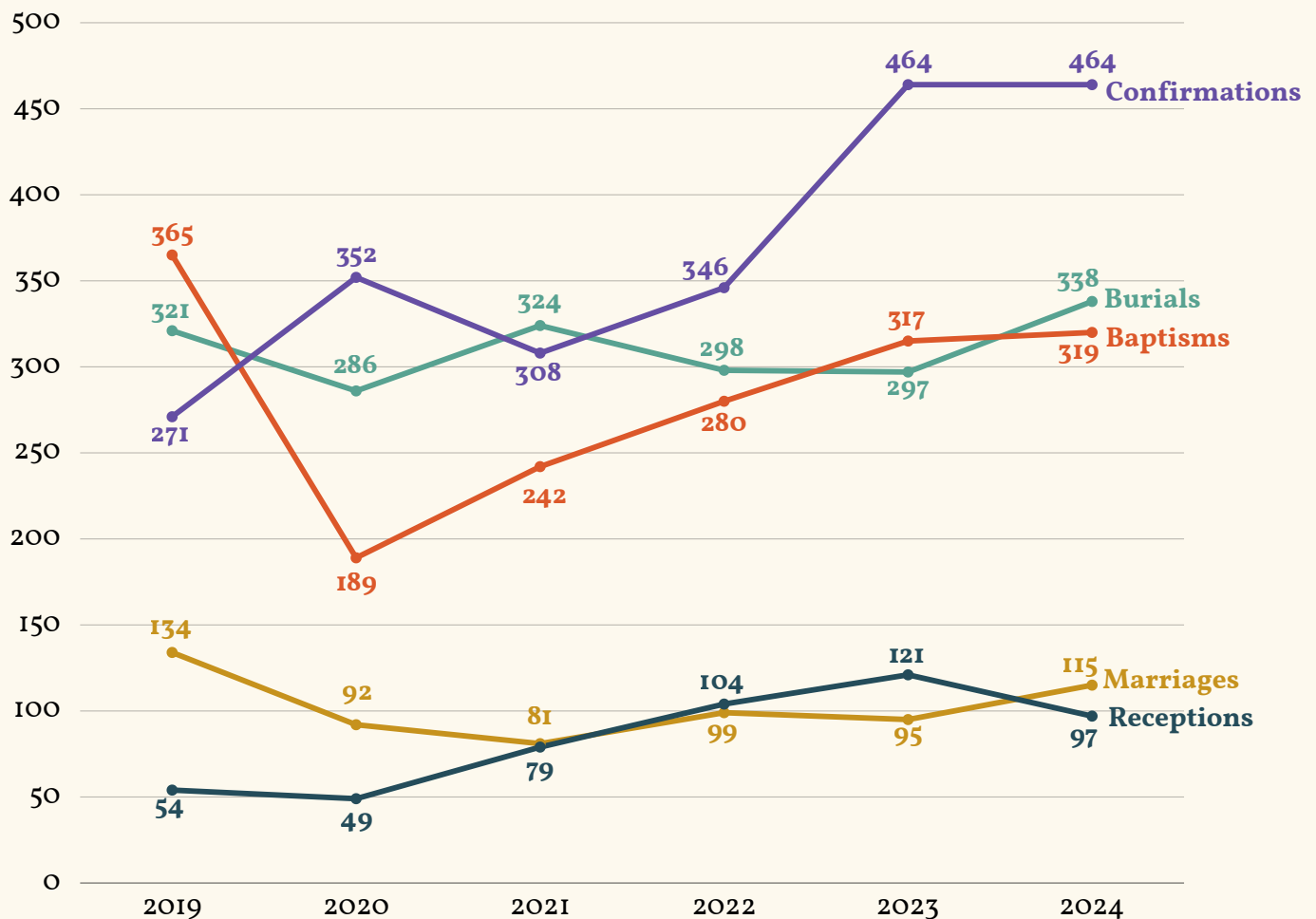


LGBTQ+ Retreat

Congregational Vitality

The chart below highlights a simple, joyful truth: our church is alive and growing. After the quiet of 2020, the sacraments that mark our life together—baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and more—have returned with energy and abundance.

Pastoral Services Across the Diocese



The number of confirmations increased by **71%** between 2019 and 2024.

In 2024, pastoral services totaled **1,333**—the highest of the period.

In 2025

19 parishes are working with a diocesan-sponsored consultant.

5,677 households pledged to parishes across the diocese, an increase of **3%** over the past 3 years.

Bishop Curry and Bishop Prior visited **77** parishes as well as **4** celebrations of new ministry and **18** special events like Cursillo, ECW, and youth events.

A Look at Parish Grants from 2023-2025

The three grants for parishes through the diocese are excellent tools for ministry. Over the past three years, these grants have awarded **285 grants for a total of \$864,552** in direct support to parishes. Parishes report that these funds invigorate their efforts to remove barriers to growth, connect with their communities, and steward their corner of God’s creation.

Renew & Refresh			
Year	Number of Awards	Average Amount	Total Distributed
2023	62	\$3,815	\$236,517
2024	55	\$4,756	\$261,604
2025	42	\$4,541	\$190,712
TOTAL	159	\$4,371	\$688,833

Parish-Based Outreach			
Year	Number of Awards	Average Amount	Total Distributed
2023	13	\$2,432	\$31,620
2024	18	\$3,089	\$55,600
2025	26	\$2,740	\$71,249
TOTAL	90	\$2,476	\$232,869

Creation Care			
Year	Number of Awards	Average Amount	Total Distributed
2023	11	\$250	\$2,750
2024	29	\$250	\$7,250
2025	29	\$250	\$7,250
TOTAL	69	\$250	\$17,250



New walkway at St. Timothy’s, Athens



Food pantry at St. Andrew’s, Birmingham



New playground at St. Joseph’s, Mentone



Exterior improvements at Epiphany, Leeds



Diaper ministry at Grace, Pike Road

A paved road curves through a forest. Sunlight filters through the trees on the left, creating a bright starburst effect. The trees are tall and thin, with some showing autumn foliage. The road is dark asphalt and leads into the distance.

*The steadfast love of
the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never
come to an end;
they are new
every morning;
great is your
faithfulness.*

*Lamentations
3:22–23*