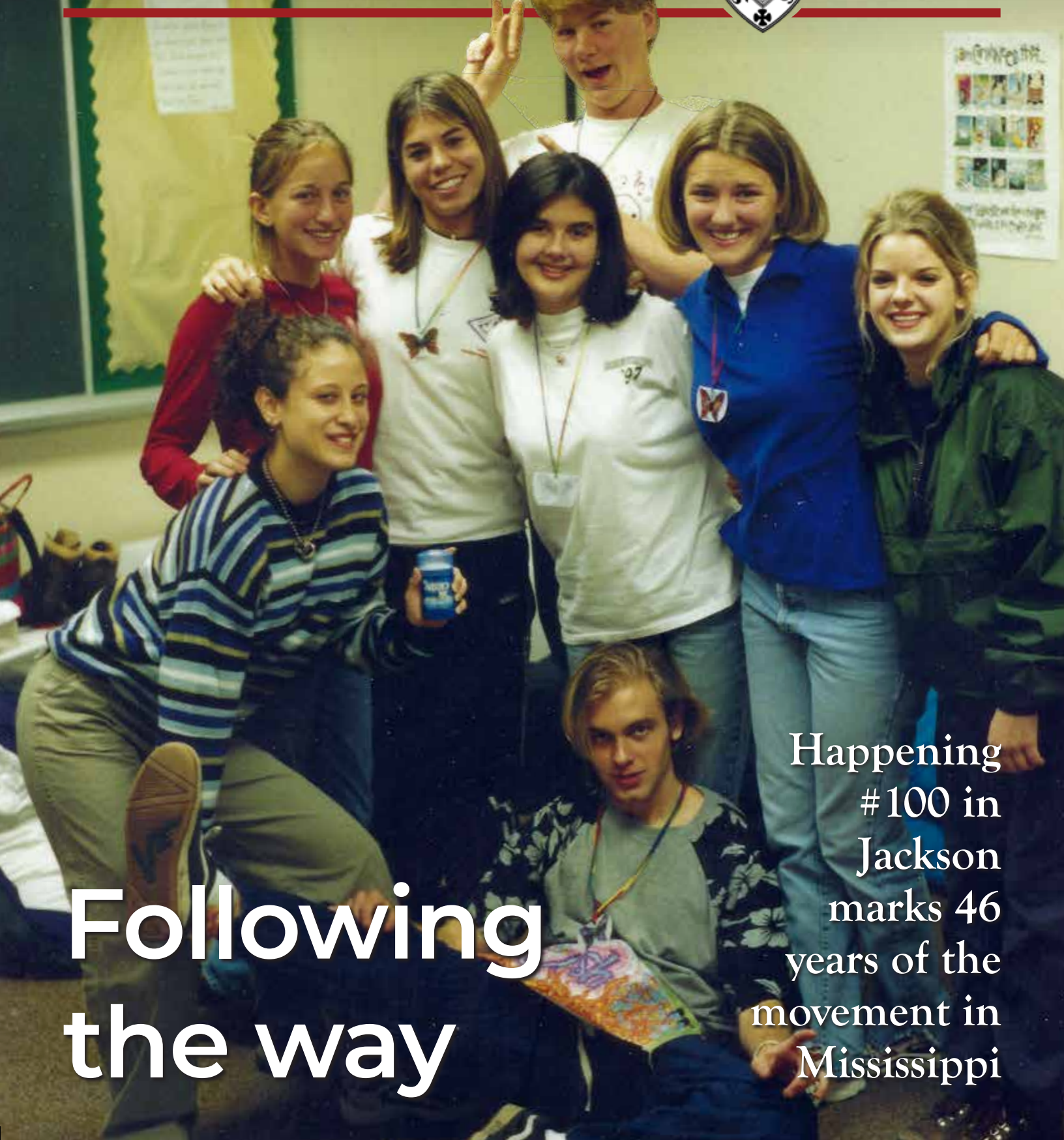


THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN

The Official Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi



Volume 151
Issue No. 5
May
2026



Following the way

Happening
#100 in
Jackson
marks 46
years of the
movement in
Mississippi

Letter from the editor



Hi everyone! I'm always glad when you read *The Mississippi Episcopalian*, but this month is especially close to my heart as the bulk of this issue is devoted to celebrating 100 Happenings in our diocese. If you're unfamiliar with Happening, just flip on over to page 11 and learn a bit about it.

I attended many Happening retreats in my teens and twenties and the impact the Happening movement made on my life persists to this day.

I'd like to thank Jo G. Prichard, Cecil Fox (both longtime Happening coordinators during the first 20 years) and diocesan archivist Julia Marks Young for their tremendous help compiling all the information about the 46 years that the Diocese of Mississippi has been involved in the Happening movement.

Even with all that help, I've only been able to pull together a partial list of all the 100 retreats we've held to date. On page 11 of this issue, you'll find that incomplete list as well as a link you can use to help us finish it out for posterity. If you attended or sent a kid to Happening, or were involved in one in any other way and remember any of the info we're missing, I hope you'll use the link there to help us fill out the list.

As always, thanks for reading!

Wil Oakes, Editor and Art Director

DAVENPORT WATTS & DRAKE INVESTMENT ADVISORS, LLC

A REGISTERED INVESTMENT
ADVISORY FIRM OFFERING

Financial Planning, Asset Management,
and Retirement Plan Services

Sonny Davenport

234 West School Street | Ridgeland, MS

www.DavenportWattsDrake.com

Office 601.898.8069 | Cell 601.672.9202

BISHOP'S CORNER

2 **The Second Mountain**

Bishop Wells's baccalaureate address at Rhodes College

4 **Coming Together**

Warren county churches celebrate "Low Sunday" to remember All Saints' School, pray for its future

5 **Following the way**

Happening #100 in Jackson marks 46 years of the movement in Mississippi

11 **Happening history**

Help us fill in the gaps on the dates and locations of all 100 Happenings

13 **This Old Place, made new**

A Q&A with Gray Center Facilities Manager and Co-director of Camp Chad Schwarzauer

15 **Deployment Report Faithful Departed**

16 **Diocesan Calendar**

The Second Mountain

Bishop Wells's
baccalaureate address
at Rhodes College



On May 15, 2026, Bishop Dorothy Sanders Wells returned to her alma mater, Rhodes College in Memphis, to deliver a baccalaureate address to the graduating class of 2026. The following morning, the bishop was honored with the Doctor of Humanities Honoris Causa degree at the commencement ceremony. We present the transcript of her remarks here.

Members of the Class of 2026: Congratulations! Tomorrow morning, you will become the newest alumni of Rhodes College—and will have joined the ranks of some of the most privileged of our nation's college graduates. You will go on to graduate or professional school or employment, eager to move on and flex your newly-minted muscles.

But before that, I hope to offer a few brief words to help you consider what it means to live this incredible one life that you have with the courage, conviction and purpose with which Rhodes College has equipped you.

BISHOP'S CORNER

with The Rt. Rev. Dr.
Dorothy Sanders Wells



In 2019, columnist and author David Brooks introduced us to his intriguing book, *The Second Mountain*, an interesting look at how we might find meaning and purpose in our lives. In *The Second Mountain*, Brooks posits that humankind tends to spend many of our best and most productive years pursuing ascent of what he calls the first mountain. I would describe that first mountain as pursuit of what the world considers a successful career path that may well define our entire earthly existence—business, medicine, law, academics, architecture, engineering, the fine arts, economics, finance, public policy, or (last, but certainly not least) nonprofit community support. We commit ourselves rather wholeheartedly to climbing that first mountain. And, while we climb that first mountain, we tend to be motivated by the accoutrements that society has

placed on that pathway to success: accomplishments, achievements and accolades, compensation and commendation, promotion and prestige.

At some point, Brooks suggests, we may find ourselves beginning to focus on something more than the way in which we make a living and measure our career success: We may begin asking ourselves about how we make a life. We may find ourselves searching for meaning and purpose in a life in which we hadn't given ourselves time or opportunity to process—in the words of Frederick Buechner—the place at which our “deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.” We may begin to connect or reconnect with our particular life passions; sometimes hardships introduce us to passions we never even knew. And that second mountain—I'll call it, the mountain of true meaning and purpose—begins to come into view.

Admittedly, Brooks may, with *The Second Mountain*, have been aiming for an audience with a tad bit more mileage behind them than a class of excited young college graduates, but nonetheless I think his work has some great kernels of wisdom even for those who are just in the earliest phases of this journey of adulting.

In case you might be wondering, I suppose I'm one whom David Brooks might say has climbed the second mountain: After 18 good—and by anyone's measure, successful—years of practicing law here in Memphis, I did something that made colleagues' heads spin: I started over. I allowed myself to deeply listen; I worked with a discernment committee to help me process what had been by the time a decade-long sense of call to ordained ministry. While some folks might have chosen to linger on that first mountain a bit longer, to enjoy the breezes and vistas, and to bask in the sunlight of accomplishments, I chose to climb down. The second mountain was in view, and even though I had no idea what I'd find once I began climbing, what I did find was far more extraordinary than I might have imagined. From the opportunity to walk in loving relationship with God's people in two churches here in the Memphis area came the opportunity to serve 82 churches and three schools in Mississippi. And I'll add this: Being formed well here at Rhodes College—becoming that lifelong learner in every sense of the word—meant that I was prepared

for the changes that were in store in my life. For that, and for every professor here who was invested in my life and my future, I am forever grateful.

So, as you make your way up that first mountain, I long to offer you a few words of advice from someone who began climbing that first mountain a little while ago.


First, I'd encourage you never to lose touch with your life's true passions; find a way to weave those passions into climbing the first mountain. When we keep a pulse on our life's true passions—the things that bring us joy—that first mountain will seem even more fulfilling. It was here at Rhodes that I experienced my first taste of serving the community—helping with an after-school program at a neighborhood center near Downtown. The bug bit me hard—and I never surrendered my love for working to make the world in which we live a better place, one relationship at a time.

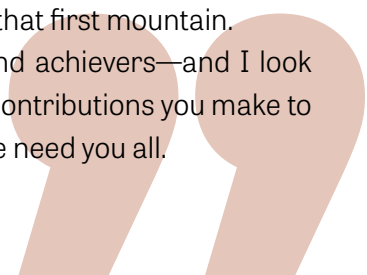
Next, I'd suggest that you do something that life here at Rhodes should have taught you well: stay curious. Ask questions, keep learning. You've been formed as lifelong learners; please remember what an incredible gift that is, and don't ever set that gift aside.

Next, I'd remind you to be observant; look around you. What does the world need, and how do your particular gifts make the world a better place? Be a solid relationship builder in your community; invest in your community and her people and let compassion be your guidepost. Your gifts make the world the place that we all want to see.

And, one last piece of advice: Please don't get too comfortable on that first mountain. The temptation is great: Between the accomplishments and accolades, the compensation and the commendation, the prestige and promotion, it's easy to get so comfortable in that space. Please resist the temptation. You've been equipped well to climb the first mountain. When the urge to move toward that second mountain comes, embrace it; what might await you there could in fact be something so much greater than you ever anticipated, and indeed, could be something even more fulfilling and rewarding than what you experienced on that first mountain.


I salute you all—scholars and achievers—and I look forward to seeing the brilliant contributions you make to our world. Goodness knows, we need you all.

Thank you so very much. 



by Elisabeth Malphurs

The Episcopal churches of Warren County came together on the second Sunday of Easter to worship on the campus of All Saints Episcopal School in Vicksburg. Founded in 1908, All Saints educated generations of young women, and later men, who came from far beyond Vicksburg to board. After closing twenty years ago as a school, All Saints experienced a rebirth as a regional campus for the AmeriCorps program. AmeriCorps and FEMACorps volunteers were trained and deployed all over the southeast from their home base at All Saints, until the program was defunded last spring. In this Easter season of death and resurrection, All Saints is ready for another rebirth, hopefully one which will continue its mission to nurture young people for lives of service.

Spearheaded by Garrett and Dorothy Wallace, members of the Church of the Holy Trinity, and current caretakers of All Saints, our “low Sunday” gathering brought together at least 130 people from Holy Trinity, Christ Church, St. Mary’s, and St. Alban’s. Lee H. Abraham and Patrick Smith led us in toe-tapping music under a sunny sky and delightful breezes. All Saints alumnae, the Rev. Jane Bearden and the Rev. Deacon Cathy Halford, offered their reflections on encountering God through the people and ministry of the school. We shared communion in front of the All Saints Chapel, and then continued the celebration with a potluck lunch outside Johnson Hall. This gathering topped off several weeks of the Warren County churches coming together for Holy Week and the Easter Vigil. Although we are four churches, we are one Episcopal community seeking to make Christ known in Warren County. 



Coming together

Warren county churches celebrate “Low Sunday” to remember All Saints’ School, pray for its future



Photo by Logan Peay

Following the way

Happening #100 in
Jackson marks 46 years of
the movement in Mississippi



by Wil Oakes, with major contributions by
Jo G. Prichard, Cecil Fox, and Julia Marks Young

On March 6, 2026, high school students from every corner of the Diocese of Mississippi convened at St. Andrew's Cathedral in downtown Jackson for a weekend known as Happening.

Happening is a Christian retreat that has now inspired generations of Episcopalians all over the country to engage more deeply with their faith and explore their personal spirituality. For many who've been through the program, it remains one of the most profound experiences of their lives long into adulthood.

Happening is very special.

This particular Happening was extra special, however. The moving talks, faith walks, and super-secret surprises were all there, same as always. But, for Happening in Mississippi, this particular weekend marked a milestone. This was Happening #100, and this group of high school students were following in the footsteps of Happening #1, which took place in those same hallways February 22-24, 1980, 46 years earlier.

In the early years, what was then often referred to as "The Bishop's Happening" came to Mississippi via the Rev.

Robert G. Certain, rector of Trinity, Yazoo City, with the help of the Rev. Joseph D. Rowland of All Saints', Grenada. Those priests served as the first spiritual directors of Happening in Mississippi, with Jo G. Prichard of Yazoo city as the lay coordinator.

The Happening movement originated in Dallas, Texas, and had only been around for 4 years, yet around a third of Episcopal dioceses had already joined. When Mississippi reached out, Certain, Rowland, and Prichard were invited to attend a weekend in San Antonio to observe. Once the program was approved by Bishop Duncan M. Gray, Jr., a team of teens and adults from the Diocese of Southwest Texas, led by teen Rector Curt Christian, came to Mississippi to lead that inaugural Happening weekend at the Cathedral.

In the years since, the Diocese of Mississippi has had the honor of providing that same service to the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast in the Florida Panhandle and south Alabama, the Mississippi United Methodist Conference, and the Lutheran Church in Mississippi. All of these groups still maintain active Happening movements today. The Gulf Coast is on #68 while the Methodists have reached a whopping #108!

In addition to Certain and Rowland, the Rev. Ernie Saik,



Facing page: A 'shrinky-dink' from Happening #1 that belongs to Jo G. Prichard. Shrinky-dinks are a crafting project that are used to make name tags for all participants in every Happening, a tradition still carried on today.



This page: Photos reprinted from issues of The Church News (predecessor of The Mississippi Episcopalian) of Happening retreats in the 1980s at All Saints', Tupelo, and St. James', Jackson.

Page 8: Happening group photos from the late '80s and early '90s.

Pages 9 & 10: Small group Happening photos from the '90s, most from the November '98 Happening at St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson.



Page 10, bottom, from left: Rector John Michael Person, Big Brother (and now TME editor) Wil Oakes, and Observing Rector Davis McGinnis at Happening at All Saints', Tupelo, in the late 2000s. Have Happening knowledge? Help us fill in the gaps by checking page 11.

the Rev. Meredith Spencer, the Rev. John Gibson, the Rev. Stennis Watson, the Rev. Rob Nichols and the Rev. (later to be Bishop) Kee Sloan were active as spiritual directors for these first Happening weekends. Among the lay adults helping orchestrate the early weekends were Prichard and his wife Mary Nell; Nell Temple and Barbara Pritchard of Trinity, Hattiesburg; Jim and Martha Petty of Laurel; Doug Singletary of St. Peter's Gulfport; Nathan Duncan of Tupelo; Marian Dulaney (Fortner) prior to her ordination; Linda Nelson of All Saints', Jackson; and a host of others.

Among the Mississippi teens who were active in leading the initial Mississippi Happening weekends were Steven and Lenzy Fisher; Charles Fowler; Mallory and Liz Yerger of St. James' Jackson; Kyle Bennett and Nick Gault of Columbus; Karen and Kevin Baker of Tupelo; Tom Black of Yazoo City; Alice and Jim Pritchard and Tony Green of Hattiesburg; Elizabeth and Parker Wheatley; Charlie Deaton; Kristen and Guy Williams from Greenwood; Andrew Smith; Marty Nelson; Cindy Gavette; Lisa Dowdle; Chris McMillan and others from All Saints', Jackson; Paul and Rhea Hill and Buddy Turpin of Brookhaven; Amanda Ellis and Jane Tetley of Grenada; Sheri Lee; Marine Bruner (Pace); Frank Burdette and Henry Furr from the Coast; Anne Workman and Reynolds Cheney from Greenville; the now Rev. Paige Ford (Fisher) of Jackson; Mundise Mortimer from Brandon; Bliss Joyner; Charley Belote; and the Guest family from Canton.

Prichard remained as coordinator for the first 16 Happenings in Mississippi, from 1980-1986, and still remembers that time fondly and enthusiastically.

"I believe that Happening has offered our teenagers the opportunity to be a part of extremely positive and affirming peer groups that have supported their journeys in faith and toward adulthood," says Prichard. "It has been a great inspiration and blessing to work with so many Happeners and the parishes that hosted our Happening weekends! It's something I'll treasure forever!"

His son, Gibson Prichard, also got deeply into Happening.

"Since my father had been closely involved with Happening since its inception, I had some understanding about what to expect, but there were many things that

came as a complete surprise to me," says the younger Prichard. "I think I felt warm and loved and appreciated for who I was as a person, which was a new feeling for me at the time. Teenage years can be difficult and the joy and acceptance I found at Happening continues to illumine my life over 40 years later."

Jo G. Prichard was the first in a line of devoted coordinators for Happening, which have through the years included Richard Lawrence, Chuck Culpepper (just prior to attending seminary), Cecil Fox, Jason Woodcock, Jennifer Deaton (also as a prelude to seminary), Nick Gault, Ann Marie Schott, Deanna Alford, and the Rev. Carrie Duncan.

The experiences of Happeners across the decades are strikingly similar and positive, highlighting the impact of the weekends. Lhay Browning Thriffiley, who attended #15 and #18 in 1986 and '87, remembers them as profound.

"I was blown away by the love I felt there," she says. "The focus was on showing love through action, rather than lecturing from a pulpit, which was how my religious experience had been up to then. I was also amazed that it seemed to be totally led and run by teenagers like me."

Alongside the main Happening program, Happening Reunions, where past Happeners get together for fellowship as well as to offer clandestine support to the new Happeners, began occurring as early as 1983 or '84.

In 1995, the demand for Happening grew so strong that a third weekend per year was added. In addition to providing opportunities for more young people to attend, the summer Happening was intentionally kept smaller to allow smaller parishes the chance to host. Over the years since, the summer Happening has been held some years and others not, in response to the number of youth hoping to attend.

Happening #50 came around in the fall of 2001, with St. Paul's, Meridian, serving as host parish.

Happenings #90 and #91 found themselves sandwiched between two of the biggest obstacles the movement has faced. The 89th installment turned out to be the last for one of the program's most devoted supporters, the Rev. Chuck Culpepper, who died unexpectedly in the summer of 2019. At Happening #90, the lack of Chuck's presence was profoundly felt, though the spirit of Happening lived on. Only two weeks after the



weekend of Happening #91, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Happening #92, scheduled for the fall of 2020, would not take place until the spring of 2022.

The post-COVID recovery was impressive, and much credit goes to Alford and Duncan, as well as to Diocesan Youth Coordinator Whitney Robinson. Smaller gatherings in 2022 and 2023 eased the program back into shape, and to make up for the loss of institutional knowledge, college-aged former youth were brought in to lead the weekends before turning them back over to the high schoolers. The weekends are now back to running at full capacity.


With 100 Happenings in the rearview mirror, the movement looks ahead toward the next 100, ready as ever to “Follow the Way,” in the words of the Happening song sung at closing services each weekend.

“I feel like Happening was where I met the spirit of God,” says Thriffiley. “Prior to that I had been in churches and I had learned about God, but it was so personal when I went to Happening. And several of those people have become deep, lifelong friends. I hope that many who came after me had the same experience that I had.” 🙏





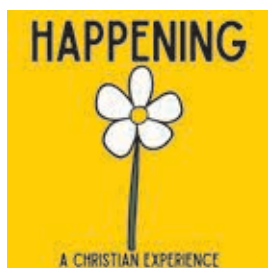
Happening history

As we celebrate 100 Happenings in Mississippi, we're working to recreate the full list of Happening dates and locations. By going through nearly half a century of annual diocesan reports, we've found a lot of this information. As you'll see below, however, there are a number of gaps in those records, and we'd love your help filling them in! There are certain Happenings for which we haven't been able to find any information, but also some that we've put together to the best of our knowledge but may have certain details incorrect. If you attended, sent kids to, or were otherwise involved in any Happening below for which the information is missing or incorrect, please visit msepiscopalian.com/happening-hunt and fill out a quick form to share with us what you know. 



#1	2/22/1980	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson	#32	1994	St. Paul's, Meridian
#2	4/25/1980	St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Gulfport	#33	1994	Trinity, Pass Christian
#3	11/14/1980	Trinity, Yazoo City	#34	1995	St. Columb's, Jackson
#4	2/27/1981	Trinity, Hattiesburg	#35	7/1995	St. Stephen's, Indianola
#5	1981	St. Peter's, Oxford	#36	1995	Trinity, Hattiesburg
#6		St. John's, Pascagoula	#37	1996	St. James', Jackson
#7		St. Paul's, Columbus	#38	1996	St. Peter's, Gulfport
#8		St. Paul's, Meridian	#39	1996	All Saints', Jackson
#9	3/1983	St. Philip's, Jackson	#40	1997	Mediator, Meridian
#10	12/1983	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson	#41	1997	St. James', Greenville
#11	3/1984	All Saints', Tupelo	#42	1997	Holy Trinity, Vicksburg
#12	12/1984	Trinity, Hattiesburg	#43	8/1998	St. Peter's, Oxford
#13	1985	St. James', Jackson	#44	11/1998	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson
#14	1985	All Saints', Grenada	#45	3/19/1999	Incarnation, West Point
#15	1986	Trinity, Vicksburg	#46	1999	St. George's, Clarksdale
#16	1986	St. Patrick's, Long Beach	#47	4/28/2000	St. John's, Pascagoula
#17	1986	Mediator, McComb	#48	2000	Chapel of the Cross, Madison
#18		Trinity, Yazoo City	#49	3/30/2001	Nativity, Greenwood
#19		St. Thomas, Diamondhead	#50	2001	St. Paul's, Meridian
#20	1988	All Saints', Jackson	#51	2002	Trinity, Hattiesburg
#21	1988	Grace, Canton	#52	8/2002	St. Columb's, Ridgeland
#22	4/7/1989	Trinity, Hattiesburg	#53	11/2002	St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Gulfport
#23	12/1/1989	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson	#54	2003	St. James', Greenville
#24	1990	St. Peter's, Oxford	#55	2003	St. John's, Laurel
#25	1990	Trinity, Yazoo City	#56	2003	Creator, Clinton
#26	1991	St. John's, Pascagoula	#57		
#27	1991	St. Philip's, Jackson	#58		
#28	1992	Camp Bratton-Green	#59		
#29	1992	Creator, Clinton	#60	2005	St. Philips', Jackson
#30	3/19/1993	Nativity, Greenwood	#61	2005	St. Timothy's, Southaven
#31			#62	2005	Redeemer, Brookhaven

#63		
#64		
#65		
#66		
#67		
#68		
#69	4/2009	St. John's, Laurel
#70	2009	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson
#71	4/2010	St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Gulfport
#72	2010	Nativity, Greenwood
#73	2011	Mediator, Meridian
#74	2011	All Saints', Tupelo
#75	3/2012	St. James', Jackson
#76	11/1/2012	Chapel of the Cross, Madison
#77	2013	St. Paul's, Meridian
#79	2014	All Saints', Grenada
#80	2014	Trinity, Hattiesburg
#81	2015	St. Columb's, Ridgeland
#82	2015	St. John's, Pascagoula
#83	2016	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson
#84	2016	All Saints', Tupelo
#85	2017	Nativity, Greenwood
#86	2017	St. Paul's, Meridian
#87	2018	St. Philip's, Jackson
#88	2018	St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Gulfport
#89	3/22/2019	Chapel of the Cross, Madison
#90	11/22	St. Peter's, Oxford
#91	3/6/2020	St. James', Jackson
#92	3/2022	All Saints', Tupelo
#93	11/18/2022	St. Columbs', Ridgeland
#94	3/10/2023	Trinity, Hattiesburg
#95	2023	St. Philip's, Jackson
#96	3/2024	St. Peter's, Oxford
#97	11/22/2024	Chapel of the Cross, Madison
#98	3/14/2025	St. Paul's, Columbus
#99	11/21/2025	St. Peter's-by-the-Sea, Gulfport
#100	3/6/2026	St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson



Introducing the Venerable Cathy Halford – Archdeacon, The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi

Following much prayerful discernment, I have called Cathy Halford to serve as Archdeacon for the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi. Cathy was installed into this new role on May 10, 2026, during my visitation to St. Andrew's Cathedral.

The role of the Archdeacon varies between churches and dioceses, but is always in support of the Bishop. Given the geographic dispersion of our deacons throughout the Diocese, Cathy's new role will be to support me in working with our deacons: in helping to build community, in helping to strengthen continuing formation for deacons, and in helping with day-to-day questions as they arise.

We are grateful for Cathy's ministry - and the support that she will be able to give me with our deacons. We ask for your prayers and support of Cathy in this new role.

—Bishop Dorothy Sanders Wells



This Old Place, made new

A Q&A with Gray Center Facilities Manager and Co- director of Camp Chad Schwarzauer



Chad Schwarzauer, a native of Jackson and longtime fan of Camp Bratton-Green, started in the role of Facilities Manager and Co-director of Camp in December 2025. With an extensive background in both residential and commercial construction and a degree in Building Construction Science from Mississippi State, he's brought a great deal of experience to the position. Schwarzauer is particularly fond of restoration of old buildings and has done remodels on historic homes in Belhaven. He recently sat down with TME editor Wil Oakes to talk about his history with and love for camp and his hopes for the future.

So, Chad, tell me about how you first came into the orbit of Bratton-Green and Gray Center?

I went to St Andrew's school growing up, and we would always come out here for a day late in spring semester. So, I was out here for that, those day trips, which were always great, and then when I went into sixth grade, I believe is when EYC started, and I went to St. James' and Buddy Stallings was in charge of our youth group program, and he brought in Richard Lawrence, I know you know who he is...

He's a legend.

Right? And then Richard brought in Jason Woodcock, who was dating Beth at the time, and Jamie Dickson and Nat Duncan. And I know I'm leaving out some really

important people—Ben David—just like, if you can think of an all-star team, and they were our youth leaders. Obviously I had no idea how good I had it at the time, right? So I started doing every single DOY that I could possibly do. I was at every EYC meeting. I only went to a summer session one year, and it was when Jason was a permie and Chuck Culpepper was my cabin dad. I've just been the luckiest person to be surrounded by all the best of the best. I came out—I think it was the second Winter Solstice that was my first Winter Solstice, and I did all four years. And my last one was the first year over on the camp side, and I remember it snowed right after the dance. I was in my tux and everything, and went and did a belly flop slide down the hill by the pool. It was just always my favorite place. I wasn't always the most popular kid around and I was small and skinny and Bratton-Green was always the safe place.

So you got a lot out of it spiritually, but also in terms of confidence and life wisdom?

I think it was actually at Happening where we had to write down five things we wanted to accomplish and one of them for me was I wanted to learn how to fix things on my house. I wanted to learn carpentry. You know, Jesus is a carpenter, so there's got to be something to it. After high school, I made it a point to get into construction, start learning construction. And so now that's that's been a big part of my life and my career.

How did you first get hooked up with Chip and Cathy and the idea of this job. How did that all come about?

Well, I hadn't been out to Bratton-Green in a number of years, and I was working a commercial millwork job. I was traveling all over the southeast, and I don't remember who reached out to me or how I found out, but Nat was redoing the outside of the cabins and try and get them insulated. And I don't know if I ran into Jason somewhere or what, but somebody said something about going out there and doing some work on the weekend. So I started joining Nat and Corey and Jason and Buddy and a number of other people. Mike Stanton was out there good bit. People would come and go. For pretty much every weekend that spring, up until camp started that summer, I was out here working, and then I found out about the Alumni Association while I was doing all this volunteer stuff, and so I joined that, and would come out to the weekends as needed. And then at the one last October, Cathy said something about this position becoming available. And I kind of shrugged it off, because I had a bunch of projects of my own that I had going that were pretty demanding.

Oh, you didn't think you'd be interested at first?

I was like, nah, you know, probably not. But then for the next week or two, it just kind of stayed rattling around in the back of my head. I finally talked to Lynn, who I'm dating and who lives in New Orleans with her two kids, about it, and I was like, "look, I know this is kind of the opposite direction of New Orleans. This is 30, 35, 45 minutes, the other way, but I really haven't been able to shake this thought and just, you know, the synergy of it all, and what it would mean and what I can give back." And she was fully supportive of it. You know, she grew up in Baton Rouge. She's Episcopalian from down there, and went to the Episcopal school. And, you know, summer camps were a big deal for her growing up. So we talked, and the stars seemed to align. So I got back in touch with Chip and Cathy, and I was like, I think I want to try to talk about this and see what we can make happen. And I'm so grateful to both of them. I wouldn't be here if Chip hadn't taken care of things the way he has the last few years.

That's amazing. What are some of the projects that you've already completed that you're most excited about?

Getting the dish pit rebuilt has been a big one—right out of the gate, pretty big undertaking, and Jason and Buddy [Turpin] really helped out tremendously with that. I definitely would not have been able to do that project without their assistance, their volunteer time. The sale of the north side, getting through all those hurdles. The transition of moving all the physical stuff out of that space, and also prepping it and having it ready for the deconsecration, Working with Quiet Waters, hand in hand with them as they take over the north side, that was a huge accomplishment.


What else... Stopping the pool from leaking! Oh, my goodness, that's one that I'm very proud of. We're working with this pool savant named Big Al. He walked up to that pool, he walked around it, you know, licked his finger, stuck it up in the air for about three seconds, and said, "okay, this, this, this." And, I mean, within almost no time he had it. The leak stopped. And it doesn't just not leak. All the lights are properly grounded. All the lights are totally functional. He put in depth markers, all kinds of things, and then the cool deck is supposed to start hopefully in the next couple of days. That's going to transform not just the esthetics of the pool, this new coating should cut down on a lot of that heat transfer and make it so people don't feel the need to run to hop into the pool, which will help with slip hazards and falling and a number of things.

And new storm shelters, new access control gate, lots of other things. Those are the big projects I'm most excited about, the ones that are completed and the ones that are near completion.

It's impressive what you've accomplished already, and I love your enthusiasm for the place. It really comes through when you talk about this stuff.

This is a special place out here. If folks haven't been lucky enough to experience it, I hope they'll take any opportunity to find that exposure, because I could not imagine my life without it. It lives strong in people's hearts for a reason. I'm excited to be here and hope to, for the next generation, at least give them a piece, if not more, of what I was able and fortunate enough to experience—what those before me created.

That's awesome, man. We're really grateful to have you. See you at the Culpepper cookout?

Every day, I'll be here. 

Deployment Report

Faithful Departed

Please submit Faithful Departed notices to your church for submission.

There are no entries to Faithful Departed this month.

Churches seeking full or part-time clergy

Redeemer, Biloxi
Redeemer, Brookhaven
Calvary, Cleveland
St. Thomas, Diamondhead
St. Pierre's, Gautier
All Saints, Grenada
Ascension, Hattiesburg
St. Paul's, Meridian
Trinity, Natchez
Resurrection, Starkville
Holy Trinity, Vicksburg
Church of the Nativity, Water Valley

Churches seeking supply clergy

St. Stephen's, Batesville
Good Shepherd, Columbus
Holy Trinity, Crystal Springs
Christ Church, Holly Springs
All Saints, Inverness
All Saints, Jackson
St. Christopher's, Jackson
St. Mark's, Jackson
St. Matthew's, Kosciusko
Calvary, Michigan City
St. James, Port Gibson
Church of the Good Shepherd, Terry

Questions about deployment should be directed to
The Rev. Canon Gary Meade, Canon to the Ordinary,
gmeade@dioms.org; 601-948-5954 x114.

THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN

The Official Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi



The Official Magazine of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi

118 N. Congress Street | P.O. Box 23107
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-3107

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Dorothy Sanders Wells, XI
Bishop of Mississippi, Publisher

Wil Oakes, Oakes Creative Agency, Editor & Art Director
The Rev. Scott Lenoir, Liz Evans, & Julia Marks Young,
copyeditors

The Mississippi Episcopalian (USPS 024755) is published
monthly by the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, 118 N.
Congress Street, Jackson, MS 39201.

Diocesan Calendar

May

- 25** Allin House Closed for Memorial Day
- 27** *TME-news* Published
- 28** Central Convocation Clericus, The Chapel of the Cross, 11:30am – 1:00pm
- 28** Standing Committee, Allin House, 1:30 – 5:00pm
- 30** Alumni Gathering/Eucharist/Deconsecration, All Saints School, Vicksburg, 9:00am – 1:00pm
- 31** Bishop Wells visits Chapel of the Cross, Madison

June

- 1-5** Living Our Vows Residency, Roslyn Conference Center, Richmond, VA
- 1** Completion of your Annual Audit
- 2** Small Churches Collaborative, Zoom, 2:00 - 3:00pm
- 5** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 7** Bishop Wells visits Incarnation, West Point
- 10** *TME-news* Published
- 11** Finance Committee, Allin House, 11:30am – 2:30pm
- 12-13** A.C. Marble Convocation, Online, 12:00 noon
- 12** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 15** *The Mississippi Episcopalian* July deadline
- 18** Executive Committee, St. Andrew's Cathedral, 11:30am – 3:30pm
- 19** Allin House closed for Juneteenth
- 19** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 20** Ordination of Deacons (Voc & Trans), St. Andrew's Cathedral, 10:30am
- 21** 62nd Commemoration Service for slain civil rights workers, Philadelphia
- 21** Bishop Wells visits St. Christopher's, Jackson
- 24** *TME-news* Published
- 28** Bishop Wells visits Good Shepherd, Columbus

we want stories . . .

about your church, your ministry, your school...
or whatever is on your Episcopal mind! Send us
fully realized stories, photos, or just ideas at
msepiscopalian@dioms.org.

July

- 3** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 4** Allin House closed for July 4th
- 7** Small Churches Collaborative, Zoom, 2:00pm
- 8** *TME-news* Published
- 9** Trustees meeting, Allin House, 1:00 – 4:00pm
- 15** *The Mississippi Episcopalian* August deadline
- 17-18** A.C. Marble Convocation, online, 12:00 noon
- 17** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 22** *TME-news* Published
- 31** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon

August

- 2** Bishop Wells visits St. Mary's, Vicksburg
- 4** Small Churches Collaborative, Zoom, 2:00 - 3:00pm
- 6-7** Commission on Ministry
- 7** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 9** Bishop Wells visits St. Columb's, Ridgeland
- 12** *TME-news* Published
- 14-15** A. C. Marble Convocation, Solomon Center
- 15** *The Mississippi Episcopalian* September deadline
- 16** Bishop Wells visits Advent, Sumner
- 21** Submission deadline for *TME-news*, 12:00 noon
- 23** Bishop Wells visits St. Thomas, Belzoni
- 26** *TME-news* Published
- 27** Standing Committee, Zoom
- 30** Bishop Wells visits St. Mark's, Gulfport

Submission deadlines—next six months
(always available at
msepiscopalian.com/submissions)

July 2026 issue

June 15, 2026

August 2026 issue

July 15, 2026

September 2026 issue

August 17, 2026

October 2026 issue

September 15, 2026

November 2026 issue

October 15, 2026

December 2026 issue

November 16, 2026



The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi
dioms.org
118 N. Congress Street
P.O. Box 23107
Jackson, Mississippi 39225-3107

The Mississippi Episcopalian is published at msepiscopalian.org monthly, and in print annually in February of each year. For more information, visit the website or email the editor at msepiscopalian@dioms.org.

A Happening small group poses for a silly photo from Happening at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Jackson in 1998. The diocese is celebrating 100 Happenings since the movement came to Mississippi in 1980. to learn more about the history of Happening, see page 5.

