

FOUR CONVENTION WORKSHOPS

Each attendee will be able to participate in two workshops as each one will be offered twice.

WORKSHOP #1

“The Saint Stephen’s Story: How Care of Creation has led to Church Growth, Unity, and a Renewed Vision”

Presenter: The Rev. John Burruss, Rector of Saint Stephen’s, Birmingham

In this session, the Rev. John Burruss will share the story of Saint Stephen’s—how a commitment to the care of creation has helped shape a renewed sense of purpose and belonging. He will also offer practical steps communities can take to better care for creation, cast a shared vision, and empower both parishioners and clergy alike.

The Rev. John Burruss Bio:

The Rev. John B. Burruss serves as the Rector of Saint Stephen’s Episcopal Church in Birmingham, Alabama, a vibrant church of 2000 members that reaches throughout the region. Saint Stephen’s is a leader in the Episcopal Church in its efforts to care for creation. As the first church in central Alabama to tackle Solar Energy, Saint Stephen’s is also home of a parish apiary, hosts monthly Holy Hikes and an annual Canoecharist on the Cahaba River, has an ambitious program to remove all invasive species from the 6-acre campus and introduce native plants, and incorporates frequent formation opportunities around Stewardship of Creation. Prior to serving at Saint Stephen’s, John was the Canon for Sustainable Ministries for the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee.

John is a graduate of Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana and Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia and completed his MBA at Christian Brothers University in Memphis. In his free time, John enjoys playing in a number of musical ensembles including his original band, Sauce Furnace. John and his spouse, Anne, have two children: Jack and Bailey.



WORKSHOP #2

“Diving deeper into Antarctic seas: What it means to you and me”

Presenter: Dr. James McClintock, Professor at the University of Alabama Birmingham

In this session, Dr. James McClintock will share how, as a young scientist, he came to know and study the rich biodiversity of the spectacular life in Antarctic seas. He will review how these unique and now environmentally challenged organisms are important to all of us, from their interrelationships that structure and sustain ecological communities to their production of novel chemicals that have the potential to treat human diseases such as cancer.

Dr. James McClintock Bio:

James B. McClintock is the Endowed University Professor of Polar and Marine Biology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He earned his B.S. from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and his Ph.D. from the University of South Florida. A member of the UAB faculty since 1987, he previously served as Dean of the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics and Interim Dean of the Graduate School.



Funded continuously by the National Science Foundation for more than three decades, Dr. McClintock is an internationally recognized authority on Antarctic marine chemical ecology and the impacts of climate change and ocean acidification on polar marine ecosystems. He has led 16 research expeditions to Antarctica and published more than 300 peer-reviewed scientific papers.

Dr. McClintock is the author of *Lost Antarctica: Adventures in a Disappearing Land* and *A Naturalist Goes Fishing*. His work has been featured widely in national and international media, and he is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and The Explorers Club. In recognition of his contributions to Antarctic science, “McClintock Point” was named in his honor.

WORKSHOP #3

“Sharing Light & Love: Evangelism Through Service and Community Partnership”

Presenter: The Rev. Lydia Knizley Johnson, Missioner for Development and Evangelism

This interactive, hope-filled workshop will focus on how your church can authentically engage more deeply with your local community through service that shares real hope and healing. Together we'll practice simple, hands-on discernment tools you can take back to help your church decide where and how to get involved. This workshop is designed to help congregations recognize where love is already at work around them and join in in meaningful, faithful ways.

The Rev. Lydia Johnson Bio:

The Rev. Lydia Knizley Johnson is a native of Mobile, Alabama, where she first fell in love with the Episcopal Church as a student at St. Paul's Episcopal School. She and her husband, Wyatt, are raising two wonderful kids, Will (13) and Lisee (8), who keep life busy, joyful, and full of lacrosse. Lydia served for many years as Director of Christian Education at St. Paul's Church, where she founded and ran the Raise the Roof Project, a home repair ministry. In 2020, Lydia graduated with the first class from the School for Ministry. She has served and interned at Good Shepherd, Trinity, and Christ Church

Cathedral. Lydia joined the Bishop's staff in 2021 as Missioner for Development and Evangelism. She also serves as chaplain for Wilmer Hall and chaplain to summer staff at Beckwith. Lydia loves meeting new people, collecting stories, and believes God is always at work, sowing seeds of faith and hope in every season of life and ministry.



WORKSHOP #4

“From Chaos to Creation: Conflict Resolution in Everyday Life “

Presenter: Anita Ford, Pastoral Care Leader

This workshop explores reconciliation as creative, spiritual work rooted in the Genesis creation story and James Weldon Johnson’s *The Creation*. Through scripture, poetry, and small-group conversation, participants reflect on reconciliation with self, neighbor, and God—and how everyday acts of reconciliation help fulfill God’s ongoing work of creation in a divided world.

Anita Ford Bio:

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, a trained Mourner’s Path facilitator, and a graduate in the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center’s Mediation Skills Training Institute. She has received continuing-education training in the subjects of depression and suicide and has been equipped to provide first-responder help to adults experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis. Relating to children, she has received instruction in building resilience and helping them process grief, and is certified to be a surrogate parent by the Florida Department and Learning Resources System. Anita is a pastoral care instructor/leader for the Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast and the former pastoral care minister at St. Christopher’s in Pensacola. She lives with her husband and their four-legged canine child, Charlotte Ann.

