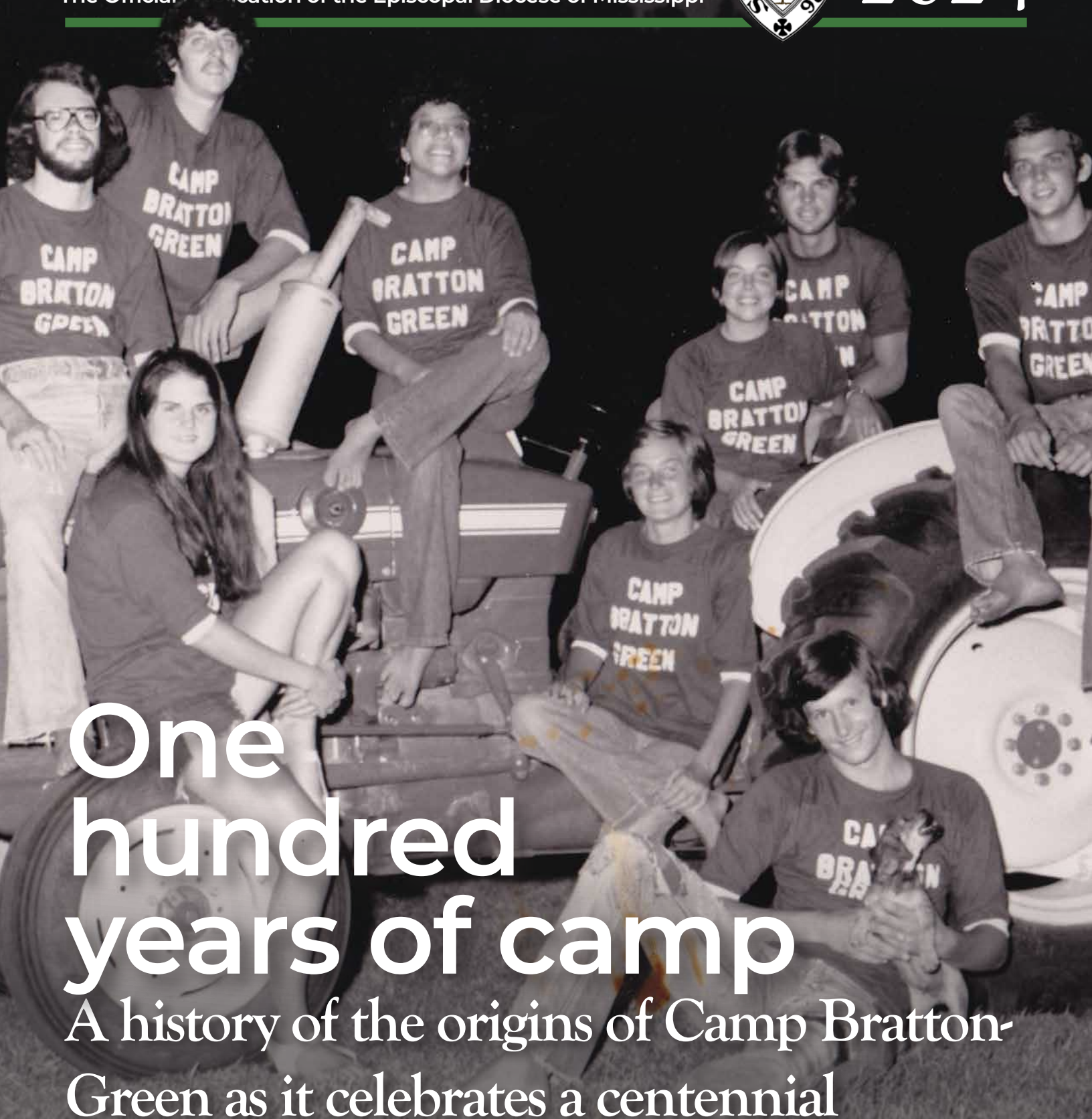


THE MISSISSIPPI EPISCOPALIAN

The Official Publication of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi

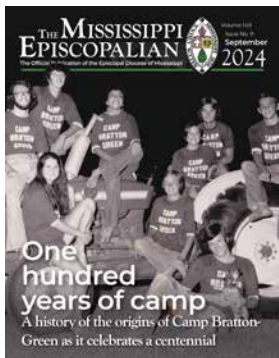


Volume 149
Issue No. 9
September
2024



One hundred years of camp

A history of the origins of Camp Bratton-Green as it celebrates a centennial



On the cover: *The Camp Bratton-Green Permanent Staff of 1974 poses for a photo on a tractor. The Permanent Staff, comprised of college students hired to run the camp during the summer, was established in 1963. A history of the early years of camp is on page 7.*

Letter from the editor



Thank you for once again taking the time to explore what's going on in the diocese through this edition of *The Mississippi Episcopalian*.

Before you dig into this month's stories, I hope you'll take a second to let me offer you a reminder and an announcement.

The reminder, in case you missed it last month or have forgotten, is that the submission deadline for the magazine has changed and is now the 20th day of the month prior to the issue being submitted for (or on the next business day should the 20th fall on a weekend or holiday). If you find that confusing, a list of the next six months' submission deadlines can be found on page 12 of this issue or any time at msepiscopalian.com/submissions.

The announcement is that, unfortunately, this issue will be the last to appear in print in 2024. The rest of this year's issues will be online-only. We intend to establish a consistent print schedule again in 2025, but budget concerns have prompted us to take a hiatus so we can reassess and determine how to balance our print and online editions to best serve you while remaining good stewards of diocesan resources.

Thank you, as always, for your love of our diocese and for reading *The Mississippi Episcopalian*.

Wil Oakes, Editor and Art Director

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A discipline of gratitude

The United Thank Offering supports mission and ministry

by **Brenda Hawkins, UTO Coordinator**

The United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. Through UTO, individuals are invited to embrace and deepen a personal daily spiritual discipline of gratitude. UTO encourages people to notice the good things that happen each day, give thanks to God for those blessings and make an offering for each blessing using a UTO Blue Box. UTO is entrusted to receive the offerings, and to distribute the 100% of what is collected to support innovative mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal Church and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

To learn more about how to participate in the United Thank Offering go to the website: episcopalchurch.org/uto. You can find resources to copy and distribute in your church to raise funds including bulletin resources, Vacation Bible School resources, printable blue boxes, inserts and coordinator guides.



This year, the focus of our 2025 grant process is “the care of Creation”. We also want to promote Creation care in our gratitude practices. See the website for criteria in the coming months.

All UTO parish offerings should be sent by check made out to UTO to:

UTO Coordinator, Brenda Hawkins
330 Lakewood Road
Vicksburg, MS 39180

Offerings should be sent by November 15, 2024 to be submitted in this year's annual giving.

We are a thankful people. I'm thankful for each of you. What are you thankful for? 🍀



Brenda Davis Hawkins is the UTO Coordinator for the Diocese of Mississippi. To reach her by phone, call or text 601.573.6962

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Wells-traveled

Bishop Wells visits 43 churches in 51 stops in her first few months in Mississippi

Since joining the diocesan staff at the beginning of May, Bishop Wells has kept an intense schedule, visiting 43 churches (including 23 before her ordination and consecration). On top of that, visits to schools and other sites as well as a handful of second church visits (already!) have made for a joyfully hectic start to her episcopacy. All that travel has made for quite a haul of photos—we share just a handful of those here. To see even more, visit msepiscopalian.com!



St. Paul's, Meridian



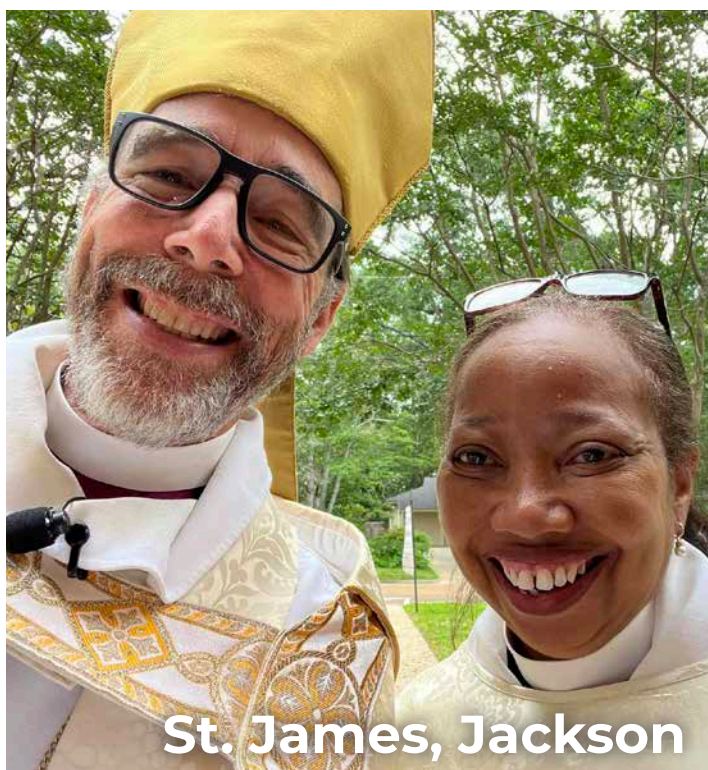
Trinity, Natchez



Advent, Sumner



Redeemer, Brookhaven



St. James, Jackson

- 4/28: St. Mark's, Jackson
- 5/5: St. James, Jackson
- 5/12: St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson
- 5/16: All Saints School/Americorps
- 5/18: Holy Trinity, Vicksburg
- 5/19: Chapel of the Cross, Rolling Fork
- 5/26: Mediator, Meridian
- 5/26: St. Paul's, Meridian
- 5/27: Trinity, Yazoo City
- 5/31: St. George's, Clarksdale
- 6/1: Nativity, Greenwood
- 6/2: Advent, Sumner
- 6/5: St. Christopher's, Jackson
- 6/9: Redeemer, Brookhaven
- 6/16: Calvary, Cleveland
- 6/16: Redeemer, Greenville
- 6/17: St. James, Greenville
- 6/17: St. John's, Leland
- 6/17: St. Stephen's, Indianola
- 6/18: All Saints, Inverness
- 6/18: St. Thomas, Belzoni
- 6/30: Trinity, Natchez
- 6/30: Christ Church, Church Hill
- 7/7: St. Mary's, Vicksburg
- 7/14: Trinity, Yazoo City
- 7/21: Seating at St. Andrew's Cathedral
- 7/23: Chapel of the Cross, Madison
- 7/24: St. Peter's-by-the-Lake, Brandon
- 7/28: Mediator, Meridian
- 7/28: St. Mark's, Gulfport
- 7/29: St. John's, Pascagoula
- 7/29: St. Pierre's, Gautier
- 7/30: St. John's, Ocean Springs
- 7/31: Redeemer, Biloxi
- 7/31: St. Peter's By-the-Sea, Gulfport
- 8/1: Coast Episcopal School
- 8/1: St. Patrick's, Long Beach
- 8/2: Trinity, Pass Christian
- 8/2: Christ Church, Bay St. Louis
- 8/2: St. Paul's, Picayune
- 8/4: St. Thomas, Diamondhead
- 8/4: Ascension, Hattiesburg
- 8/5: Trinity, Hattiesburg
- 8/7: St. Luke's, Brandon
- 8/11: St. Columb's, Ridgeland
- 8/18: Advent, Sumner
- 8/25: St. Thomas, Belzoni
- 9/4: Nativity, Greenwood
- 9/5: St. Mary's, Lexington
- 9/8: Incarnation, West Point
- 9/9: St. Peter's, Oxford (Burial service for the Rev. Wilson Webb)
- 9/11: St. Andrew's Middle and Upper Schools
- 9/12: St. Philip's, Jackson

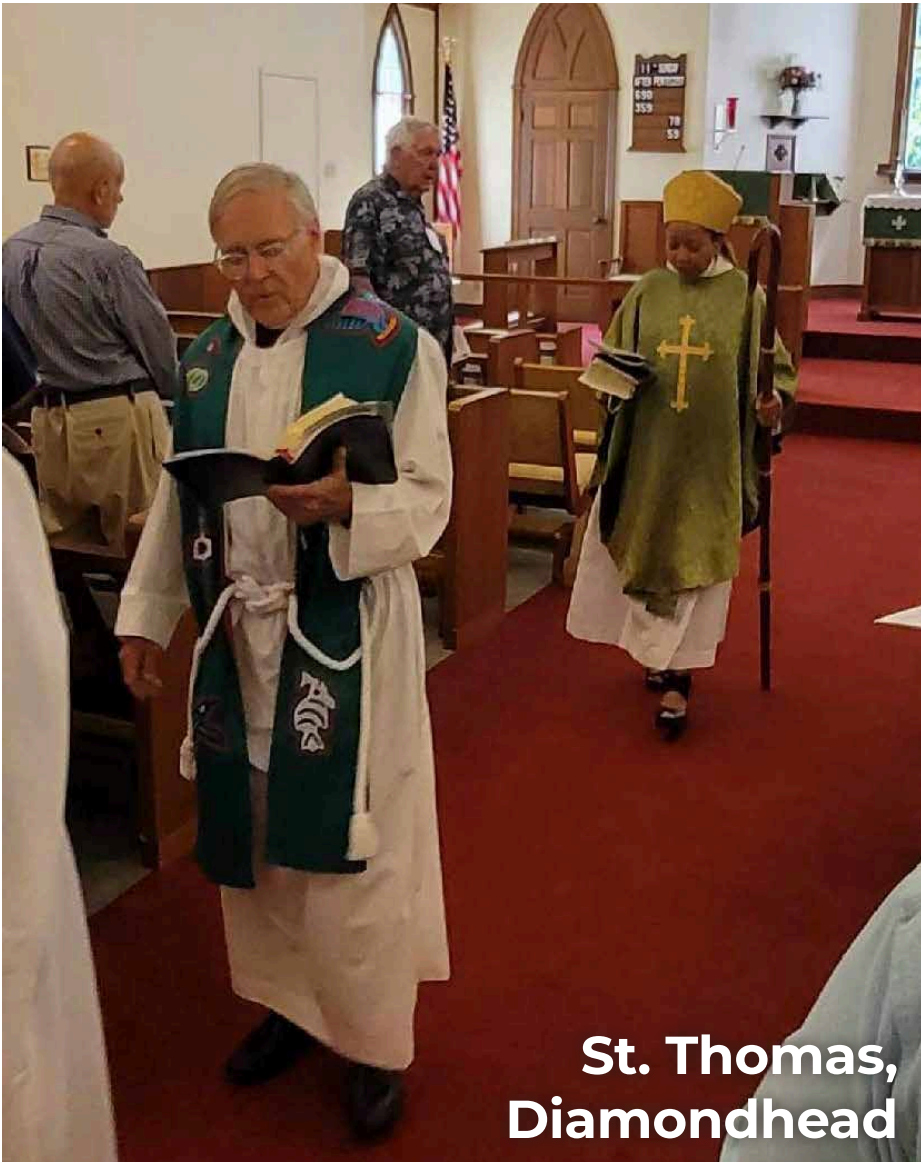




**St. Mary's,
Lexington**



**Trinity, Pass
Christian**



**St. Thomas,
Diamondhead**



**Incarnation,
West Point**



Trinity, Hattiesburg



St. Columb's, Ridgeland



General Convention, Louisville, Kentucky

One hundred years of CAMP



Camp Bratton-Green photo from the 1930 session held at Castellion Springs resort north of Jackson.

A history of the origins of Camp Bratton-Green as it celebrates a centennial

One of the charms of Camp Bratton-Green has always been that it's small. This past summer, at any given session, camper enrollment topped out shy of 100 campers. CBG has always been scrappy, too—making the most with lesser budgets and fewer facilities than other camps. This keeps the emphasis on human relationships and also makes it possible for more kids to attend regardless of their parents' incomes (tiered pricing and scholarships mean no one is turned away for financial reasons).

Still, camp's humble beginnings a century ago this year make the present-day camp look like a massive institution. When the Diocese of Mississippi held its first ever summer camp at the Gulf Coast Junior Military Academy on the beach between Gulfport and Biloxi in the summer of 1924, the enrollment was five campers. They paid 10 dollars each.

Then-Bishop of Mississippi Theodore Dubose Bratton presided over an amorphous diocese, very loosely connected and, in those days, struggling with churches experiencing stalled or declining membership. Bratton

wisely saw youth programs as a way to shore up the church's future, and tapped the Rev. Bradner Moore of St. Peter's, Oxford, to spearhead a summer camp. Moore, in turn, recruited an Ole Miss freshman, Girault Jones (whose family influence on summer camp in the diocese has been tremendous and continues to this day), to round up some young men for the program.

The Diocese of Mississippi and the world were very different then. Those first five campers had to travel to the coast on roads that were rutted gravel affairs in the best of circumstances, scarcely more than dirt trails in others. Babe Ruth was in the prime of his career. The radio was the latest hot piece of tech.

Throughout the rest of the 20s, camp persisted but bounced between its coastal venue and the Castellion Springs luxury resort north of Jackson. By most accounts, campers preferred the luxury resort to the military academy.

But camp in the 1920s had plenty in common with camp in the 2020s—skits, games, swimming, sports and, of course, worship and prayer. And after ten years

in operation, what had come to be known as Camp Bratton-Green, named after the bishop who started it and his successor, had a budget of a whopping \$120 and an enrollment of 137 campers. Notably, it had also bucked the trend of most camps of the day and admitted both boys and girls, who played and worshipped together.

Of the 1933 camp, held in June, *The Church News* reported:

Camp Bratton Green, Castalion Springs, has just closed the most successful year in its history, the best spirit among the campers, splendid cooperation. Bishop Bratton and Bishop Green were in constant attendance, each bishop leading a daily conference among the adult members of the camp.

After a decade and a half bouncing from location to location, it was decided that All Saints' School in Vicksburg would become Bratton-Green's home in 1939. It was in some ways a very appropriate venue since camp at that time was much more school-like than it is now.

In addition to their fun activities like a daily trip to Vicksburg's city pool, campers took classes like Prayer Book, Christian Family Living, and Church History.

Singing at meals, however, would have looked very familiar to anyone who's been to lunch at camp in modern times:

"Campers jumped up and down so hard that the glasses bounced on the tables," according to W.G. Christian, the headmaster of the school at the time.

In 1943, Duncan Gray, Sr., was elected bishop, and one of his goals was to build a physical site for camp to call its permanent home.

"Camp Bratton-Green is the most important and helpful of our diocesan gatherings," said Gray. "We who have known Camp Bratton-Green over the years find it hard to exaggerate the values of its fellowship and training. Friendships formed at church camp are the sort that endure."

In 1946, Bishop Gray took a look at a property ten miles north of Canton called Rose Hill—it was beautiful and came with a house equipped with sheets, towels, and china, as well as a cow, a horse, and a mule named Ella.



From top: the camp dock in 1950, Permanent Staffers (including future Bishop Duncan Gray III, top right) stop for a photo during the summer of 1969, the Permanent Staff of 1973 in front of the Chapel. Thanks to Jason Woodcock and Julia Young, diocesan archivist, for help with archival Bratton-Green photos.

The asking price was out of reach at first, but in late March when the bishop was making his annual visit to Columbus, he got some good news from the rector there, the Rev. Cecil B. Jones Jr., who was also serving as the camp director at the time. He'd received an offer to buy the property for \$32,000.

The deal closed just over three weeks later, and the era of Bratton-Green as it's known today began.

The work was only just beginning, though. The house on the property (home in modern times to the members of the Permanent Staff) wasn't nearly large enough to house the campers. Money had to be raised, cabins and a dining hall built, and the land had to be tamed.

Jones recalled the state of the property this way:

The big house was in very good condition, but that was it. Down a dusty road were glimpses of the lake where the children were going to swim, all over grown, moccasin heads sticking up out of the surface of the water... Briers, bushes, vines, snakes, yellow jackets and wasps nests were everywhere. Pine stumps stuck out of the water like candles on a birthday cake...

He, along with Bishop Gray and a small army of men and women who volunteered, did much of the work themselves—erecting cabins, felling trees, building a swimming pier, cleaning the site. Even the mule pulled a mowing plow to clear waist-high grasses.

Rose Hill hosted campers for the first time in 1947—which also marked the first year of multiple camp sessions. For the first seven years, the very first session was a 'work camp' to improve the facilities. A version of this lives on in modern times in the form of camp alumni association work sessions held throughout the year.

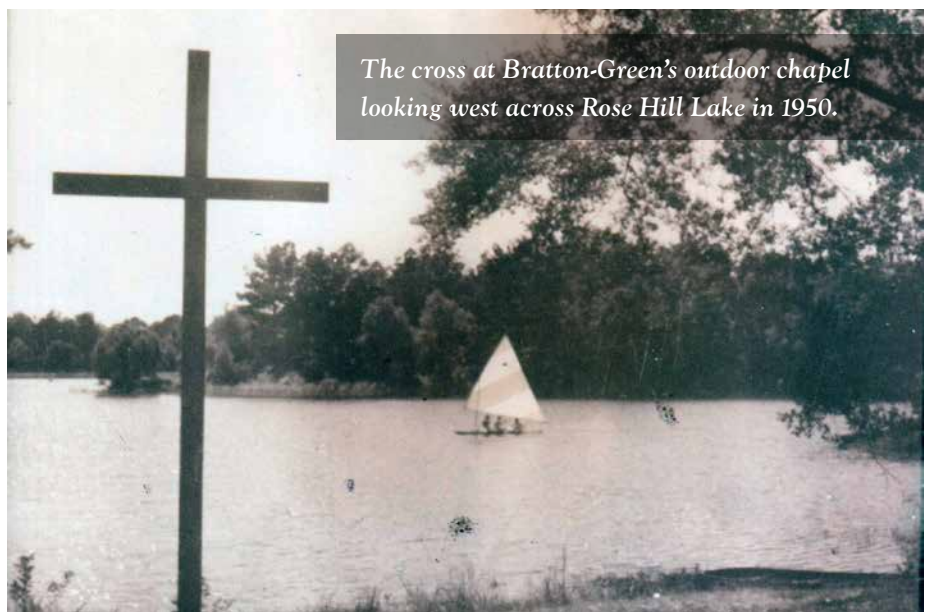
There were many milestones to come in the ensuing decades. A permanent dining hall, administration building, recreation hall, well, and swimming pool were completed in 1954. Permanent cabins throughout the latter half of that decade. An arts and crafts shack added in 1959.

On top of the physical improvements, camp changed in other ways. The first Permanent Staff of college students was introduced in 1963. The first Special Session for people with all sorts of disabilities was held in 1968. Special Session, which remains a cornerstone of Bratton-Green to this day, hosts campers of all ages, and some have attended for as many as 50 years. The influence of this camp is perhaps even greater for the young people who come to serve as counselors and learn the true meaning of service.

The most infamous date in camp history, of course, came decades later on December 21, 1990, when a powerful tornado leveled most of Bratton-Green. When Jones, who served in his role at camp for thirty years before his retirement, heard the news, he reportedly said, "Well, we built it in three months. You'll have to rebuild it in three months."

Of course, camp was rebuilt, though it wasn't really built in three months either the first time or the second. It's been in a constant state of building now for 100 years, with each new generation of campers picking up the mantle and renewing it for the next. There's no telling what the next 100 years of camp will bring. 🏡

This article is adapted from Camp Bratton-Green: As Remembered by Many Who Experienced It by Linda Kay, Ed.D., 1991. To read the full manuscript, visit msepiscopalian.com/camp. Additional reporting by the Rev. Hugh "Scoop" Jones.



The cross at Bratton-Green's outdoor chapel looking west across Rose Hill Lake in 1950.



Please submit Faithful Departed notices to your church for submission

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William J. "Bill" Toler, 95, communicant of All Saints', Inverness, died June 22, 2024.

Lynn Alexander Schaffarzick, 77, communicant of St. James', Greenville, died July 15, 2024.

Mr. William "Bill" Duchie, 85, communicant of St. Luke's, Brandon, died July 20, 2024.

Elizabeth Moss Fullilove, 88, communicant of St. James, Greenville, died August 1, 2024.

Kathryn "Kitty" MacCullagh, 78, communicant of St. Patrick's, Long Beach died, August 9, 2024.

John Anthony Barron, 93, communicant of St. Paul's, Columbus, died August 18, 2024.

Judy Lynn Davies, 81, communicant of St. Pierre's, Gautier, died August 19, 2024.

The Rev. James Wilson Webb, Jr., 78, having served St. Stephen's, Indianola; St. James', Port Gibson; as Dean of the Old River Convocation; as regular supply for All Saints', Inverness, following retirement, and receiving the Griffin Award for Study in the Holy Land in 2000, died August 29, 2024.

Deployment Report

New Calls and Transitions

The Rev. Linda Healy changed her status to non-parochial on July 28th

The Rev. James Wilson Webb, Jr., former rector at St. James Episcopal Church in Port Gibson, MS, St. Stephen's in Indianola, and acting priest at All Saints Church in Inverness, MS, died August 29.

The Rev. Elizabeth Wheatley-Jones transferred out of the diocese to Trinity Episcopal Church in Bend, Oregon as of August 31

Churches/Chaplaincies in Transition

Redeemer, Brookhaven

Calvary, Cleveland

Good Shepherd, Columbus

Christ Church, Holly Springs

St. James', Jackson (as of 8/31/2024)

St. Matthew's, Kosciusko

Mediator, Meridian

Trinity, Natchez

St. Peter's, Oxford

**Canterbury: Mississippi State University /
Resurrection, Starkville**

Incarnation, West Point



Godly Play

New opportunities for creative formation arrive on the coast

August 18th, 9:00 a.m., marked the beginning of an exciting opportunity for families in the Bay St. Louis and Waveland area who are searching for a creative, wholesome Christian Education program for their children ages 3 years through 3rd grade. Godly Play—a curriculum full of story, wonder and play will be taught at Christ Episcopal Church, located at 912 S Beach Boulevard, Bay St. Louis.


The Godly Play program this year is spear-headed by retired educators, Nadine Holzbauer and Ruth Winter.

“We are excited about working with this program, it’s Montessori based,” says Winter. “We learn a different Bible story every Sunday. We use special hands on kits for the children to experience the stories in their own way,” said Ruth.

More information about the Godly Play curriculum can be found online at godlyplayfoundation.org.



GODLY PLAY
FOUNDATION

For more information, you may call Christ Episcopal Church at (228) 467-7757. 

“I have no greater joy than this, to hear that my children are walking in the truth.” -3 John 4.

Diocesan Calendar

Diocesan Meetings continue by Zoom unless otherwise noted. Though the Diocesan Staff works in a hybrid model (office and home), the Allin House is staffed daily, M-Th, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Fridays (through Labor Day) 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

September

- 26** Executive Committee, St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson; 11:30 am - 3:30 pm
- 27-29** Cursillo "Refresh" Alumni event, Camp Bratton-Green
- 29** Bishop Wells visits St. James', Port Gibson

October

- 1** Small Churches Collaborative, online
- 3** Racial Reconciliation Task Force Meeting; 12:00 noon
- 3-4** Sewanee Annual Trustees Board Meeting
- 6** Bishop Wells visits Resurrection, Starkville
- 13** Bishop Wells visits St. Paul's, Meridian
- 15** 1% Seminary Support Due to Diocesan Office
- 18-19** A.C. Marble School, online
- 18-20** Jr. High DOY, Camp Bratton-Green
- 19** Commission on Ministry, location TBD
- 20** Bishop Wells visits Calvary, Cleveland
- 20** Bishop Wells visits Grace, Rosedale
- 21** *The Mississippi Episcopalian* November deadline; 12:00 noon
- 21-23** Clergy Conference, Tupelo
- 23** Standing Committee, Allin House
- 24** Trustees Meeting, Allin House; 1:00 - 4:00 pm
- 26** AWWY, Middle Area, Chapel of the Cross, Madison
- 27** Bishop Wells visits Trinity, Natchez
- 27** Bishop Wells visits Christ Church, Church Hill

November

- 1** Bishop Wells visits All Saints', Jackson
- 1-3** Happening #97 Staff Training
- 2** Installation of the 28th Presiding Bishop, online
- 3** Daylight Saving Time ends - Fall back!
- 3** Bishop Wells visits All Saints', Tupelo
- 5** Small Churches Collaborative, online
- 7** Racial Reconciliation Task Force Meeting; 12:00 noon
- 8-9** A.C. Marble School, Solomon Center
- 9** Fall ECW Conference, St. Peter's-by-the-Lake, Brandon
- 10** Bishop Wells visits St. James', Greenville
- 16** AWWY - Northern Area, St. Peter's, Oxford
- 17** Bishop Wells visits St. Stephen's, Columbia
- 20** Deadline for Lay Leadership Relicensing
- 20** *The Mississippi Episcopalian* December deadline; 12:00 noon
- 22-24** Happening #97, Chapel of the Cross, Madison
- 27-29** Allin House staff holiday in observance of Thanksgiving
- 28** Thanksgiving Day

December

- 1** Deadline for Submission of Budget Requests/Reports to Annual Council
- 1** VPG % Due
- 3** Small Churches Collaborative, online
- 4** Racial Reconciliation Task Force Meeting; 12:00 noon

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.

Submission deadlines for the next six months (always available at msepiscopalian.com/submissions):

October 2024 issue
September 20th, 2024

November 2024 issue
October 21st, 2024

December 2024 issue
November 20th, 2024

January 2025 issue
December 20th, 2024

February 2025 issue
January 21st, 2025

March 2025 issue
February 20th, 2025

Community of St. Joseph welcomes new oblate novitiates

The Community of St. Joseph received three oblate novitiates into the Order of St. Benedict at St. Pierre's Episcopal Church in late August. Pictured are (front row) novitiates Shari Penton, Robert Brandon, and the Rev. Chris Schaefer, rector of St. Pierre's. The Rev. Scott Lenoir and Br. Jacob Luke Taylor (back row) officiated the reception standing in for Br. Vincent Ignatius, Superior of the Community. To learn more about the Mississippi based Community of St. Joseph log on csjms.org.



Leading the next generation

The Rev. Rick Roessler shares a Book of Common Prayer moment with young parishioners Connor Burgos and Fletcher McInnis at Church of the Holy Trinity, Vicksburg, on August 4th following a Sunday service.



Farewell, Canon Ponder

The Rev. Canon Brian Ponder takes his leave from the diocesan office for a second time



Archival photo from the February 1997 edition of The Mississippi Episcopalian. Original caption: "Members of the diocesan staff include, from left, Catherine Johns, secretary to the bishop; Liley Gilbert, bookkeeper; and Brian Ponder, clerical assistant. Johns was also elected registrar for the 170th Annual Council."

After nearly three decades of service to the church in Mississippi and Tennessee, the Rev. Canon Brian Ponder announced his resignation as Canon to the Ordinary. It was his second stint working for the diocese, after starting his career in the church as a clerical assistant in the mid-nineties before heading to seminary.

In his resignation letter, Ponder wrote, in part:


It has been an honor and a sacred privilege over these past nine years to serve among you through my work at the Allin House. I am grateful for the trust placed in me and for our partnership in ministry. I never could have imagined in 2001 when I left the diocesan staff headed to seminary that I would return in 2015 at Bishop Seage's invitation. To work alongside you, our Bishops, diocesan leadership, committees, and communities has grown and stretched me in ways unimaginable, and I have welcomed its challenges and graces.

One of the most profound graces for me in our shared ministries over this time has been the opportunity, again and again, to worship with many of you on Sundays and throughout the week. To have been invited into your parishes and missions to preach and celebrate the Eucharist, to hear from you at coffee hour, to work with your vestries or mission committees and the clergy that serve

our churches, to share in good conversation in the Sunday School classroom, and to work as colleagues in ministry has been an absolute joy.

Thank you.

Bishop Wells wrote, in announcing Ponder's departure, "I know that you join me in thanking Brian for his faithful service to this Diocese, as a priest and pastor, and as a member of the Diocesan staff, and we envelop him in prayers as he rests and renews."

Ponder is taking a sabbatical, during which he plans to continue a course of study at St. John's University School of Theology and Seminary. 



Meade to serve as new Canon to the Ordinary

Bishop Wells announced that the Rev. Gary Meade has accepted the call to serve as the Diocese of Mississippi's next Canon to the Ordinary, beginning November 1. Currently serving as the Interim Dean of St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Memphis, the Rev. Meade has served parishes in the Episcopal Diocese of West Tennessee and the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande. The Rev. Canon Chip Davis will serve as interim Canon to the Ordinary until the Rev. Meade's arrival.




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Rose Hill has been the home of Camp Bratton-Green since 1947, though the history of Bratton-Green in the Diocese of Mississippi dates back 100 years to when the first camp was held on the Gulf Coast in 1924. To learn more about the early years of CBG, see page 7.