



Appleton Episcopal Ministries

Annual Report 2016

As the oldest community ministry in the Diocese of Atlanta, Appleton Episcopal Ministries has served children and families for nearly fifteen decades. Appleton's mission is *Sharing God's love by partnering as parishes in the Middle Georgia Convocation to promote the health, education, safety and well-being of children and families.* Operating within the Middle Georgia Convocation, the parishes represented by Appleton's Board of Governors include All Angels, Eatonton; St. Stephen's, Milledgeville; Christ Church, Macon; St. Paul, Macon; St. Francis, Macon; All Saints, Warner Robins; St. Christopher, Perry; St. Andrew's, Fort Valley; St. Luke's, Fort Valley; and St. Mary's, Montezuma. Our lay-driven structure promotes communication, cooperation, and creative thinking to expand outreach opportunities throughout the convocation. Together, we are able to leverage multiple resources to make a much larger impact in our communities.

In late 2015, many parishes in the Diocese contributed as directed in Canon 24 to the annual Thanksgiving offering for Appleton, and we put this generosity to work in 2016. Combining these gifts with the assessments paid by the parishes of the Middle Georgia Convocation and quarterly distributions from our endowment, the Board of Governors awarded several program grants for January 1 start dates. With support from Appleton, parishes established a new diaper ministry, funded an afterschool arts enrichment program, and provided weekend food for the homeless and hungry in Macon; supported a protein food pantry in Eatonton; made possible a field trip to Atlanta for students in a tutoring program and underwrote a summer youth choir in Fort Valley; initiated a campus ministry and community outreach program in Milledgeville; and sustained a community garden in Montezuma. These 2016 ministry program grants, which are serving some of the most disadvantaged people in our diocese, would not have happened without the diocesan Thanksgiving offering. Just as important as the financial support provided by Appleton is the partnering of our parishes with other churches, community organizations, and governmental programs to expand overall resources for outreach ministry.

Beginning in May, Missioner Julie Groce and parish representatives met with nearly all of the parishes in the convocation to discuss potential projects for another grant cycle. Interested parishioners, clergy and local citizens dreamed about ideas and plan ways they could utilize Appleton funding and expertise to partner with other churches and community service organizations to initiate new outreach projects or expand existing programs to serve families and children.

Each of the ten parishes in the Middle Georgia Convocation contributed its yearly financial assessment to Appleton, and by combining that 100% participation with the Diocesan Thanksgiving Offering, Appleton has expanded this year beyond our annual program grants to offer small, one-time discretionary grants. Those grants are supporting the start-up of two new Path to Shine programs in Perry and Warner Robins, assisting in the transition of a family bringing their children out of foster care in Eatonton, partnering with several churches in Milledgeville to fund a special Thanksgiving meal for the hungry, and transporting youth in the convocation to the 2016 Annual Diocesan Council lock-in who could not otherwise attend.

On June 5th, Appleton held its second annual celebration and worship service to commemorate the lives of the deaconesses of the Order of St. Katherine. The afternoon began with a procession to the Appleton plot at Rose Hill Cemetery in Macon. Board members and clergy of the Middle Georgia Convocation gathered as The Very Rev. David Probst, Convocation Dean, blessed the graves of five Appleton deaconesses, four orphan girls, and a teacher, all of whom had lived or worked at the Appleton Church Home. The group then joined additional clergy and members of the diocesan community for a special Eucharist service led by Bishop Keith Whitmore at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, adjacent to the original Appleton campus. This year, the Appleton Board and members of the Middle Georgia Convocation are proposing a resolution to Annual Council to nominate the deaconesses of the Order of St. Katherine for sainthood in the Episcopal Church.

On August 27th, Appleton hosted a convocation-wide workshop called A Movable Feast to discuss parish food ministries. Led by Canon John Thompson-Quartey and Missioner Julie Groce, Movable Feast offered participants the chance to share details of each of their parish food ministry. Attendees discussed ways to better coordinate efforts to serve hungry children and families through improved resource collection and distribution, bulk buying, targeted marketing, and a shift to consciously serve our brothers and sisters in Christ as guests by living into our baptismal covenant.

One of the goals of Appleton is to bring the Middle Georgia Convocation together to foster a spirit of closeness and cooperation among the parishes. To that end, Appleton once again sponsored and hosted the Convocation's Pre-Council meeting on September 27th at St. Paul's, Macon. This meeting was scheduled to outline to all Council representatives how Annual Council works, to encourage representatives to run for election to Diocesan committees and trusteeships prior to October and November deadlines, and to discuss and approve the resolution nominating the Appleton Deaconesses for sainthood.

To increase awareness of Appleton as a Diocesan ministry, Missioner Julie Groce joined members of EYC at the 2015 Annual Council Lock-In, where attendees collected canned goods for distribution by Appleton to hungry children and families. This food collection helps to commemorate the annual delivery for more than 120 years by churches in middle Georgia of food, clothing, and supplies to the Appleton Church Home at Thanksgiving to take care of those less fortunate. Mrs. Groce again joined diocese youth in August 2016 at their Annual Service Retreat Day at All Saints Atlanta to collect nearly 20 crates of canned goods and to share with participants how their outreach efforts were benefitting disadvantaged children and families in middle Georgia. Missioner Groce and members of the Appleton board will join EYC participants at the 2016 Annual Council Lock-In to help make sandwiches for a Diocese-wide project and to organize canned goods brought to the lock-in for distribution to the middle Georgia parish food ministries.

2017 shows even greater promise for Appleton. In addition to continuing our program and discretionary grants for parish outreach partnerships, we are raising funds to sponsor a Freedom School in Macon to increase literacy for rising 1st through 3rd graders at four Macon-Bibb County schools. Freedom School will take place for six weeks in June and July 2017 at St. Paul's, Macon. Appleton has recently received a Diocesan Innovation Task Force grant for \$26,384.00, which will

cover 1/3 of the cash costs of this project. Appleton is matching this grant with more than \$37,000 in in-kind contributions and is cooperating with multiple community organizations to make Freedom School possible.

For more than 146 years, Appleton has shared God's love with children and families. As we go forward together, we can have confidence that God will continue to powerfully use us to spread God's love through this ministry. We look forward to another year of service with God's grace and generosity.

Members of the 2016 Appleton Board of Governors have been:

Ann Eubanks, Chair
Dr. Michael Webb, Vice-Chairman
Martha Ray, Secretary
Linda Plowden, Treasurer
Alfred Ellis
Dr. Tracie Jenkins
Debbie Liipfert
Rev. Julia Mitchener
Mariann Overton
Stuart Rumph
Deacon Arthur Villarreal, Liason to Clericus

Respectfully submitted,

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