

## Campus Missioner Report 2020

2020 was a different year for campus ministries in Macon. In January some students and I attended the annual Young Adult Retreat at Camp Mikell. It is always good to be at Mikell and to connect with other campus missioners and students from the Diocese. In March we took a spring break mission trip to Birmingham to visit the Legacy Museum and Martin Luther King's former church. It was a powerful time of learning about our nation's history of racism and how that still plays out today. This trip was an ongoing part of our Welcome the Stranger grant and initiative. We spent time before the trip in Bible Study and prayer to prepare.

Shortly after the trip, life changed dramatically. As a result of the pandemic, students were sent home and pivoted to virtual learning. Students at Canterbury House remained.

We began meeting weekly on Zoom with around 5 to 6 participants. We mainly prayed evening prayer together and used this as a time to vent, ground ourselves, and connect in a scary time.

When it became clear students would not return for the semester, we began to plan a Diocesan college baccalaureate service. ELF graduated five seniors this past year and the baccalaureate service was the only graduation recognition some of them were able to participate in. I also mailed out graduation cords with a handwritten note and small gift (religious jewelry). We also mailed out finals cram care packs to students at home.

We continued to meet over the summer via Zoom to give the students a safe space to talk and some social interaction. Two of our students were sick over the summer, one with COVID and one with testicular cancer (Freeman). I provided pastoral care and care packs to them throughout their illness. They are both recovered.

In the fall ELF decided to stay virtual with an occasional in person meeting outdoors. We read Bishop Curry's book, *Love is the Way* together. It was an incredibly stressful and exhausting semester for most students, so a lot of pastoral care was done.

We also welcomed four new students to the Canterbury House residential ministry in the fall. It has been a different year of residential living as our social interactions are so limited, but the wonderful students who live there are still gifts to us all.

The students have been on extended holiday break and return Jan 7. They were able to get Christmas care packs because of the donations of our support churches. (And they really liked their Christmas care packs).

Thank you for the ways you have supported our students in this difficult time. Your prayers, financial support, and presence has been a gift to them. Many of our students enjoy your daily prayer and worship broadcasts. Some have enjoyed participating in leadership in these ministries. Your creativity and commitment to being the church no matter the circumstances have not gone unnoticed or unappreciated.

Respectfully submitted, Dena Hobbs, Macon Campus Missioner