

This summer, I performed my Lilly Summer Discernment Institute internship at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Huntsville and All Saints' Episcopal Church in Homewood. At both parishes, I was exposed to both the outwardly visible aspects of leading parish ministry as well as the less public responsibilities of being a priest, including pastoral care and administrative duties. For the most part, I worked with the priests of both of these parishes. At St. Thomas, these were the Reverends Matt Doss and Allison Liles, and at All Saints', they were the Reverends Eric Stelle and Jack Alvey. Each of these priests either has a young family or has not yet begun a family, which showed me what it is like to be young and ordained.

At both parishes, I participated in liturgy as a Eucharistic Minister and as a lector. Sharing the Eucharist with others for whom it possesses deep meaning is an exciting experience for me, since I am considering ordained ministry and have always found Christ central in my own life and work. I also gave a homily while at both parishes, which I found to be the most challenging aspect of my internship; I seek to become more confident in my own ability to interpret scripture and share it with others in a palatable way. My favorite and most enjoyable part of working at these two parishes was performing pastoral care visits. I felt like my visits were meaningful to both myself and to the people I visited, and enjoyed spending time with people and listening to their needs.

I worked in the Diocese of Alabama at an exciting and dynamic time; clergy are currently involved in response to not only Alabama's April 27 tornadoes but also to Alabama immigration Bill HB56. I was able to participate in a Habitat for Humanity tornado rebuilding project, which showed me how I could become part of a positive Christian reaction to a current issue taking place both within and outside the church. I attended both a clergy meeting and a march and vigil

in opposition to the immigration bill, which revealed a great deal of solidarity among people of faith as well as among humanity as a whole.

My interest in church ministry and being an active Episcopalian has been affirmed through this experience; I am still discerning how to best show my love for God and my neighbor through my vocation. I feel called to struggle alongside God's people as they seek meaning in a difficult world, and will continue to pursue my answer to God's calling in my life.