



Living It Out

the newsletter of greater birmingham ministries

Fall 2004

Inside this Issue

2 - 3

Reigniting
Constitutional
Reform

Living Wage

Peace Pilgrimage

4 - 5

Jefferson County
Dept. of Health

Building Bridges

Getting Out to Vote

Lead Safe Baby
Club at CLEPP

Education Research

Bread for the
World Event

6 - 7

Mental Health
Seminar

Public Health Care

Environmental
Justice

Community Day

Our Mission

is to serve God's purpose of Justice and Peace by assuaging the wounds of the community and by struggling in *community* to realize more just systems and more faithful relationships.

NO ROOM FOR ROSEDALE?

The recent dismissal by the courts of a suit brought by Rosedale against the city of Homewood for failure to protect their neighborhood from commercial encroachment is just one more in a long string of setbacks for this once-thriving community. Settled by African American families in the 1890's, Rosedale is Homewood's oldest neighborhood, and this year it was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Many of the original residents bought lots, and built their own homes in a variety of architectural styles with bungalows being the most prevalent. Rosedale Elementary School and three historic neighborhood churches were constructed early in the last century. Hartselle sandstone mined from the northern edge of Rosedale was used in the construction of these and many other neighborhood structures. Two of these churches, Bethel AME and Union Baptist, represent the longest continuous places of worship in Homewood.

In the late 1920's Rosedale came together with the Hollywood and Edgewood neighborhoods to form the city of Homewood. Over the past 60 years the central business area of Homewood has encroached into Rosedale so that today only about 24 acres of the original 83 remain. Much of this encroachment occurred during the 1950's and 60's when the city government attempted to completely replace Rosedale with the "Southgate Shopping Mall." Although this effort was abandoned after a legal battle, it created a long term precedent of encouraging real estate speculation in much of the residential property and of repeated requests to rezone these areas for commercial use. Because of the ongoing pressures of land speculation and rezoning initiatives, only minimal reinvestment in residential property has taken place, and the housing stock has steadily declined.

In 1984 a group of residents formed the Rosedale Community Development Corporation to preserve and improve the neighborhood. During the past 10 years they have worked with various entities,

Continued on page 3

GBM CELEBRATES 35 YEARS OF WORKING WITH AND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

It was 1969, the year of Hurricane Camille. It was the year that Richard Nixon succeeded Lyndon Johnson as President of the United States, Golda Meir became Prime Minister of Israel, Yasser Arafat was appointed leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Neil Armstrong became the first person to land on the moon, Sesame Street premiered and ARPANET (predecessor to the Internet) was created. Not drawing nearly as much attention, it was also the year the United Methodist Church established Greater Birmingham Ministries.

On June 16, 1969, the Interim Board of Directors of GBM held their first meeting. Moved by the agenda of the Civil Rights movement to address issues of social and economic justice, the founders of GBM sought a way to bring faith to bear on the multiple crises that affected poor persons and those excluded from justice in ways that answered the question "who is my neighbor?" with authentic inclusiveness.

Continued on page 6



JAMZ 95.7 delivers school supplies to GBM for distribution to needy children. They collected the supplies at various K-Mart stores. Special thanks to Micky Gee of the Pants Store for connecting JAMZ with GBM and for helping with school uniforms.

Economic

... Listening to and working alongside low-income neighborhoods and concerned ...

REIGNITING CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

We are delighted to report GBM has reignited our Constitutional Reform (CR) Education Campaign. Building upon the lessons learned from last year's failed tax reform amendment, we have regrouped and reshaped our CR campaign efforts.

Our first task was to find a Project Director for the campaign, and we are very pleased to announce that **Mark Berte** was hired to serve in that capacity. Since April, he has been busy redeveloping the work plan and meeting with GBM committees, past and present constitutional reform leaders and other people with ideas on how to build an effective movement. Please feel free to contact Mark at the office if you have any ideas that you would like to discuss.

In August we hired **Melissa Patrick** as the CR Training Organizer to refine the curriculum that will be used to help small groups analyze and discuss the day-to-day impacts of the state's constitution on the lives of citizens around the state. In addition, she will coordinate the volunteer training activities for the campaign. We are piloting our efforts in Birmingham this fall and will adapt them for implementation throughout the State of Alabama in 2005.

As we celebrate the 35 years that GBM has been serving this community, many of us have discussed time and time again how most of the problems that we encounter are rooted in the outdated 1901 State Constitution. Sadly, we do not have to look far for an example: the transit bill killed in the last legislative session is just one manifestation of how the constitution holds back progress for our state. Legislators from across the state were effective in preventing the people of Jefferson County from raising the matching funds needed to draw down millions of Federal

dollars already allocated for mass transportation in the Metropolitan area. The lack of home rule has been institutionalized by the Constitution and prevents those most affected to make choices to better their lives.

We are excited about the opportunity to create some grassroots momentum for changing these foundational problems and look forward to working with you all as we discuss and act out our beliefs on how to create a more just government. For more information, please visit our web site at www.gbm.org.

We, the citizens of Alabama, will vote this November to remove racist and discriminatory language from our State constitution. On November 2, please vote "Yes" on Amendment 2 to remove the verbal hatred now. Also, if you have time on election day to ask people to sign a petition calling for a constitutional convention, please contact Mark at GBM.

FIGHTING FOR A LIVING WAGE

"No business which depends for existence on paying less than living wages to its workers has the right to exist in this country." FDR

The first minimum wage was established during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt as a means of ensuring that the above statement was in fact enforced. Since then the minimum wage followed the trend of a rising cost of living until 1968 when the wage was at its highest ever - \$8.14 an hour. Despite the continuing rise in the cost of living since the 1960s, today's minimum wage is only \$5.15. In 1968 the salary range in large corporations typically ranged from minimum wage to salaries 38 times higher. Today that same range is from minimum wage to salaries typically 449 times higher. Reinstating a minimum wage that is also a living wage, a wage that allows an individual or family to live above the current poverty level, would help narrow this gap. The current minimum wage is equivalent to an annual salary of only \$10,712 per year, 12.2%

below the 2001 poverty line for a family of two. In addition, most low paying jobs do not include health benefits, increasing the need for funds on which to survive.

Currently there are two efforts to establish some sort of living wage legislation for the City of Birmingham. The Coalition of the Homeless has partnered with the Carpenters Union in an effort to establish such legislation; however, at press time the proposal is lost in committee at City Hall. In addition, the Alabama Appleseed Foundation led by Executive Director John Pickens is assisting by working on an impact study to be done early next year on living wage options for Birmingham.

Continued on page 3



Denise Laffan and Knonomo Utsuni, two Buddhist monks from the Atlanta Dojo come to Birmingham as part of the 6th Annual Peace Pilgrimage in July on their way to Oak Ridge, TN. Their 450 mile journey was a walking prayer for peace and the end of nuclear weapons production.

Justice

... people as they seek to improve their lives and the life of our community ...

LIVING WAGE ...Continued from page 2
As long as people who work full time jobs cannot survive in our city, state and country, then many of our neighbors will continue to fall behind on utility and rental payments, will continue to go hungry and will continue to suffer undue hardship. Some will lose housing, end up living on the streets, sleep in doorways or alleys or cardboard boxes, and work at jobs in oppressive conditions resulting in additional loss of self esteem, hope and courage. Such are the conditions that plague our rich, but wasteful society.

While the push for a living wage will face opposition in these times of economic despair, we must be vigilant against arguments claiming the wage increase would simply throw disposable income to the poor. We must make sure the distinction is made between disposable income and survival income. Survival income requires a living wage to pay ever increasing utility costs in substandard rental property, transportation costs in areas without accessible public transportation, inequitable tax burdens like tax on food and other necessities, the added health costs of those without insurance and the burdens of school costs during these times of under-funding.

Additional information can be obtained from Alabama Appleseed at 334-263-

0086 or visit their web site at www.appleseeds.net/al/

or visit the following web sites:

www.umass.edu/peri/resources/livingwages.htm

www.livingwagecampaign.org,



Please attend the Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform Annual Meeting at Samford University on Tue., Oct. 26, from 1:30 to 5:00 PM. It is free and open to the public.

ROSEDALE ... Continued from page 1
such as Habitat for Humanity, the Greater Birmingham Foundation, YW Homes, the Southern Baptist World Changers and Metro Changers, Jefferson County Economic Development, Outreach International and with multiple volunteers from local churches and Samford University. These partnerships have helped build new residential units and improve many of the existing homes. In 1998 the Auburn University Center for Architecture and Urban Studies partnered with the Tuesday Group to conduct a year-long series of visioning and planning sessions with the Rosedale neighborhood. These meetings were attended by large numbers of residents and generated a high level of enthusiasm and a variety of ideas/strategies. Despite all of these many initiatives, however, the neighborhood has never received the meaningful support from the Homewood Planning Commission and City Council that is essential to stop the long-term real estate speculation that has continued to devour this historic community.

Rosedale lies in the shadow of Vulcan, an historic statue which metropolitan Birmingham invested 10 million dollars to preserve. We struggle, however, to find ways to preserve perhaps the more important part of our history, the communities of people who labored so strenuously and with minimal reward in laying

the foundation of our city. Although many of the residents of Homewood recognize the important contributions of the Rosedale community, one can sense a growing resignation that somehow "progress" and the preservation of Rosedale are not compatible. Over and over again the Rosedale residents are forced to come before the Homewood Planning commission and the City council to try and protect their neighborhood from unrelenting efforts to rezone what remains of their community. Surely the struggle of our Rosedale neighbors calls on all of us to question the morality of a society in which so called "progress" comes at the expense of those least able to defend themselves.

Despite many assurances by previous city administrations to the contrary, the Homewood City Council rezoned a large residential tract in Rosedale for commercial use in 2002/2003. This is especially frustrating in view of so many efforts by so many members to develop a revitalization plan, and comes at a time when the area is particularly vulnerable to further encroachment. Even as this article is being written, another request to rezone several more parcels from residential to commercial is in process. The residents will once again face the indignity of pleading their case at another series of public hearings.

GBM believes that the long history of commercial encroachment into Rosedale cries out for an initiative from the faith community to bring hope and healing to this beleaguered community. After all, what meaning do our beliefs amount to if we ignore the injustices and simply stand by and allow the lure of money to be the dominant force in guiding the future of our communities? Greater Birmingham Ministries' mission is to serve God's purpose of justice by building community and convening constituencies across the lines of race, class, culture, geography, and religion, and we welcome everyone to that table.



Come join the Economic Justice Work Group

Meetings are every Thursday
at GBM from Noon to 1:30 PM.

Bring your lunch and
share in discussing current issues.

For more information

Please contact EJ Co-Chairs
Helen Holdefer at 879-6195 or
Betty Likis at 290-9459

Or call GBM 326-6821
and speak to

Tari Williams (ext 105).

Direct

... Providing Financial help, Personal Assistance and ...

JEFFERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

Though the United States has the latest in health care technology, access to the health care system is a major problem, especially for the uninsured or under-insured. While emergency care is available to all, the poor have a hard time finding treatment for chronic ailments.

Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH) is working to reduce the barriers facing many of the uninsured and under insured of the county. They offer a variety of preventive services ranging from immunizations to family planning. Preventive services can mean the difference between a healthy future and one plagued with chronic disease. Services are available Monday through Friday from 7:45 AM to 5:00 PM at the main office of the Department of Health, at Cooper Green's Comprehensive Care Clinic or at one of the many health clinics located throughout the county. The JCDH will try to schedule an appointment the same day of the call, so go to your local clinic and get the medical care you need to prevent more serious problems later. It is your responsibility to take the necessary steps toward healthy living.

Regarding transportation, anyone on full Medicaid can seek reimbursement of transportation expenses through the Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation Program. Individuals should call 1-800-362-1504 to apply for transportation vouchers between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday through Friday, preferably at least 10 days prior to their appointment. Vouchers can be cashed to reimburse friends or family for rides to appointments, or they can be used to pay for transportation to appointments through one of the many local transportation agencies that honor the vouchers. If a Medicaid recipient has to go to an emergency clinic, they can call Medicaid within 24 hours and

request reimbursement for the actual cost of the transportation to the emergency clinic.

For additional information on services or clinic locations, please contact the Jefferson County Department of Health at 933-9110. For information on Cooper Green's Comprehensive Care Clinic, please call 930-3200.

SCHOOL CHILDREN NEED YOUR HELP

Birmingham City School children are required to wear uniforms, but the cost of a uniform combined with school supplies is more than many families can afford. Donations of white shirts (with sleeves and collar), pants (blue or khaki), socks, underwear, undershirts, belts, are a wonderful way to help a child stay ready for school. Financial donations are also appreciated and can be made to the "GBM Uniform Fund." Please consider giving \$68, the cost of each set of clothes.

For more information, contact Sarah Price or Ernestine Davis at 205-326-6821 or visit www.gbm.org



The Vacation Bible School from South Highlands Presbyterian Church assist stocking shelves of the Food Pantry here at GBM, a great activity for families, youth groups and Sunday Schools. If interested in doing a similar project, call GBM today.

BUILDING BRIDGES

In the day-to-day activities here at GBM, all those who work with Direct Services continue to uncover heart-wrenching stories of survival. Too many mothers must raise their sons and daughters without the support of the children's fathers, with too little support from jobs that pay a minimum wage well below the poverty level and with too little support from an education system that sometimes tries to push the children out of school claiming they "lack interest." We care for mothers who are seriously ill with lupus and cannot work because of severe headaches and high blood pressure that may cause them to collapse anytime. We care for parents who work three part-time jobs to try and make ends meet but end up neglecting themselves and their children. We spend our time and energy building the bridges necessary to support many on their journey. Working together, we close the gaps and seal the cracks in an effort to catch each other before we reach the point of no return.

This year GBM has been able to help build bridges for the elderly in our community through a \$50,000 grant from the Lucille Beeson Fund of Canterbury United Methodist Church. Since receiving the grant, we have helped over 30 elderly individuals ranging in age from 50 to 89 living on fixed incomes between \$400 and \$800 a month. Too often rent or mortgage payments consume over half this income. Many suffer with diabetes, strokes, heart disease and/or a variety of diseases. Some are veterans. Many are care givers to disabled or ill children, grandchildren, neighbors or friends. The empathy which the poor feel for others in need is an inspiration to all of us. Thanks to the Beeson Fund for helping us support those in our community who continue to help others despite their own needs.

S e r v i c e s

... Support for Families and Individuals in Crisis ...

GETTING OUT TO VOTE

GBM's Senior Advocate Voter Registration and Mobilization Program (SAV) is working to improve the quality of life of senior citizens and strengthen their participation in governmental institutions that affect their daily lives. GBM/SAV staff and volunteers are available to assist senior citizens with registering to vote, changing their address and/or applying for absentee ballots. Since 2000, GBM has registered over 600 new voters, both young and old, and assisted many others to update their addresses on record. GBM will also provide transportation to and from the polls for senior citizens on November 2, 2004. If you know of a senior citizen or a group of senior citizens who need any of the aforementioned assistance and/or if you would like to volunteer, please contact Mary Jones or Tari Williams at 205-326-6821.



LEAD SAFE BABY CLUB

Lead Safe Baby Club (LSBC) is a pilot program of CLEPP (Citizens' Lead Education and Poisoning Prevention), a nonprofit community-based organization whose goal is to eliminate environmental hazards that adversely affect the lives of children. CLEPP provides community outreach events, programs to inspect housing conditions, and educational programs that empower families to safeguard homes against environmental hazards.

LSBC is open to all expecting mothers living in Birmingham or Jefferson County with priority given to families of low or moderate income living in homes built before 1978. LSBC provides educational, parenting, and resources workshops on the effects of lead on a child's physical and mental development. A quarterly newsletter also keeps participants informed on environmental health hazards, parenting advice, and prenatal care.

For more info, please call Micah Johnson or Jonika Smith at 780-8077.

EDUCATION RESEARCH

For several weeks this summer, GBM was blessed to have Stephanie Dillard work as an intern through the Southern Education Foundation (SEF) of Atlanta. GBM had just been added as a site for SEF interns. Since this year marks the 50th anniversary of Brown vs. Board of Education, SEF established the internships to focus on the issues of the case and try to see if any of the inequities identified are still existent in the system. Stephanie clearly stated that Brown's vision is not yet realized, though current segregation is more economic. As long as school systems are supported at the neighborhood level, poor neighborhoods will always have inequitable access to education. The task that Stephanie took on was to find out what the people in the community want in their education system. Too often decisions are made by selecting what the empowered few think is best for the disempowered many. "One solution does not solve the problems for all the people." - Stephanie is a graduating senior this year at Stillman College majoring in math. She plans to study education in graduate school before becoming a secondary or high school math teacher.



Come join the Direct Services Work Group.

Meetings are the second Monday of every month at GBM from Noon to 1:00 PM.

Volunteers are needed throughout the week to sort food and clothes for distribution.

Please contact DS Chairperson
Patty Warren at 879-0898

Or call GBM at 326-6821
and speak to
Ernestine Davis (ext 101) or
Sarah Price (ext 102)

BREAD FOR THE WORLD CAMPUS EVENT

"One voice - your voice - can make a difference. Together, acting as one, we can change the world."

This year Bread for the World (BFW) celebrates 30 years of seeking justice as an interfaith voice for ending hunger. BFW is a nonpartisan citizens' movement of 50,000 people of many faiths, lobbying national decision makers on legislation that addresses hunger in our communities and around the world.

As part of a year long celebration, Bread for the World is hosting a campus event for all Birmingham area college students on Monday, October 18, at 7:00 PM. in Brock Forum at Samford University. Confirmed panelists at press time include Rev. David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, U.S. Representative Spencer Bachus, U.S. Representative Artur Davis, CME Bishop Lawrence Reddick and Beloved Community Church Pastor Angie Wright.

The program's focus is to show college students that they can change the world by participating in the voting process and by lobbying Congress on issues that affect poverty, hunger and health in both the U.S. and overseas. Although primarily for college students, the program is open to the public and is free of charge.

For up-to-date information, please visit BFW's calendar of events on their web site at www.bread.org. You may also contact BFW's volunteer district coordinator Elaine VanCleave at 205-979-9470 or elainevc@aol.com.



2004 GBM CHALLENGE

In 2003, students at Mountain Brook Jr. High collected over 2,000 cans for GBM in a 24-hour period. This year, local schools were challenged to do likewise. In September over twenty thousand cans of food were donated. Thanks to all who participated.

Faith In

... working with the faith communities of Birmingham to lend support and resources in...

35 Anniversary ...Continued from page 1

There was much to do. Alabama's poverty rate in 1969 was among the highest in the nation at 25%. Segregation, previously ruled illegal, was still a reality in public education, housing, and employment. There was a growing concern within faith communities. Other efforts had developed within the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church. By 1971 these two additional denominations were also sponsors of GBM. In 1991 the sponsoring groups expanded to include an inter-faith mix of communities.

In the subsequent years, GBM developed strategies for addressing systemic issues that continue until this day. Hearing voiced concerns for access to public buildings for people with disabilities, GBM convened the Task Force on Architectural Barriers that eventually launched Access Unlimited. Responding to the hunger needs of senior citizens, GBM wrote the grant and housed Jefferson County's first Meal on Wheels program. Noting the increased number of homeless men, GBM helped form the Shelter Work Group that launched the Old Firehouse Shelter. Later GBM helped birth PATH (Partnership Assistance to the Homeless) to benefit homeless women. Noting that many powerful interests in the state had lobbyists, but the poor had none, GBM joined two other groups to start Alabama Arise. Examining Birmingham's housing policies, GBM nurtured the development of the Birmingham Center for Affordable Housing and Birmingham Home Ownership Program.

What has it meant to our community that GBM has nurtured these and other organizations that have enhanced the lives of the poor and the non-poor? It would take a small research project to fully answer the question. Certainly tens of thousands of people each year have benefited from the services provided by these organizations. What would not be counted are the

thousands of people, youth and adults, who have found pathways to community service and community organizing through volunteering with these organizations. If it is truly better to give than to receive, the real beneficiary of these organizations is the community at large. Hope is held higher, possibilities are extended further and Shalom appears nearer when people join together to heal the wounds of any of our neighbors. The GBM of today is thankful to all of those who made GBM and the groups GBM nurtured possible. GBM will celebrate our 35th Anniversary in ways that honor our past and say yes to the future as we continue to embrace compassion and justice for all.

As a way to acknowledge the anniversary, GBM is changing the appearance of all its publications. This issue of *Living It Out* reflects the new look which will later be seen in all stationary, business cards and brochures. Keep an eye out for the new look and the events honoring the past 35 years and envisioning our future work.



On Thursday, July 29, GBM held its first Community Day of the year. GBM staff, board, and others met with over 100 of our neighbors to share lunch, to register to vote, to talk about housing, education and a wide range of other issues and concerns. GBM hopes to hold similar events quarterly.

MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

The Mental Health Association of Central Alabama (MHACA) and the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Alabama (NAMI Alabama) will be hosting free seminars beginning in February 2005. The seminars are open to all clergy, administration, and lay leaders in the various faith communities here in Greater Birmingham. Attendees will learn about mental illnesses and the community resources available to help clergy and staff better assist people in their faith communities who are dealing with mental illness.

For more information, including location, please contact Jeff Baxter of MHACA at 933-9393 or Shannon Weston of NAMI of Alabama at 833-8336.

PUBLIC HEALTH CARE

The UAB School of Public Health has recently initiated Congregations for Public Health (CPH), a newly formed non-profit consisting of eight congregations in Birmingham, including the Church of the Reconciler. CPH's mission is to improve public health in each of the communities by trying to disseminate information on various health issues and the many programs sponsored by the Jefferson County Department of Health. The vision of CPH is "congregations reaching out to embrace neighborhoods with programs and services to eliminate disparities and achieve optimal health, education, social and economic well-being." Participating congregations have been assigned a staff member, but volunteers are always needed. If interested in assisting Reconciler, please contact Kevin Ware at 326-6402.

For additional information on the CPH program, please contact Mike Bramlett at UAB at 975-8386.

Community

...a unified effort to create a more just and compassionate way of life for all...

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

With dwindling resources and rising costs, many corporations are pushing for fewer restrictions and less pollution control. People most affected now by the degradation of the environments in which they live now struggle more and more with the effects of slack or unenforced environmental laws.

GBM has always taken a stand to listen to and fight alongside the poor and disenfranchised in our community. The impact of environmental degradation calls us as faithful individuals and organizations to listen and act.

With the help of a donation from the Matthew Fox Planning Committee, GBM has been able to assist in pulling together an Interfaith group to network with the existing environmental agencies, with emerging environmental justice organizations and with communities of faith to help inform the citizens of the issues and to organize volunteers and dedicated individuals to assist with the environmental work. The group - unofficially calling itself the Interfaith Environmental Justice Round Table - has been meeting monthly since June. Already eight faith communities are represented, and at least as many more have been invited to join. If interested, please join us at 5:30 PM the first Tuesday of each month at the Safari Cup in Birmingham.

The Round Table is hoping to focus on the following areas:

Recycling - To help organize information on the services available, help educate business owners and help brainstorm ways of making recycling easier and more business friendly.

Youth - To help coordinate activities for youth, help educate the directors of various youth and/ or religious camps to include environmental justice curricula in their camp programs.

Coordination of Volunteer Projects - To partner with other volunteer coordination agencies to gather information on various volunteer activities, help publicize the activities and assist in coordination of the volunteers.

Interfaith Discussion / Forum - To organize a public gathering where representatives from various faith groups can present and discuss religious views of environmental stewardship and the call to justice.

Liturgy and Rituals - To compile readings and rituals which could be adopted into the liturgy of various faith services to promote environmental and environmental justice issues to congregations.

Earlier this year the Alabama Environmental Forum reconvened after several years off. Currently there are twelve agencies active, with others being approached to join. Those actively participating include the Alabama Chapter of African American Environmental Justice Action Network (AAEJAN), the Alabama Environmental Council (AEC), the Black Warrior Riverkeeper, the Cahaba River Society, Friends of Shades Creek, Ruffner Mountain, the local Sierra Club, the

Southern Environmental Center, the United Earth Alliances and the Village Creek Society.

Cahaba River Society is looking for citizens willing to take an active role protecting the community's drinking water. A recent study identifies the immediate need for local governments to set higher watershed protection standards for development projects in our area, including wise land use planning, more urban revitalization and open space protection. The Cahaba River Society has helped draft ordinances for local governments to adopt. If interested in helping to petition your local officials regarding the adoption of such ordinances, please contact Beth Stewart at 322-5326 ext111 or beths@cahabariversociety.org.

Ruffner Mountain is looking for volunteers to help with a variety of office duties, to help conduct educational programs and to help with all aspects of animal care. If interested, please contact Nicole Smith or Marilyn Raney at 833-8264.

Black Warrior Riverkeeper is the first citizen-based organization dedicated to defending all 6,276 square miles of the Black Warrior River watershed, a major source of drinking water for the people of Alabama, including Birmingham, Bessemer and Tuscaloosa. Our river is being polluted with dangerous toxins of all kinds, including mercury, cyanide and human sewage. Unfortunately, our state government is not enforcing national law that would protect the state waterways. The Black Warrior Riverkeeper organization keeps polluters in line by patrolling the watershed, analyzing permits and working with citizens.

For more information on the Environmental Forum or the Interfaith Environmental Justice Round Table, please contact George Thompson at GBM at 326-6821 (ext 115).

Come join the Faith in Community Work Group

Meetings are the second
Thursday of every month at GBM from
5:00 to 7:00 PM.

Please contact

Hattie Belle Lester at 942-6825

Or call GBM at 326-6821

and speak to

George Thompson (ext 115) or
Robert Montgomery (ext 110)

2004 Board

Sponsoring Faith Communities and Current Board of Directors

African Methodist Episcopal Church

Mabel Clark
Doris Hardy
Tommy Mitchell
Gloria Stutson

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Christopher Perry

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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Episcopal Church USA

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Presbyterian Church USA

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Carolyn Crawford
Lillian Ford
Martina Robison
Sandy Schrohenloher

Roman Catholic Church

Rick Ambrose
Carol Binder
Helen Holdefer
Jerald Norris
Patricia Ross

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church

Carolyn McKinstry

Temple Beth-El (Conservative Judaism)

Sherrie Grunfeld
Jeff Padawer

Temple Emanu-El (Reform Judaism)

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