Department of Lifelong Christian Formation, Youth, College Campus and Young Adult Ministries

Since the 142nd Convention, Christian Formation Ministries in the Diocese of East Carolina have been engaging people in a variety of ways, inviting, inspiring and transforming people to be faithful disciples in East Carolina and beyond.

## Lifelong Christian Formation

Lifelong Christian Formation typically includes five age group divisions for ministry: children, youth, young adults, adults, and older adults. There has been continued growth in ministry areas, and as always, change.

## Formation Leaders

Diocesan Formation Leader Gatherings
Two Zoom gatherings were hosted in the Winter and Spring of 2026.

In February Kate Carney Bond, Canon for Congregational Vitality in the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma led a gathering on guidance and resources for congregations seeking to engage adults in discipleship and Christian Formation.

In April Chris Williamson who currently serves as Special Assistant to the Office of the Bishop here in East Carolina led a gathering on creating welcoming, safe and inclusive spaces within our buildings.

The annual Formation Leader survey went out in late Spring of 2026. Feedback about when and how to meet led to a shift in format beginning in the Fall of 2026.

Lunch & Learns
Scheduled every other month, rotating Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, these hour long gatherings bring in an expert on a particular topic drawn from the Sprint Survey Feedback.

**Volunteer Engagement - Wednesday, August 19, 2026**
with Lauren Wainwright, Director of Youth & Young Adult Formation in the Diocese of Upper South Carolina

**Book Studies for Adults -** Tuesday, October 20, 2026
with Missy Morain, Missioner for Christian Formation, Children, & Youth in The Diocese of Los Angeles

*Upcoming Dates & Topics*
Monday, December 14, 2026
**Intergenerational Ministry** with Sarah Bentley Allred, M.Div., Project Director for Roots & Wings: Intergenerational Formation Collaborative

Wednesday, February 24, 2027
**Processing Grief & Trauma of a Friend or Classmate** with Mary Henry Thompson, Former School Chaplain at St. Mary's Episcopal School

Monday, April 19th and Tuesday, June 8th - *Topics TBA*

Diocesan Forma Memberships
The Diocese of East Carolina is supporting parish formation leaders (those who coordinate ministries with and for children, young people, young adults, and adults) by sponsoring annual membership to Forma: The Network for Christian Formation. *The ministry of Forma is to celebrate, equip, support, and connect leaders who form followers of Jesus.*

Formation Resource Updates
Emails are usually sent quarterly with resources and content for formation leaders, clergy, and any other who are on the email list. These resources include a wide variety of ideas and sources for parish and faith at home use. Anyone is welcome to sign up for these emails. All of the resources are housed under Lifelong Christian Formation on the Dicoesean website.

**Children's Ministry**
Resources continue to be provided for congregations in the area of Children's Ministry. This includes but is not limited to what is posted on the website along with individual congregation curriculum consultations.

**Youth Ministry**
The Diocese hosts 5 annual events for young people at Trinity Center. In 2025 into early 2026 the ECYC hosted Deanery Youth Gatherings in 4 of 5 Deaneries. They hope to revisit these again moving 2027-2028.

ECYC (East Carolina Youth Council) *Term 2026 - 2027*
*Members:*
Ada Ruth Canady - At Large (Christ Church, New Bern)
Jerry Carpenter - Trinity Deanery (Christ Church, New Bern)
Katie Gray Farless - Albemarle Deanery (St. Paul's, Edenton)
*Emily Gowdy Canady – Missioner for Lifelong Christian Formation*

Eloise Haigler - Albemarle Deanery (St. Paul's, Edenton)
Hazel Kate Hughes - Pamlico Deanery (St. Paul's Greenville
*Hannah Hutchens - Adult Member (Christ Church, New Bern)*
Hazel Lee - Lower Cape Fear Deanery (St. Paul's, Wilmington)
Ros Little - Albemarle Deanery (St. Paul's, Edenton)
*Xena Markine-Morrision - Adult Member (St. Stephen's, Goldsboro)*
Sophia Morrison - Trinity Deanery (St. Stephen's, Goldsboro)
Charlie Nipper - Lower Cape Fear Deanery (St. Paul's, Wilmington)
Henry Robertson - (All Saints, Richmond)
Caroline Saylors - Trinity Deanery (St. Stephen's, Goldsboro)
Ellie Saylors - Trinity Deanery, (St. Stephen's, Goldsboro)
*Betsy Shepherd - Adult Member (St. John's, Fayetteville)*
*Gary Stanley - Adult Member (St. Paul's, Edenton)*
Jude Warren - Trinity Deanery, (St. Mary's, Kinston)

The East Carolina Youth Council currently includes 13 young people and 4 adults at this time, representing all 4 of 5 deaneries in the diocese. The ECYC continues to take on more leadership in the Department by designing and facilitating many of the youth events we offer.

In 2026 we welcomed young people from around the diocese and beyond to both new and long-standing events for Middle and High Schoolers.

***Diocesan Offerings***

Youth@Convention

This event is part of Annual Diocesan Convention in February. For the 142nd Convention 16 young people participated. Two young people were elected delegates from their parish and fourteen served as Youth Representatives for their parish.

Winter Retreat 2026

Winter Retreat isis a collaboration between Camp Trinity and the Diocese of East Carolina Youth Ministries. Join 8th through 12th graders who are past Camp Trinity Campers and or, young people from around the Diocese of East Carolina for a weekend of Camp T fun. You do not have to have been a Camp Trinity Camper nor do you have to have ever attended a Diocese of East Carolina Youth Event.

Winter retreat is coordinated by past Camp Trinity Assistant Directors.

Happening 84 & 85

This is a renewal based youth event for high schoolers that is run and supported by other high schoolers. Make a friend, be a friend, bring a friend to Christ. Happening provides a well-

structured environment of talks and activities for high school young people to explore, question and deepen their faith.

Happening #84 was March 6-8, 2026 at Trinity Center
Happening #85 was September 25-27, 2026 at Trinity Center

Happening Coordinator - Ashley Simpson
Spiritual Directors for 84 - The Rev'd Addie Budnick, The Rev'd Phillip Craig
Spiritual Directors for 85 - The Rev'd Melody Perdue, The Rev'd Tom Warren

<u>New Beginnings</u>
April 17th - 19th at Trinity Center
This event is for middle schoolers run by high schoolers and older middle schoolers. New Beginnings seeks to help middle schoolers navigate the emerging world of changing relationships with friends, significant others, family and the world through the lens of their faith.

*Coordinators:*
John Kells, St. John's, Fayetteville
Xena Markine-Morrison, St. Stephen's Goldsboro

*Spiritual Director:*
The Rev'd Michelle Bullock, St. Peter's by the Sea, Swansboro

<u>Fall Conference for Middle Schoolers</u>
*October 16-18, 2026*
Designed for Middle Schoolers by the ECYC. ECYC members served on team along with other High School Young People. This year's theme was ***Live in Contrast.*** The young people engaged in a program built around Galatians 5:22-23 and focused on how we are to focus on the fruits of the spirit, living in contrast to the negativity in the world.. The weekend is full of fellowship, worship, fun and time to be in God's creation.

*Coordinator:*
Hannah Hutchens, Christ Church, New Bern

*Upfront Leadership*
Jerry Carpenter, Christ Church New Bern
Hazel Lee, St. Paul's, Wilmington
Ros Little, St. Paul's, Edenton

*Chaplain:*

The Rev'd Ashley Simpson, St. Paul's Beaufort

Province IV Youth Leadership and Network Meeting
*December 4th-7th, The Diocese of North Carolina*
2 youth and 1 adult members of the ECYC along with the Mission for Lifelong Formation participated in the annual Province IV Youth Leadership and Network Conference Forty plus young people and adults from 14 of the 20 dioceses that make up Province IV gathered to learn from each other and hear annual diocesan reports.

Jude Warren- St. Mary's, Kinston
Jayden Wright - St. Mary's, Kinston
Hannah Hutchens - Christ Church, New Bern

**Adult Formation**
Resources continue to be provided for congregations in the area of Adult Formation Ministry. This includes but is not limited to what is posted on the website along with individual congregation curriculum consultations.

**Young Adult Ministry**
This ministry continues to be one of support and connection of young adults to broader opportunities offered through The Episcopal Church, including the Episcopal Service Corps and the Young Adult Service Corps.

We continue to support parishes actively engaged in ministries with young adults.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Gowdy Canady, M.Ed.
Missioner for Lifelong Christian Formation