

The Scoop

Newsletter for Appleton Episcopal Ministries



Founded in 1870, Appleton's mission is Sharing God's love by partnering with parishes in the Middle Georgia Convocation of the Dioceses of Atlanta to promote the health, education, safety and well-being of children and families

We identify and coordinate resources, establish community partnerships, and create cooperative networks to support programs in Macon, Warner Robins, Milledgeville, Eatonton, Perry, Fort Valley, and Montezuma and their surrounding counties. Currently, Appleton emphasizes programs addressing literacy and education, food insecurity, mental health, and racial reconciliation. Appleton serves all people and does not discriminate on the basis of faith, race, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status.

2024 Ministry Expansion

New Program Director Corley Peth

Appleton Episcopal Ministries is pleased to announce the addition of Corley Peth as our new Program Director. Formerly with Macon's Stratford Academy, Corley has taught history and government for six years at the middle and high school level. During her entire tenure as a teacher, she also served as Head Coach for both Varsity and Middle School Swim Teams. Ms. Peth earned a B.A. in History from Berry College and a Masters in American History from Gettysburg College. She is a Macon native, a Mount de Sales graduate, and a lifelong member of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer (ELCA). Missioner Julie Groce praises Ms. Peth's appointment. "I have known Corley for more than fifteen years, and she is the perfect person for this job."

Beginning in 2021, Corley worked as a senior staff member with the Appleton Free To Read® Summer Literacy Program for three years, first as a teacher and then as Curriculum Director. Since joining Appleton on a full-time basis in June 2024, Corley supervised and implemented this summer's Free To Read program and has recently completed Associate Level training in Orton-Gillingham instruction. Orton-Gillingham is a multisensory, structured, phonics-based approach to teaching literacy for children reading below grade level or those diagnosed with dyslexia.



Adding Corley to the staff allows Appleton to expand its literacy programs to better serve middle GA students with year-round academic support, as well as offering parents and guardians technical support to help children address academic and social issues. She will also assist Appleton in offering programs addressing economic disparity and racial reconciliation.

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Appleton Free To Read® 2024

This summer, Appleton Free To Read® completed its eighth successful year of literacy programming. Located at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, our six-week program prevents summer learning slide and enables students to maintain or even exceed their pre-program instructional reading levels. We reinforce reading and math literacy with daily enrichments in art, science, African dance, gardening, and field trips. The 2024 theme was Just Vote! Using the book, *Grace for President* students explored the importance of voting, elements of government, and civic responsibility. All of the books selected for our program look like our children and address self-esteem, respect for peers, managing emotions, and explore cultures around the world. Our young scholars learned about musicians, artists, writers, photographers, scientists, and civil rights figures. This year our program served rising 1st- 3rd grade students from seven elementary schools in Middle Georgia including; John R. Lewis, Ingram-Pye, Southfield, Martin Luther King Jr., Veterans, Bruce, and Northwoods Academy. We offer daily van transport from three schools for families that need this service.

Prior to the arrival of our students, the summer began with several staff members, volunteers, and supporters making a pilgrimage to important Civil Rights sites in Montgomery and Selma, Alabama. Over the course of three days, the group visited the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, The Legacy Museum, The Rosa Parks Museum, and The Freedom Rides Museum.



Top Middle: Chairman Appleton Board of Governors, Janie Price visited Appleton Free To Read® as a read aloud guest during this year's program.

Top Right: Staff and volunteers of Appleton Free To Read® 2024 stand outside the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama.

Bottom Right: Chaplain/ counselor Scott Aspden with a Free to Read® student.



To mark the end of their trip, the group visited The National Memorial for Peace and Justice, a site commemorating the black victims of lynching in the United States. This powerful and impactful pilgrimage was made possible by the generosity of The Powers Family Foundation.

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Appleton Free To Read® 2024: Highlights

One of the high points of this year's program was the continued addition of a reading specialist. Mrs. Anay Williamson, a second-grade teacher at Springdale Elementary School, returned after joining the program in 2023. Trained in the Orton-Gillingham method, she provided expertise in children's literacy instruction. Mrs. Williamson conducted literacy and phonics assessments for every student in the program and implemented individualized, prescriptive and diagnostic support to help improve students' reading skills. As a result of her hard work and dedication, 100% of students saw improvement in both reading and spelling categories at the end of the six-week program. To address trauma, anxiety, and positive mental health our program employs a full-time chaplain/counselor. This year's counselor was seminary student Scott Aspden. This summer Free To Read® also partnered with the R.I.S.E Program, (Restoring Inspiration by Success in Education) an initiative started by the Bibb County District Attorney's Office to address students impacted by violence, crime, and trauma. As a result, seven students from R.I.S.E. attended our program this summer. To combat food insecurity over the summer months we provided breakfast, snack and lunch each day, including hot meals to students three times a week.



Above: Mrs. Anay Williamson works one on one with a Free to Read student.

To encourage daily attendance, for the first time, Appleton Free To Read® provided a financial incentive to the parents/guardians of the students. To reserve their child's spot in this program families were asked to make a refundable deposit of \$50 with their application. If the child missed no more than three days of the program, parents/guardians received their full deposit back plus a bonus of \$25, for a total of \$75 at the end of the program. If their child maintained perfect attendance for the entire length of the program, the family received an additional \$50 bonus, for a total of \$100. The implementation of a attendance incentive proved wildly successful. At the end of the program, 53% of students missed no more than three days of the entire program, and 25% of our students maintained perfect attendance.



Orton-Gillingham in action!



Pictured above and to the right, two students engage in multisensory literacy practices. The students are using tent cards and sand trays as kinesthetic learning tools as they identify and review vowels.

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Appleton Free To Read® 2024: Highlights



This year, students in Appleton Free To Read® explored offerings in their local community. The program provided opportunities to learn about local agriculture, weather, gardening and African Dance. Students took a field trip to Dickey Farms where they enjoyed homemade ice cream while observing part of the peach-packing process. Philip Groce taught students about the science of weather. After learning about rain, lightening, tornadoes and clouds, students then participated in classroom demonstrations recreating weather events. Students reported the weather using data from our own on-site weather station.



Top Left: Two students enjoy homemade strawberry ice cream at Dickey Farms.

Middle Left: Students learn about urban wildlife and gardening in the backyard of Missioner Julie Groce.

Middle Right: Mr. Philip Groce demonstrates the formation of clouds using dry ice.

Bottom Left: Students enjoy a sunny afternoon at Macon's Downtown Splash Pad.

Bottom Right: Students participate in an African Dance class led by Pilar Wilder.

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Appleton Free To Read® 2024: By the Numbers

At the beginning of this year's Appleton Free To Read® program, students were tested to establish a baseline for their literacy needs. Students were assessed in both reading and spelling. Our reading specialist, Mrs. Anay Williamson, analyzed the results of the tests to determine which students needed more support to help them in their literacy journey. Of the 32 students enrolled in the program, Mrs. Williamson identified and worked individually with 12 students on a daily basis. Using the Orton-Gillingham method, Mrs. Williamson created personalized and prescriptive lessons to help each child with their reading skills. As a result, all twelve children showed improvement in their reading and spelling, with some individual children improving their reading by as much as 380% and their spelling as much as 900%. Below are the results of this year's Appleton Free To Read® literacy initiative.

Overall Reading: % Improvement

- Word List 1: 84%
- Word List 2: 104.6%
- Word List 3: 116.3%

Overall Spelling: % Improvement

- Word List 1: 94.1%
- Word List 2: 82.1%
- Word List 3: 107.8%



Top Right: A selection of curriculum books from this year's Free to Read® Program.
Bottom Right: Students tie-dye t-shirts as a part of Juneteenth celebrations.

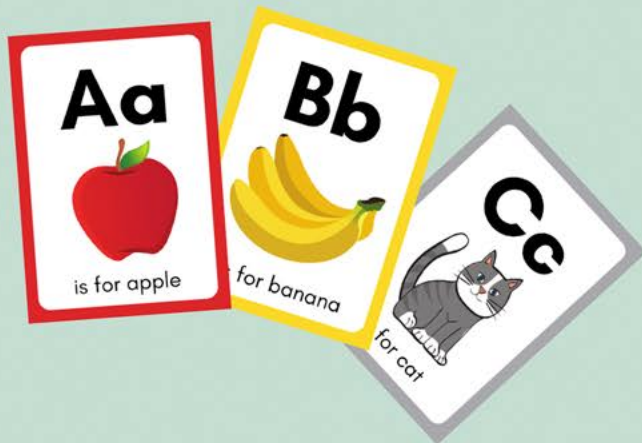
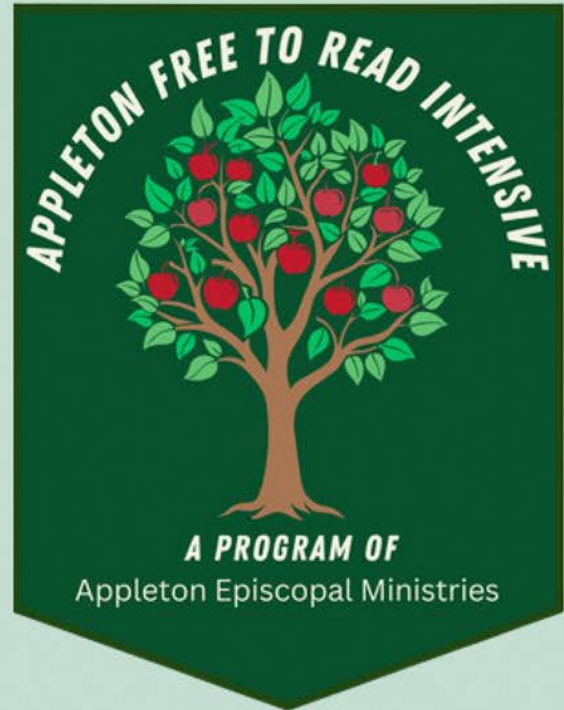
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Looking Ahead: Educational Programming for 2025

Beginning in January 2025, Appleton Episcopal Ministries will expand our literacy programming in Macon, Georgia. Our new program, Appleton Free to Read® Intensive will focus on addressing crucial literacy deficits in Bibb County. The pilot program will hand-select six second graders who are critically delayed with language comprehension and word recognition. Working alongside their families, teachers, program staff and volunteers, these children will work on specific and individualized literacy skills two days a week afterschool to help bolster their academic success. The program will implement the Orton-Gillingham method as a proven approach to helping students of all reading levels achieve fluency confidence in their reading.



Bellow: A student in Appleton Free To Read® reviews vowels with our reading specialist, Mrs. Anay Williamson. The successful implementation of the Orton-Gillingham method in our summer program inspired the foundational structure for Free to Read® Intensive.



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Appleton Programming 2023-2024

Milly Free Fridge

St. Stephen's and Appleton have begun partnering to help stock the Milly Free Fridge in Milledgeville. This Fridge offers community residents in need the ability to anonymously obtain pre-packaged and fresh foods that require refrigeration. St. Stephen's is providing both peanut butter and ham or turkey sandwiches, chips, and fruit in clearly-marked lunch sacks for easy retrieval. Milledgeville is the home of Georgia College and State University, and this type of pick-up-and-go system is particularly useful in a college town, where numerous students can experience food insecurity on a regular basis.



Top Right: Volunteers help fill bags with food items for the Milly Free Fridge.

Bottom Right: Deacon Debra Smith works alongside volunteers filling bags

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Appleton Programming 2023-2024

Fort Valley State University Assistance

St. Luke's kicked off this new program with a spaghetti dinner for students and has followed up by providing hygiene kits and food supplies to The Vault, an off-campus resource for FVSU students who face food insecurity or financial barriers to personal hygiene and critical medical supplies. Appleton Missioner Julie Groce and Archdeacon Janet Tidwell have provided a custom-designed Safeguarding training for parishioners who will be working in-person with students both at the Fort Valley campus and on the St. Luke's Church campus immediately across the street



Appleton partners with St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Fort Valley to support a Canterbury Fellowship program on campus. Appleton helped St. Luke's obtain a grant from the Innovations Task Force of the Diocese of Atlanta and has provided additional grant funding to help fund a renewal of an earlier campus ministry program that went fallow during the pandemic.

Top Right: Members of the FVSU Football team enjoying a Spaghetti Dinner.

Bottom Left: St. Luke's members Dr. Woody Freeman, Dr. Anna Holloway, Sylvia Malone, Virginia Dixon, and Toby Hoskins

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Appleton Programming 2023-2024



In partnership with All Angels Episcopal Church in Eatonton, we continue to support Backpack Buddies, a weekend food program that serves 156 students every week at Putnam Elementary, Putnam Middle School, and Putnam High School. At the beginning of 2023, the program served 72 children weekly, but by growing partnerships with Putnam Christian Outreach, other churches in Eatonton, and local corporate donors, the program has expanded to meet increased demand. We celebrate with All Angels, Putnam Christian Outreach, and the Backpack Buddies program a recent \$24,000 grant awarded to them by the Episcopal Community Foundation. This generous grant will allow them to expand the program to include students at both the Putnam Primary School and the Putnam Head Start programs. All told, the Backpack Buddies Program will now serve nearly 250 students each week.



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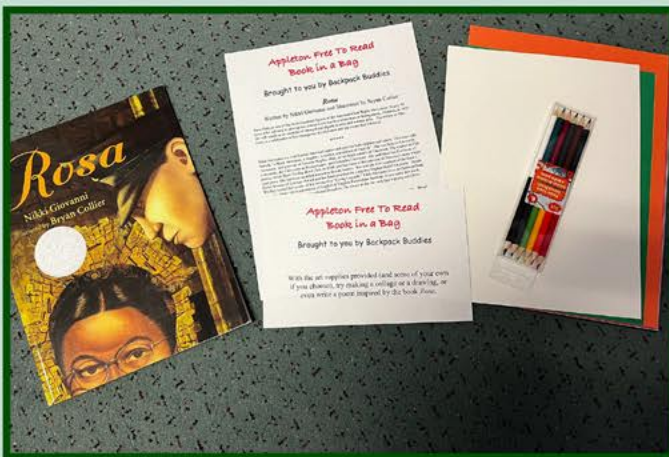
Appleton Programming 2023-2024

Book in a Bag

As an outgrowth of our Appleton Free To Read® Summer program, we're modifying some of our classroom lesson plans to create simple creative projects paired with a book for home distribution. These Books in a Bag can be offered to children staying at Crisis Line/Safehouse or the Brookdale Warming Center, to children who visit Loaves and Fishes and the Weekend Lunch program at Christ Church in Macon, and to Backpack feeding programs across the convocation. Drawing from our curated library of book titles from the summer program, we are purchasing additional books to create packages that feature characters of color, that address civil rights history, that promote civic engagement, and that explore science and nature. Some books will feature bilingual texts.



We are currently piloting this program with a collection of books for elementary and middle schoolers in Putnam County who are part of Backpack Buddies, a weekend feeding program that we sponsor with All Angels Episcopal Church, Putnam Christian Outreach and Eatonton First Methodist Church. This project is designed so that students do not need the assistance of teachers to access the activities, is meant to encourage children to read for pleasure, and provides young people with personal copies of books to develop their own libraries. This innovative program is funded in part by The Griffith Family Foundation.



Top Right/Bottom Left: Examples of Book in a Bag.

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Commemoration of the Appleton Deaconesses



On Wednesday, September 18, Appleton Episcopal Ministries hosted a Commemoration of the Deaconesses at their burial site at Rose Hill Cemetery in Macon, Georgia. Missioner Julie Groce led the service alongside clergy and lay members of the Middle Georgia Convocation. The service recognized and reflected on the important roles played by Sister Margaret, Sister Katherine, Sister Sarah, Sister Katie and Sister Sophi in the early work of Appleton Episcopal Ministries. As a part of the liturgy in our historic cemetery plot in Rose Hill, we blessed the graves of five Appleton deaconesses, a teacher, and four Church Home residents. The Reverend Bryan Hinson and Missioner Julie Groce served as officiants for the service.



Top Left: Clergy and Lay members of the convocation participate in the blessing of the graves.

Top Right: The gravestone of Sister Margaret

Bottom Left: The Reverend Bryan Hinson blesses the graves.

Bottom Right: The gravestone of a resident of Appleton, Christine Estelle Gardner

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Extending an Enormous Thank You to Our Financial Sponsors

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Lutheran Church Of The Redeemer ELCA, Macon

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To learn more about how you can get involved, please reach out or visit our website. If you would like to make a financial contribution please the QR code shown to the right.

Together, we can create a lasting impact!
Thank you for your support!

