

A BRIEF HISTORY

In 1884, Emily Morgan, inspired by her friend Adelyn Howard, envisioned a group of women united in prayer and companionship. Adelyn, an invalid and confined to bed, wished for a spiritual companionship which would support through prayer those in need and those who minister to those in need. Others were attracted to this project, and soon a rule of life and aims were drawn up for the group. A prayer was chosen for their daily use. They met regularly and created the first Intercession Paper that continues to be sent to Companions each month.

Over the next 10 years, the Society grew to more than 100 with chapters in New York, Hartford, Philadelphia, and Boston. Many Companions became associated with Emily's vacation house project for working women to find rest and nurture. Many became active in the settlement house movement of that time.

In 1914, Adelynrood was built in Byfield, Massachusetts, and is still, all these years later, our home for ministry and outreach. Each summer Companions come to enjoy community life and to volunteer as hostesses, sacristans, program coordinators or leaders, librarians, and gardeners.

Today, there are nearly 810 Companions worldwide, with 34 chapters in the USA, and India. The Companion-in-Charge, newly elected every four years, other officers, and committees oversee the operations, programs, and outreach of the Society.



SCHC Vows

To serve God day by day in thanksgiving,
in the ministry of intercession,
and in simplicity of life.

To pray and work for social justice and
peace, for the unity of all God's people,
and for the mission of God in the world.

To practice peacemaking and non-violence,
acknowledging responsibility for
the environment and for economic justice
throughout the world.

To live in singleness of heart and mind
so that my way of life bears witness
to God's love.

To lead a simple, disciplined life and be
a faithful steward of all that
God has given me.

To support the corporate life and
ministries of the Society with my time,
talent, and treasure.

More Information

For further information about the
SCHC discernment process, contact
Companion-in-Charge of Discerners
Discerners@Adelynrood.org

For information about
Adelynrood Retreat and Conference Center,
see www.Adelynrood.org or contact the
General Manager, 978-462- 6721 ext. 11
or SCHCGeneralManager@Adelynrood.org

THE SOCIETY OF THE COMPANIONS OF THE HOLY CROSS

*An Introduction
FOR INQUIRERS*



We are a community of women,
Christ's disciples,
called by God
to a life
of prayer,
transformation,
and reconciliation
within ourselves,
within our Companionship,
within our faith communities,
and within the whole creation.



ADELYNROOD

Retreat & Conference Center

A ministry of the Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross
46 Elm Street, Byfield, MA 01922-2812

The Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross is a diverse group of women who share a commitment to intercessory prayer, thanksgiving, and simplicity of life, seeking to live a life of obedience to Christ in the company of others. Connected to one another by the Companion Prayer Chain and Intercession Paper, we focus our prayers on the needs of individuals and families known to Companions around the world as well as on our concerns for justice and peace, the unity of God's people, and the mission of God in the world.

The Society welcomes women from the Episcopal Church and any church with which it is in communion: the Anglican Communion, the Moravian Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We invite you to explore your interest in the SCHC by visiting a local chapter as an Inquirer. After six to twelve months, you will be asked to consider making a further commitment by going through a period of discernment.

The discernment period is one of prayer, study, and reflection that enables you to determine if Companionship fits your life and interests and if you are called to a vocation in the SCHC.

The discernment period is not less than one nor more than two years. It is a time to explore the Companionship

and the various ways in which women around the world participate, drawing strength, support, and challenge from its corporate life as much as from its individual members. You will have two Sponsors who are knowledgeable about chapter life, Adelynrood, and the larger Society. They will be your guides, and all chapter members will support you through your discernment time. Overseeing the process will be the Associate Companion-in-Charge of your chapter.

During this time, you will be expected to attend chapter meetings and will be given a reading list from which you will read at least one book from each category. Other information provided will give you a view of how the larger Society operates. You will be encouraged to join with other Companions and live in community for a time at Adelynrood. There we live out our corporate ministry to guests who come for spiritual and physical refreshment.

You will receive a copy of our SCHC Manual as well as a copy of Emily Morgan's *Letters to Her Companions*. The Manual contains the Rule and Aims of the Society, prayers and worship services compiled by and for Companions for use at home, at chapter meetings and at Adelynrood. The *Letters* present the early history of the SCHC, the joys and challenges of life in community at Adelynrood, and

the struggles and successes of women living out their vocations in Christ. The discernment period is a time for contemplation, for searching. Will the Companionship have meaning for you in your journey? Are you committed to this life of prayer? Do you find strength and support in this company? Do you find thankfulness and joy in the challenges?

At the conclusion of this period, when you are ready, you will be asked to write reflections to a series of questions designed to focus your responses to the Rule and Aims of the SCHC. There are no "right" answers, only individual responses.

A joyous service will mark your transition from Discerner to Companion, at which time, you, in the company of your Sponsors and your Companions, will take your vows, committing yourself to follow the Way of the Cross in the company of others committed to a ministry of intercession, thanksgiving and simplicity of life.

O Savior Christ, whose way of the cross calls us to closer fellowship with you, we thank you for this friend who is joining us in the journey. May she find here fulfillment of her hopes; and grant that we all may come to that life abundant, which is life eternal in your Kingdom. Amen.

Office of Admission,
SCHC Manual