

ECW WORKS

The Newsletter of the Episcopal Church Women
Diocese of North Carolina www.ecw-nc.org



The President's Message.

president@ecw-nc.org

There have been requests for copies of the short speech I gave at the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina's annual convention, held last January in High Point. It is reprinted here. First, though, a few comments to help put it in perspective.

The Rev. Rick Lindsey, rector of All Saints' Church in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina has said, "Faith is that point of departure that claims our will, to do and be that which seems impossible. It is not the abundance of talent that is at stake, rather the faith to allow God to shape our lives and by that holy movement, to that which God has given us." These words resonate with me in large measure because so many Episcopal women do step out in faith day in and day out, using what God has provided to further mission and ministry. This is what our organized sisterhood is all about, and this is what we need to be shouting from the mountaintops. We cannot afford, literally or figuratively, to miss any opportunity to tell the story of Episcopal Church Women and what we are accomplishing by giving back that which God has given.



Now, here's my report to the convention:

(Continued on page 2)

Special M • E • S • S • A • G • E

Staying in Touch

The Executive Board of the Diocesan ECW wants everyone to have the information they need about ECW programs and activities when they need it. That means we are always on the lookout for better and easier ways to communicate with one another.

For instance, the web site of the ECW in North Carolina is updated regularly; new information is added at least once

a week. Visit the web site, today by going to www.ecw-nc.org. You'll find everything from devotions to registration information for the upcoming Altar Guild Festival.

Also, we have instituted a new e-mail system. Previously, if you wanted to send an electronic message to a board member you had to either memorize their personal address or rush to find an ECW directory. You don't have to do that anymore. Nor is it a concern if someone decides to change their address or Internet service provider.

Why? Because addresses for board members have been standardized and relate directly to a position no matter who happens to be doing the job. That is, if you have a question for the treas-

urer send it to treasurer@ecw-nc.org. If you want to communicate with the United Thank Offering coordinator, e-mail: uto@ecw-nc.org. Want to know what's going on with the ECW in the Winston-Salem convocation? Send an email to winstonsalem@ecw-nc.org. Correspondence about the Lex Mathews Scholarship program can be directed to lexmathews@ecw-nc.org. And so it goes.

All contact information for the Executive Board, including e-mail addresses, can be found in this newsletter as well as on the web site (click on "About Us".) Please don't hesitate to contact us with questions, comments or concerns. *—Lisa H. Towle*

(Continued from page 1)

Good morning!

My name is Lisa Towle and I bring you greetings from the Episcopal Church Women.

Last November 8th, at St. Timothy's Church in Winston-Salem, I was installed as president of the Diocesan ECW by our Bishop Suffragan, Gary Gloster. That day and every day since, I have, in ways big and small, been reminded of the legacy of ECW – which dates to 1871 – and our missionary roots. It was 133 years ago that the Women's Auxiliary to the Board of Missions was established by General Convention.

The women I follow in this job have, each in their own way, worked to build on the collegiality and mission we all share. They are known to many of you: Sylvia Nash. Gail Fennimore. Shara Partin. Carolyn Darst. Mittie Landi. June Gregory. May Grimsley. Scott Evans Hughes. And the list goes on.

They and I are but the tip of an iceberg, for known or unknown, an **army** of women are out there contributing to the health and welfare of the Diocese of North Carolina every single day. We are making disciples and making a difference.

Through the discipline of regular offerings for prayers of thanks and praise – United Thank Offerings – we have made a difference in the lives of the people of La Guadalupe and St. Mark's in Wilson. In 2003, they received a sizeable UTO grant -- \$30,000. The difference this money will make in their community will, I believe, help form disciples.

Through the Church Periodical Club, the ministry of the word, we have made a difference in the lives of many, many seminarians and parishes too poor to afford prayer books, hymnals and other worship-enhancing literature.

Through the Lex Mathews Scholarship Fund we have made a difference in the lives of adult women seeking to better their circumstances through education. With that difference comes disciples.

And in March, acting in concert with Thompson Children's Home, we will launch a literacy project that will make a difference in the lives of pre-schoolers and by extension their families. Yet more disciples.

And the list goes on.

We are a spiritual, worshiping, educating, outreaching community of believers who will continue to look for ways in which to help our parishes and each others fulfill the call to embrace mission and discipleship.

I want to take this moment to thank both of our bishops for supporting our lay-led ministry. They don't just talk the talk, they have walked the walk when it comes to affirming and encouraging Episcopal Church Women.

I also give a heartfelt thank you to the clergy who have welcomed the ECW year in and year out.

For those who may not know of ECW – and even for those who do – you will be hearing more from us and about us as, I hope, better communication will be a hallmark of my tenure. As a start, I invite you to visit our new and first-ever web site! That's **www.ecw-nc.org**

For all the women who came before me, for the women here now, and in preparation for the generations to come, it is my prayer that we continue in faith and vision so the work in our parishes ... in our diocese ... in our world ... grows in God's way.

Here we are Lord. The E C W. Send us.





Left, Jodie, right, Shani

Diocesan Board Planning Meeting Features Special Workshop: Restoring to Our Best Selves: The Essential Role of Diversity

Note: From the president's memo to the Board:“The first meeting of the year is traditionally an overnight session and used primarily for planning purposes. As a newly configured board living in a diocese and working on behalf of a church that is undergoing stress and change, it is even more imperative we learn how to better understand each other and communicate. As many of you have already heard me say, better communication – with each other, our constituency and the greater ECW organization—is going to be our watchword for the next few years. So, the board's new year will begin with a way to start that learning and communication process, as well as fulfillment of a promise made to Province IV.

A bit of background: About a year ago our ECW received a small grant from Province IV. The idea was that this seed money, so to speak, would be used to help us join with others in the region who were witnessing to the mission and ministry of the women of the church by addressing the national **Call to Action** challenge. We asked to consider creating a program related to the areas of *Jubilee, anti-racism, economic justice, environmental stewardship, or global peace and justice*. We indicated to Province IV leaders that our Executive Board would tackle, in some fashion, the issue of racism. It made the most sense to approach a topic at the February meeting since it offered the board the most time together. Ultimately the idea of a workshop on diversity emerged.

The workshop, was facilitated by Jodi Barnes Nelson, PhD, author, consult-

ant and MBA instructor at N.C. State University and Shani Barrax, a consultant and former director of Race Study Circles at The Greater Triangle YWCA. These women, both Episcopalian and highly trained, gently led us in a series of discussions and introspections.

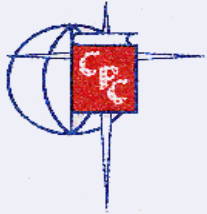
*(From Jodi): Our 2003 General Convention's theme, **Engaging God's Mission**, included four pillars: receiving, repenting, reconciling and restoring. This workshop will focus primarily on restoring our best selves, the selves that God created as possible and doable. Within today's culture, restoration has evolved to mean needed rest, relaxation, or getting our batteries recharged. The General Convention places a broader and yet more spiritual emphasis on restoration:*

***Restoration** is reconciliation at home, at last. To restore is the act of having our relationships and our lives once again in the place God intends. Not only are we restored to the God who created us and to his will and way, but to our own best self. If there is a “going out” impulse in mission, restoration teaches us that there is also a time to “come back in” to the unity of God in Christ and each other.*

We will look at what “coming back in” to the unity of God and Christ and each other might mean within the context of Christianity—especially for our rich Episcopalian diversity of races, ethnicities, and nationalities—and how the very personal “coming back in” to each other is absolutely necessary for individual growth, enlightenment and restoration. What gets in the way of coming back in? How do we help one another achieve this vital goal?

The facilitators used a variety of strategies and scenarios in engaging the Women to discuss how they might be applied to coming back to the unity of God and Christ in each other as a member of ECW committed to anti-racism. We were challenged to bring forth specific actions and behaviors in their application(s). They distributed literature and resources for each of us to take home and share with others.





CHURCH PERIODICAL CLUB UPDATE

Sarah Shaw: cpc@ecw-nc.org

The year 2003 was a busy, active one for the work of Church Periodical Club, Diocese of North Carolina. Thirty-six churches plus the Episcopal Church Women Diocesan Board contributed \$4,837.38. Grants totaling \$6180.00 were awarded. This means our funds are depleted. There is a need to raise monies for seminarians this semester.

Update on Activities

In March, 2003, each of the 13 seminarians from the Diocese of North Carolina received \$150.00 in book grant money.

In June, we were represented at the Province IV meeting at the Kanuga Camp and Conference Center in preparation for the Triennial Convention meeting held July, 2003 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Diana Frady, wife of former Bishop of Honduras and director of "Little Roses" girls school and orphanage, gave dynamic and encouraging presentations based on the Episcopal Church Women's Prayer.

We were represented and participated in the 5-day Church Periodical Club Triennial and then the Episcopal Church Women Triennial held the following week in July and August.

We also participated in the National Book Granting Session where \$1500.00 from the Diocese of North Carolina was granted to purchase Bibles, Hymnals, Prayer Books, and text books to fill requests from churches inside and outside of the United States. *All grant requests must be approved by the Bishop of the requesting Diocese or Province and be associated in some way with mission of the Episcopal Church.* Over \$42,000.00 was granted during that session from all the Dioceses represented. At that CPC granting session, book grant money was made available to each of the eleven Episcopal Seminaries through their Dean. Money was awarded for missionaries from the Episcopal Church, USA to order 2 magazines per year (one is often a news magazine and the other of a

religious nature, sometimes homemaking or craft periodicals are chosen to help where missionary women are involved in helping women in poverty stricken areas to become more self sufficient and develop cooperative enterprises).

We heard the Bishop of Jerusalem give thanks for the Mile of Pennies Grants given to each of seven schools for books.

I could fill several pages with the reports of those 14 days and evenings filled with worship, fellowship, conversation, instruction, and entertainment with literally hundreds of people of many ages, experiences and diverse backgrounds and talents. I was so privileged to attend and thank you for the opportunity.

Remember to celebrate Church Periodical Club Sunday May 2, 2004.

CHURCH PERIODICAL CLUB SUNDAY is a vital way to present the unique Ministry of the Printed Word as a concern of the entire church. Each year the Presiding Bishop designates one Sunday in the year (usually the first Sunday of May) for the observance of the work of spreading the Christian message through the Printed Word, i.e. Bibles, Prayer Books, Hymnals, Sunday school literature and allied programs, such as Alpha, or Education for Ministry, etc.

It is important that the CPC prayer and/or Litany be used at all services. The priest or parish representative should take special time to explain the mission of providing printed and related materials free to people all over the world who cannot otherwise obtain it. The offering that is collected on Church Periodical Club Sunday is customarily used only for the support of the National Books Fund. Checks should be marked for "Church Periodical Club Sunday" and sent to the ECW Treasurer.

Miles of Pennies

A mile of pennies is \$844.80. All the money collected from the 'miles of pennies' goes to supplying Children's books, videos, and tapes, or for shipping and handling charges of recycled children's books.

WANTED: A FEW GOOD WOMEN... OR MORE

pastpresident@ecw-nc.org

As immediate Past President of the Diocesan ECW, my main job is the chairing of the nominations committee. I consider this a very important assignment. In a volunteer organization, with no paid staff, continuity of leadership is essential to continued operations. I write this note to enlist the help of every one of you. If you can respond to my plea, either for yourself or by suggesting another, please contact me, Sylvia C. Nash, at 252-823-3633 or 1004 Main St., Tarboro, NC, 27886.

It is not too early to begin to acquire names for the slate of nominations which will be presented at the 122nd Annual Meeting of the Episcopal Church Women in November. Within the next three years, the entire Executive Board will be replaced, so there will be opportunities for many different areas of service within the stated purpose of the organization, which is...“...to assist the women of the Episcopal Church to carry on Christ’s work of reconciliation, mission and ministry in the community, nation, and the world and to take their place in the life, governance, and worship of the church.”

This fall, at the Summit, we will elect a Secretary of Communication and a Secretary of Devotional Life.

The duty of the Secretary of Communications is the editing and distributing of our award-winning Newsletter, **ECW WORKS**. This very valuable instrument, formerly called **PATCHWORK**, is almost our only non-computerized link to all women in the Diocese, and is the lifeblood of our communication with each other. It is well-run and organized now, in the very capable hands of Mary Hawkins. If you would like to serve Christ and

the ECW and this is your field of interest, please call Mary at (919-682-4647 or 919-530-6424) or email her @communications@www.ecw or write her (1805 Primrose Place, Durham, NC 27707). She will tell you exactly what is involved, and **you will not be obligated!**

The duties of the Secretary of Devotional Life consist of arranging devotionals for Board meetings and retreats. She is also responsible for working with the Bishops and the host rectors to plan the worship for ECW Diocesan meetings, and to be available to help convocations and Branches to plan worship services. For specifics about this job, please call Ann Thompson (336 364 1993) or email () or write (160 BC Way, Rougemont, NC 27572-6514).

You may feel yourself called to one of these positions – or you may know of someone “just right” for the job. Or, you may be able to help the Board fill one of the appointed positions which need filling – we are currently without a **Director of Church Periodical Club**, and as of November, will be looking for a new Altar Guild Chairman.



The Summit Invites You

The Summit’s annual fundraising event, The Board of Visitor’s Weekend, is scheduled for Friday, June 11th – Sunday, June 13th. The theme of the weekend is “Visiting Camp Summit” and all ECW members are welcome to attend. For more information or to be added to the formal invitation list, contact Kristin Patterson at (336) 342-6163 or kristin@episcopalsummit.com

How We Got Here: A Look at Our Common Church History

On Friday, April 23 and Saturday, April 24, The Swindell Fund and The Summit Conference Center will present author Phyllis Tickle. Ms. Tickle will lead discussions on our common church history and offer some predictions for the future.

Phyllis Tickle serves as contributing editor for the religion section of *Publishers Weekly*. She has authored a series of daily devotions known as *The Divine Hours*, as well as, *God Talk America*, and *The Shaping of a Life*.

Cost for the conference is: \$75.00 for overnight accommodations with a roommate, 95.00 for overnight accommodations with a private room, and \$50.00 for commuters. For more information please contact Lisa McHenry at (336) 342-6163 or Summit_lisa@yahoo.com



The Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of North Carolina ended the year 2003 in good financial shape, with surplus from unspent convocation grants and youth scholarship grants.

The Annual Meeting, hosted by the Winston-Salem Convocation at St. Timothy's Church, realized a surplus of \$1,426.19. These funds have been placed in the savings account, along with surplus from prior annual meetings, to help fund costs associated with ECW seminars and meetings.

Convocation Grants of \$200 for each convocation are budgeted again for 2004. Youth Scholarship Grants up to \$200 are also available to each convocation. Applications for these grants are included in the ECW Yearbook and may also be found on the ECW website at www.ecw-nc.org (first click on "About Us" then "Handbook and Directory."). These grants are awarded by the seven convocations, so completed applications should be returned to your convocation chairman. Grants are awarded on a first come, first served basis.

Branch treasurers are reminded that at least 50 percent of their annual pledges are due by May 1, 2004. Chapter pledge payments, United Thank Offering Spring and Fall Ingatherings, Epiphany Offerings, Church Periodical Club Offerings, Miles of Pennies funds, Missionary Christmas Offering, Harris-Evans Conference donations and Lex Matthews Scholarship donations are sent to Betty Temple, ECW treasurer, 1003 St. Patrick St., Tarboro, NC 27886. Convocation pledge payments are sent to your convocation chairman. The treasurer will be glad to answer any questions concerning finances. Write me at the above address, e-mail me at treasurer@ecw-nc.org, or telephone 252-823-6854.

Betty Temple, Treasurer
Treasurer@ecw-nc.org

Living the Baptismal Covenant

christianeducation@ecw-nc.org

How many baptisms do you think you've attended over the years? What do you focus on at baptisms – the babies, the water, the sermon? When you walk out of a baptism, do you feel you have changed? Episcopalians are participants in baptism services. We are asked to promise, as witnesses to the event, to "do all in our power to support these persons in their life in Christ". We also join "with those who are committing themselves to Christ and renew our own baptismal covenant" each time another person joins the church. What exactly are we promising to do when we participate in this way?

We promise to "continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers". Most of us attend church and participate in Eucharist on a regular basis, but many adults are not part of a regular Christian Education class. I see entirely too many people come to church, drop off the children for Sunday School, and come back after an hour to pick them up. Part of our task as supporters of the newly baptized is to be role models for the children in our churches, and as role models, we need to be active in our own Christian formation. We have to show that learning and growing in the faith are an expected part of each person's journey. The spiritual journey is just that – a journey – not some stagnant place you arrive at a preconceived point in your life, never to do anything else again.

A journey requires preparation. You have to find out about where you are going, get the maps or directions to arrive safely, be sure your transportation method is working and fueled, and then take the first step to begin the trip if you ever want to arrive where you plan to be. Do you know where you are going? Do you read the maps and directions Christ provides us? Do you listen to the "apostles' teachings" on ways to be sure your transportation is working and fueled? All of these things are part of Christian formation and are important for adults as well as children. I encourage you to find a class or program that will help you on your personal journey as we move into the joyous season of Easter.

Polly Redd
Secretary of Christian Education



For Lex Mathews *lexmatthews@ecw-nc.org* Scholarship Support

Eleven 2003 recipients of the Lex Mathews Scholarship for Women are enrolled in programs which enable them to better care for themselves and in some cases, their families.

A very special thank you is extended to the ECW groups who contributed to the Fund for the year 2003: Church of the Savior, Jackson; Holy Trinity, Greensboro; All Saints, Roanoke Rapids; Christ Church, Charlotte; St. Mary's, High Point; St. Andrew's, Rocky Mount; Calvary, Wadesboro; St. Timothy's, Wilson; St. Andrew's, Greensboro; St. Thomas, Reidsville; St. Timothy's, Winston-Salem and Calvary, Tarboro.

Congratulations to St. Timothy's of Winston-Salem for a job well done. They raised \$1,685 from a silent auction. What an extraordinary way to assist our Sisters who have been out of the work force for a period of time and who need to upgrade their skills or education to advance career opportunities.

The scholarship is an excellent way to honor a fellow ECW member, individuals, families and groups. Please consider making the scholarship fund one of the priorities in your annual budget or sponsoring a special fund raiser. It is a worthwhile outreach with successes that are seen each year. Send your donations to Betty Temple, Treasurer, 1003 St. Patrick Street, Tarboro, NC 27886

ECW President Special Guest

The Raleigh Convocation had a dinner meeting on Sunday Evening March 14 at the home of Co-chair, Ann Proctor. Lisa Towle was our special guest. Six churches in the Raleigh Convocation were represented. We our had much discussion on where to designate our two \$200 grants. We also discussed the March Madness-Support Literacy Program and the 2004 Altar Guild Festival. The Convocation agreed to host the 2005 Annual Meeting of ECW. We look forward to getting together again at Annual Meeting in November at Brown Summit

Ann Proctor and Susie Small
Raleigh@ecw-nc.org

Lex Mathews Fund

Symbolizes the following concepts:

1. The Episcopal Church Women affirm and commit themselves to assisting the working woman.
2. The ECW recognizes that a woman from any walk of life may need help in being re-educated in order to realize self-sufficiency.
3. The ECW is aware that most people living below the poverty line are female.
4. Affirmation from the church community is one step toward helping a woman accomplish her goal.

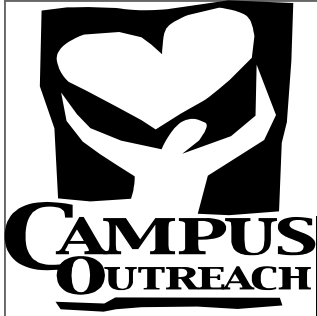
Members of the selection committee are:
Velma Bradshaw, Tarboro, 252-823-4266;

Julie Elsee, Smithfield , 919-034-6340;

Marjorie Northup, Winston-Salem
336-748-0674;

Deborah DeBourg-Brown, Hillsborough
919-732-2871 and

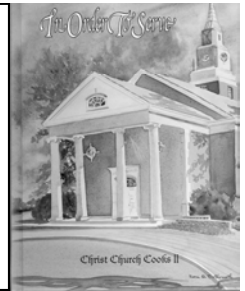
Marcia Kephart, Charlotte, 704-399-8090.



THANK YOU CHRIST CHURCH ECW, CHARLOTTE, Note: If you attended Annual Meeting 03 at St. Timothy's Winston-Salem, you probably saw two lovely ladies from Christ Church, Charlotte offering free boxes of cookbooks to small ECW branches. The only requirement was to use the cookbooks for outreach and report on the outreach initiative. St. Titus' received 50 copies to use in creative ways to support Outreach Ministries. This is a report from St. Titus' Durham.

About the cookbook.

Christ Church Cooks II is the second cookbook published by Christ Church Episcopal Church Women. Following a successful sale of more than 5,000 copies in Charlotte recently, they gave small parishes the remaining copies to use in creative ways for outreach. The foreword states: **"In Order to Serve** is more than a collection of recipes. Service to God and others is at the heart of our mission, and the book gives us the opportunity to weave the recipes into art work and spiritual messages about the service....."



THE APPEAL

St. Titus' continues to explore opportunities for students at North Carolina Central University, Durham, to experience worship, nurture, fellowship evangelism and service in the Episcopal Church.

To that end, St. Titus' sponsored a Cookie Party as a study break in the University Library Café and other buildings in December 03 during final exams.

Parishioners were encouraged to support this Outreach Effort by making a generous contribution to help underwrite this initiative. Parishioners who donated \$10.00 or more received a copy of the cookbook "In Order to Serve" Christ Church Cooks II.

St. Titus' members were on hand during the serving periods to talk with students and serve as hosts and hostesses.



Cookie Party





2004 ALTAR GUILD FESTIVAL

A Celebration of Flowers at The Summit

Wednesday, May 12. 9:00am – 3:00pm

With the Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry, Bishop, and
Kevin Aubrey, National Cathedral Flower Guild.

Kevin Aubrey of the National Cathedral Flower Guild will lead this ministry of altar work. He will use flowers to turn holy places into our most beautiful spaces. He will demonstrate floral arrangements for small and large altars, pedestals and other areas of the sanctuary. Flowers and greenery native to North Carolina will be featured in the arrangements.

The Altar Guild Festival is hosted by the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of North Carolina . It is open to everyone, men and women of all faiths, garden club members, anyone who finds joy in using flowers to create beautiful spaces.

Bishop Curry will lead the afternoon worship. Selections from the Diocesan bookstore will be available for browsing and purchase.

Schedule

9:00am	Registration and bookstore browsing
10:00am	A Celebration of Flowers with Kevin Aubrey
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	Holy Eucharist Celebrated by Bishop Curry
2:30pm	Wrap-up and bookstore browsing

Altar Guild Festival Registration. Wednesday, May 12, 2004.

Name _____

Address _____ Telephone _____

email _____

Registration Fee

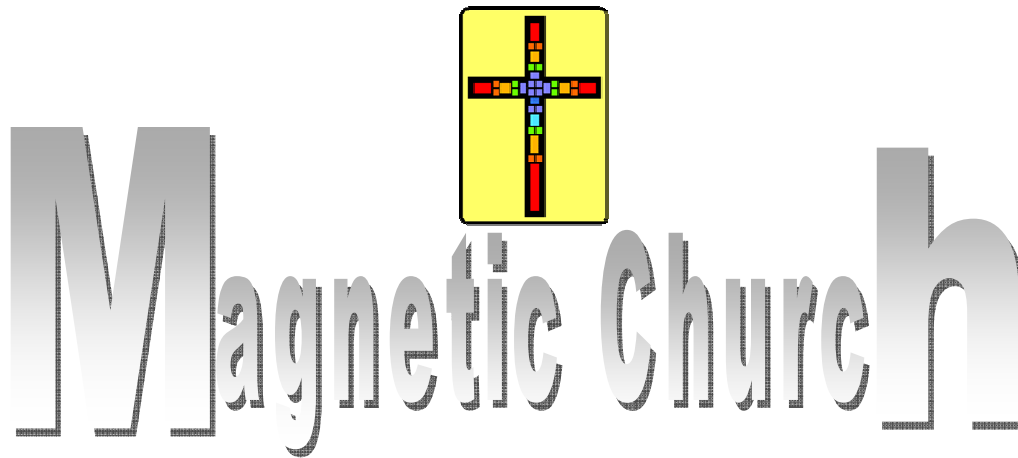
One day– Wednesday, May 12. \$20.00. Includes lunch

Overnight Tues, May 11 and Wed, May 12: Includes dinner on Tuesday, Breakfast and lunch Wed

Make checks payable to ECW, Diocese of North Carolina (Memo: Altar Guild Festival).

Mail by May 1, 2004 to Vivian Edwards, P. O. Box 33– Middleburg, NC 27556

Phone: 252-438-6714. email: altarguild@ecw-nc.org. For exhibit information, contact Vivian Edwards



October 1-2, 2004

The Magnetic Church Conference is non-confrontational, *practical* evangelism to help our churches attract *and* retain new members. St. John's with the support of the North Carolina Diocese, is pleased to announce that noted evangelist Andrew Weeks will be presenting this event at St. John's Episcopal Church on October 1&2, 2004. To learn more about his ministry, Andy invites you to log onto www.magnetic-church.com.

After attending the Magnetic Church conference in Greensboro, NC we wanted to offer the opportunity to more of our parishioners and in particular our greeter and usher teams. We asked Andy Weeks to come to our church in Wake Forest, just 15 miles north of Raleigh. We invite and encourage everyone who is interested to take advantage of this event and plan to attend the conference in October. Registration information and publicity packs will be sent to churches soon. Space will be limited; so, put it on your calendars now and don't miss the chance to hear Andy Week's message on Friday and Saturday, October 1 and 2, 2004. Registration will be discounted for groups of 4 or more.

Brochures, posters and registration forms for this opportunity will be mailed to your church very shortly.

If you have any questions regarding the conference that cannot be answered by the information presented on the magnetic-church.com website, please feel welcome to call Jessica Graber at (919) 556-3656 or Bill Wrenn at (919) 787-6313 x233. You may also email jgraber@nc.rr.com or bill.wrenn@episdionc.com. The registration fee will be \$35.00/person or \$30/person when registering a group of 4 or more from the North Carolina Diocese.

If you have been thinking about ways to improve your method of greeting newcomers and visitors to your church, you do not want to miss this opportunity. Send your greeter and usher teams along with anyone else interested in the welcoming of others to your church.

**St. John's Episcopal Church
Wake Forest, NC**

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UNITED THANK OFFERING SPRING INGATHERING SET FOR MAY 23

Each of us can approach the UTO Spring Ingathering date of May 23 knowing we are abundantly blessed. We are privileged to again participate in a mission and long-cherished tradition of the Episcopal Churchwomen. The new United Thank Offering mission statement is: To expand the circle of thankful people. To achieve this mission we encourage daily prayers, offerings, and an awareness of the abundance of God's blessings.

In the Diocese of North Carolina, we can see firsthand the magnitude of the power of the "blue box" through the most recent grant to La Casa de San Marcos/St. Mark's House in Wilson. With this generous grant award, we are reminded of the growing diversity of the Episcopal Church. Two congregations have come together with a commitment to working together to keep their growing worshipping communities focused beyond themselves to seeking and serving Christ in their midst and in their neighbors. An interracial and multicultural community center will be built adjacent to St. Mark's Church that will reach out to residents in a community including more than 500 children

Two UTO grant applications have been submitted for 2004. The UTO Committee is in the process of approving grants and awards will be made in the summer.

The Diocese of North Carolina UTO's lovely alms basin is available for In-gatherings by reservation.

Made of silver and gold donated by women across the diocese during the early 1950's, the outer rim is inscribed with: Accept, O Lord, from grateful hearts, our United Thank Offering. For any questions or to reserve the alms basin, please call me at (252) 237-5020 or e-mail uto@ecw-nc.org.

For those of you who enjoy browsing the Web, Province IV also has established a new Web log (www.episcopalchurchwomen.blogspot.com). It is interesting to note that many of the activities of the Diocese of North Carolina ECW are posted there as well as on (www.ecw-nc.org), thanks to our president.

By Eva Morriss, United Thank Offering Coordinator
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