



ECW WORKS

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

January, 2004

The President's Message

Lisa Towle



G^o **Tell It On The Mountain (and Happy New Year, too!)** Recently, I was reading about the Chinese New Year. The observance of the New Year in Chinese communities around the world is based on the lunar calendar and occurs sometime between January 21 and February 19. I already knew this because my birthday falls in this timeframe, and there have been a number of celebrations of my maturing that, thanks to friends and family, have had a Chinese New Year theme. What I didn't know was that the New Year celebration is the longest and single most important of the Chinese holidays.

Now the New Year, Chinese or otherwise, is not *the* most significant holiday in my book. However, it is something I await with great eagerness. I savor thoughts of unmarked calendar pages (well, some are still unmarked) and a thorough housecleaning (like the Chinese, I like the idea of symbolically sweeping away all traces of misfortune), but mostly I appreciate the chance for a fresh start and new opportunities.

Some very grand opportunities were presented to the ECW in November, the month in which the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of North Carolina hold their annual meeting and celebrate the end of one year and the start of another. It was hosted last year by the Winston-Salem Convocation (kudos to Vicki Robins and her team for an outstanding meeting!). On November 8, 2003, the second and final day of Annual Meeting, The Rt. Rev. J. Gary Gloster, Bishop Suffragan of North Carolina, installed the new officers of the Diocesan ECW Executive Board and affirmed the efforts of all women who work on behalf of our Lord and Savior and His church.

During that time at St. Timothy's Church in Winston-Salem, when we were blessed with the preaching and teaching of Bishop Michael Curry, Bishop Gloster and keynoter Mary M. MacGregor of Texas, who spoke with conviction, eloquence and

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*A Call to Action:
Hungry Hearts and Hectic
Lifestyles,
ECW's Challenge*

**LOTS OF GEMS FROM MARY MACGREGOR
AT THE 2003 ANNUAL MEETING**

(Continued from page 1)

humor about “the ECW challenge,” my thoughts on the role of the ECW in our diocese in particular coalesced. I will be sharing more about this in the coming months.

In this, my first letter to you as president, it is enough to say that my overarching goal for the next three years is to help strengthen ECW through better communication. If nothing else, my professional and personal experiences have taught me that it is through good, consistent and open communication that relationships and organizations grow strong.

That’s easier said than done. However, it is my belief that in the final analysis all the resources in the world won’t matter if the people working with you and the people you’re trying to reach don’t understand what’s being done and why, and if a vision for a better future cannot be articulated. We cannot afford to be complacent about what we think we know regarding those who share the ministry of women. Nor should we assume that others understand what ECW is about and why it matters.

We have been given in this fresh new year a chance to start anew, to draw on the knowledge of the longtime members of ECW and harness the energy of more recent members, to share the powerful and ongoing story of the Episcopal Church Women, to, in short, go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere.

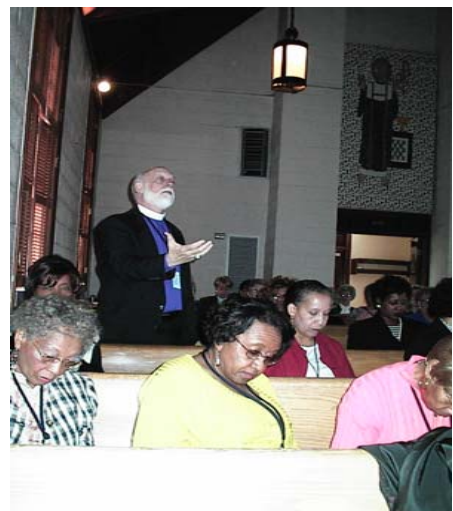
Toward this end, the Diocesan ECW will be utilizing many tools to spread the word. Some will be familiar to you, while others are new. One of the newest is the Internet. I’m very pleased to say that the women in the Diocese of North Carolina now have their own website, www.ecw-nc.org. It is chock full of goodies, so I hope you will visit it today and often for the latest information about what’s happening with Episcopal Church Women around the country, the region and the diocese.

I look forward to new beginnings and to working with you in His name.

And, oh yes ...Happy (Chinese) Year of the Monkey!

Lisa

ANNUAL MEETING *Scenes*



Closing A Chapter

Remarks at Annual Meeting 2003

by Sylvia Nash Immediate Past ECW President

ECW CROSS IS PASSED



Bishop Curry, Bishop Gloster, Ladies:

I'll be brief – but I have to take time to say thank you. Thank you, Bishop Curry and Bishop Gloster, for being wonderfully supportive of the ECW and me, personally. I cherish your friendship. Thank you, Executive Board – you too have been supportive. You have given me good counsel, hours out of your busy schedules, and many interesting times.

Thank you to the newly elected officers. On your shoulders the continuity of the ECW rests. I have faith that those sturdy shoulders will bear the burden with competence and enthusiasm.

And especially and personally, I want to thank you all for your loving prayers this summer when I confronted the monster under the bed – the ugly words “breast cancer” aimed like a gun at me and my teammate Eva. The comfort I derived from your messages of love and hope is immeasurable. To know that you all, and the entire Triennial gathering were sending daily prayers on our behalf was equivalent to traveling on a cloud to safety.

Which brings me to the importance of the ECW and its existence as a community: The connectedness of our organization makes us all able to be more, do more, act more, love more fully, than if we were operating as an island. By necessity, we listen to each other, and evaluate our differences through a large lens and not a peephole. We become used to forming a general consensus out of vastly differing positions.

So, then: the recent action of our General Convention and the discomfort thus caused, is something we will have to deal with – locally, nationally, and globally. I envision the women of the Church as communicators, healers, and peacemakers. These are traditional roles for women. I challenge you to act out those roles in your home churches, and across your lives. We look at recent events and some of us are dismayed, some angry, some elated. But none of these feelings will render us outside the love of God. He can accept my views, and love me, even if they are not what He wills for me.

Can I not strive to emulate God and greet my fellow Christians with love and acceptance, even while disagreeing violently with their views?

Ladies, we may be the agents of healing for the churches suffering pain and confusion and sorrow and uncertainty. And is not our beloved Protestant Episcopal Church worth it? You became Episcopalians for a reason – even if it was your birth into a strongly loyal family. Think what it has meant to you, with the dignity and beauty and joy of our traditional service. Think of the babies baptized with those timeless words. Remember watching your daughter making her marriage vows in lovely language worn to perfection through ages and ages. My feeling is that we will hurt and perhaps cry over the current pain, but that on a deeper level – no, a higher level – we will listen to each other and love each other, and then we will heal – others.

I feel privileged to have been asked to serve as your president. I have learned a lot from you, and I will continue to serve on the Executive Board for three years. I will not, however, be estranged from you after that, because you have changed me. I am a different person from the one of November 2000, thanks to you. Perhaps that is why God encouraged me to accept the position. And so, most of all, I thank God. **Thanks be to God!**



"A Call to Action" March Madness-Support Literacy

The Episcopal Women of the Diocese of North Carolina have a wonderful opportunity to respond the National ECW Board's call back to our roots of Mission and Ministry. The Diocesan ECW Board is challenging each of our Branches to participate in **March Madness 2004**.

If you were not at annual meeting in November and want to participate please contact Sandra Bell - Diocesan Christian Social Ministries Secretary - at 704-528-0649, or skiperkee@adelphia.net for a packet. Also note the request for a grant enclosed.

What is it? – **March Madness** is a month long reading campaign where we encourage children and parents to go **CRAZY** for reading throughout the month of March! This is the brainchild of Thompson Children's Home Early Childhood Outreach Program and is designed for preschools and/or day-cares. It fits perfectly with the literacy focus area in the Call to Action from the National ECW Board.

How can ECW participate? – Each branch is challenged to choose a daycare or a preschool and help that center set up a **March Madness** reading campaign. Using your March Madness information packet your branch will plan the following essential components:

ECW Branch

1. Commit to the project as a branch
2. Identify one or more day cares or preschools to talk with (this will depend on your church size and number of active Guilds).
3. Decide what resources you can commit to
 - ◆ Reading daily, 3 times weekly, weekly, or one week out of the month, etc.
 - ◆ Organizing and attending a launch celebration
 - ◆ Planning special events throughout
4. Be prepared to give a book to each family in the center. Create a strategy for collecting needed books

5. Plan and staff the ending celebration for the families.
6. Report number of books read by you, staff, families, and children to your convocation Chairperson

Preschool/Day care

1. Staff agrees to participate and is enthusiastic about the opportunity
2. Passes out information to families
3. Creates bulletin boards, etc.
4. Keep records of numbers of books read

What will this accomplish? - Research indicates that how many books a home has is a key part of a child's success in school and that when parents read to their children, school success increases. We can help parents learn the importance of reading at the earliest ages and can empower early childhood centers to do their part in promoting literacy.

We can quadruple Thompson's outreach effort in literacy throughout our diocese and provide a focus for our own outreach efforts that can be tailored for each of our communities.

Go crazy for reading in March!



UNITED THANK OFFERING GRANT COMES TO DIOCESE OF NORTH CAROLINA



The United Thank Offering is a gift of love to us and from us. The grant money comes to us through grateful prayer and giving by Episcopalians throughout the Caribbean, Central America, Mexico, the Philippines, South America, Taiwan and the United States. Our efforts make the money come alive in our own place in our own way. This is OUR gift of love.

The Episcopal Church Women are excited that La Casa de San Marcos/Saint Mark's House, Wilson, has been awarded a United Thank Offering grant of **\$30,000.00!** These funds, along with other monies, will be used to build an interracial and multicultural community center adjacent to St. Mark's Church. This parish center will reach out to residents (including more than 500 children) in a 12-block Black and Hispanic neighborhood.

The ministry of La Iglesia de La Guadalupe began at St. Timothy's, Wilson, in 1995. In 2000, St. Mark's took a bold step by inviting La Guadalupe to share their facilities. St. Mark's was organized more than 100 years ago, and has a respected place in the life of the Wilson Community. The first school for Black children in Wilson County was established at St. Mark's and operated for more than 40 years. La Iglesia de La Guadalupe is now a thriving Spanish-language Episcopal mission-experiencing rapid growth.

The numbers are more than 450 persons, most of whom are young. To date, there have been 253 baptisms and more than 100 confirmations. St. Mark's is small, growing slowly, and elderly. Both congregations are committed to working together to keep a growing worshipping community focused beyond itself to seeking and serving Christ in their midst and in their neighbor.

With the receipt of this generous UTO grant, we are reminded of the power of prayers, giving thanks, and making our offerings. This mission has been a part of the Episcopal Church for more than 100 years. The United Thank Offering Committee has prayerfully written a new mission statement: To expand the circle of thankful people. To achieve this mission, we encourage daily prayers, offering, and an awareness of the abundance of God's blessings. Let us remember what a tremendous blessing it is for the United Thank Offering Committee to have awarded the DIOCESE OF NORTH CAROLINA two grants within the past three years. Two years ago, Christ the King, Charlotte, received a grant to provide educational and playground equipment to serve the vast numbers of children and youth in the intercity area.

For any questions relative to United Thank Offering grants or other information, please call me at (252) 237-5020 or e-mail esmorris@aol.com, or call Lisa Towle at (919) 481-3943 or e-mail lisa@liskar.com.

Tappers entertaining at Annual Meeting



In 1985, the then Rector of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, Verdery Kerr became increasingly concerned about the homeless/hungry within the Reidsville community. He began to make contacts and by the end of that same year, a skeleton committee had been formed to research the need and feasibility of a community Soup Kitchen. This committee consisted of the Outreach Chairman of St. Thomas vestry, several ministers of other denominational churches, community leaders and a few lay persons.

Surveys were processed and presentations were made to local civic groups, churches, etc. Soon visits were made to the already existing Soup Kitchens in North Carolina: Greensboro, Salisbury, and Wilson. After a very busy fall and winter of gathering information, the doors of the Reidsville Soup Kitchen officially opened in April, 1986 at the local Salvation Army.

Initially, the kitchen served a noon time meal three days a week. However; shortly thereafter the kitchen moved to the Parish House at St. Thomas Episcopal Church and began serving meals Monday through Friday.



The Board, right to left: Stephanie Trent, Executive Director; Marion Safriet, President, Susan Turner, Treasurer; Maggie Looke, Board member and Dot Reilly, secretary.

After three years at St. Thomas, land was purchased and fundraising began to construct a new building on Arlington Street. The new Soup Kitchen was completed in October of 1989 and weekend meals were added to the schedule. Volunteers from the community (churches, schools, and individuals) man the kitchen daily. There is one paid employee (Site Manager) who works Monday-Friday planning the menu and supervising the volunteers. The kitchen is governed by a Board.

The Directors meet monthly to establish rules and regulate the operations. Most of the food and food stuffs is donated by generous individuals, companies, churches, and civic

groups. Presently, approximately 50-90 people are fed a well-balanced lunch on a daily basis. The numbers have increased due to job layoffs and business closings within the county.

The Reidsville Soup Kitchen is a much blessed entity in a small community which cares deeply for those less fortunate. The support is ongoing; therefore, the kitchen thrives and is a bright spot to those in need.

Stephanie Trent
Executive Director
Reidsville Soup Kitchen

Towel Ministry Receives Our Outside Diocese Grant

Sandra Bell, Secretary of Christian Social Ministries

The Church of the Holy Cross at Valle Crucis, North Carolina was awarded \$3450.00 for The Towel Ministry.

The TOWEL MINISTRY was founded by The Rev. Deacon Cris Greer 18 years ago in The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina. The name TOWEL MINISTRY comes from the book of John, chapter 13, and verse 5. "After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him."

Linda Nye chairs this ministry on the diocesan level. The chairperson at The Church of the Holy Cross in Valle Crucis, is Noyes Capehart Long. The Towel Ministry at the Church of the Holy Cross has a deep and remarkable taproot. This unique servant ministry, now in its eighteenth year, can best be summed up in a motto that has endured changes, challenges, and disappointments: "Walking the talk of the church."

The mission of the Towel Ministry is to recognize God's presence in every task undertaken in hopes of alleviating the day-to-day hardships of the less fortunate neighbors in the counties of western NC. This outreach effort is most visible in the tangible improvements made with sub-standard housing (repairing rotting flooring, re-shingling roofs, constructing safe and comfortable porches, building handicap ramps for physically disabled, painting and general residential improvements). Of equal importance is the relationship building that occurs with every Towel project. A young camper from Florida after the closing Eucharist said, "I came to Towel thinking that I might make a difference in someone's life, only to leave realizing that it was my life that experienced the greatest change."

The Towel Ministry camps operate in the summer. High school youths are eligible to participate. The cost is \$300.00 per person for room and board at the Valle Crucis Conference Center. The volunteers start their day with Bible reflection and end it with devotion. In the past, youth leaders and volunteer youth groups have come from Florida (Holy Nativity in Panama City), Alabama (The Church of the Advent in Bir-



mingham and The Church of the Good Shepherd in Decatur), Virginia (St. Mary's in Leesburg), and from parishes and churches in North Carolina .

The success of summer Towel programs (and present mini Towel projects) depends entirely on outside financial support. (Towel is not a line item in the budget of The Church of the Holy Cross.) The 2003 program, for example, received a \$1500.00 matching grant from the diocese and financial support from New River Behavioral Health for two families because of children with mental or physical disabilities. A sizeable portion of operating overhead has come from creative fund-raising .

At present, there is a need for a trailer to haul building materials back and forth to work sites. The trailer Towel was previously using belonged to the founder of Towel Ministry, Cris Greer. When he died, his family reclaimed it.

A Call to Action: Hungry Hearts and Hectic Lifestyles, ECW's Challenge 2003 ANNUAL MEETING Gems

CONGREGATIONAL DYNAMICS THAT AFFECT WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS (ECW References)

AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE

-Optimum size to support groups are churches with attendance of 100 – 300 on Sunday mornings. Churches with less than 100 often meet the fellowship need of women naturally and don't have the resources or people power to keep a group going and strong. The rural church with a history of a strong women's group may be the exception. Churches with over 300 in attendance are often urban, busy with multiple activities. ECWs in large churches struggle to compete for space, attention and purpose. They must be focused in their mission (purpose) and flexible in their efforts to draw a crowd. Excellence in program must be a hallmark of the larger churches.

CLERGY SUPPORT

-ECW research done in 1994 said that clergy support was the key factor in both strength and weakness of ECWs! Seek out the clergy and their vision for the church. Determine together what part the women's organization plays in the vision. Make sure it is a vital part! Ask for support. The ECW needs to support them in return. *Don't expect clergy to always show up for meetings and events.* Communicate with clergy the times that are very important for them to be present. Stop the yang-yang and start praying for the clergy.

AGE OF AVERAGE WOMAN

-keep in mind generational differences.

ECW groups with an average age of 65+. If rolling along, should not be forced to change by a younger group, but encouraged to allow a "parallel group" to form. Clergy support and communication with older and younger groups is critical. Recommended that older women give grants of money to support the administrative function of a younger group which is less likely to do fund raising. "Power" and "control" issues need to be addressed, especially if money is involved.

NUMBER OF NEW WOMEN MEMBERS TO THE CHURCH

-Churches with a high turnover of members have the greatest chance to renew, revive groups and start up new groups. Churches with little turnover often have stagnant or "closed" ECWs. Recruitment for women to participate **MUST** be personal, face to face or by phone. Do not depend on mail or announcements. Building of relationships is the attraction and must be done in a personal way. Women do not want to be considered "new blood to fill a slot". She will respond out of a need to be accepted, to get to know others and to see if she is interested in the type of activities and fellowship she will experience in the group.

THE PRESENCE OF A WEAK, DWINDLING GROUP

—Allow it to stop meeting, have a natural death, that is okay. Allow at least a year to pass. Gather a core group of 4 – 6 women who believe in the need for organized women's ministries, do a needs assessment of the women of your congregation (a focus group meeting would be best-surveys are not as affective), determine a purpose (mission) for the group with three or 4 long term goals. Determine an organizational model that looks different from the old group (circular model, simple majority rule, informal decision making. Only utilize parliamentary procedure if your organizational model is large with large business meetings). Set up the new organizational model immediately after the needs assessment/visioning and goal setting. Write guidelines or open-ended by-laws. The mission statement should drive the organization's total activities and expenditures of money. Don't over schedule events or meetings the first year. Start simply, with a few very well done, attention-getting events that address the results of the needs assessment.

NO CURRENT ORGANIZED WOMEN'S MINISTRY

-A group can be started but only by committed leadership, the purpose (mission) clearly defined, and strong clergy support. Activities that meet the needs and do not compete is critical to new group start up. Avoid fund raising and too much cooking and hospitality functions.

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DOLLAR\$&¢CENTS

FINANCIAL NEWS – *By Betty Temple*

Delegates to the ECW Annual Meeting approved the proposed ECW Budget for 2004. The budget totals \$20,390: \$19,500 is projected to come from chapter pledges, the remainder from interest. The 2004 Budget reflects a decrease in income of \$1,610. Chapter pledges have not increased over the past several years and despite close oversight by the Executive Board, some Diocesan ECW costs have increased. Among other things, this has resulted in a small cut in funds budgeted for outreach. The Audit of the 2003 books will be done by committee and not by a certified public accountant, resulting in an \$825 savings.

Convocation grants are still \$200 per convocation, as are Youth Scholarship grants. The Outside the Diocese grant amount for 2004 remains at \$3,450. This year's Outside the Diocese Grant was awarded to The Towel Ministry, Church of the Holy Cross in Valle Crucis.

At the 2003 Annual Meeting, the Eucharistic Offering of \$425.75 was appropriated to the Diocese of East Carolina to benefit Hurricane Isabel flood victims. This recommendation, made by the host convocation, Winston-Salem, was approved by the delegates.

Remember that Epiphany Offerings are due to the ECW Diocesan Treasurer by March 1. At the Annual Meeting in November, delegates voted to send the 2004 Epiphany Offering to Rachel and Allen Hill, missionaries in Peru. The 2003 Epiphany Offering, which totaled \$2,092 was divided between Pat and Paul Stock in Pakistan and Jane Torrey in Republic of Korea. It would be great to have at least that much to send to the Hills this year. The Stocks used their share for improvements to a Sunday School room and a hostel. Jane Torrey uses her funding for the work of Jesus Abbey in Kangwondo, Republic of Korea.

A copy of the updated Missionary List may be found in the 2004 ECW Handbook.



Mary McGregor, Director of Leadership Development for the Diocese of Texas, spoke to the group challenging us to look at the changes in the church and in society that affect ECW membership in our churches. She offered new ideas to meet these challenges through recognition of the needs of different generations within our congregations. Members need to explore ways to make training more accessible and improve parishioners' understanding of the ECW ministry.

Focus on a balance of in-reach, outreach, spiritual growth. The planning or business group should meet separately from well-designed programs and events. See steps in the above paragraph. ©Mary M. MacGregor, 1996

The North Carolina ECW Presence at Triennial



The 44th triennial meeting of the Episcopal Church Women, held July 30 to August 8, 2003 in Minneapolis, had a theme of "A New Light is Shining."



Representing the ECW of the Diocese of North Carolina were Lisa Towle (then President-elect, now the President), Polly Redd (then the delegate-at-large, now Secretary of Christian Education), Gail Fennimore (then Immediate Past President) and Sarah Shaw



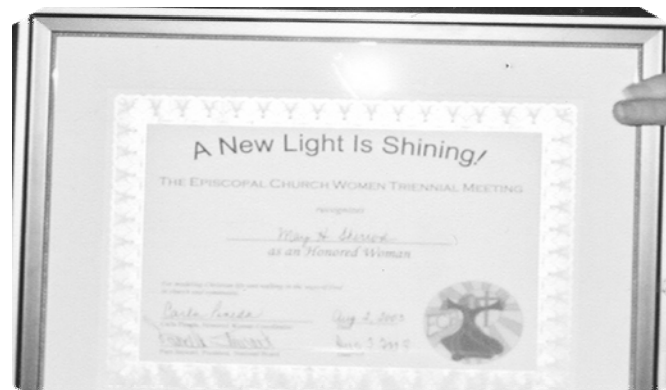
The Women of Vision workshop, whose facilitators are pictured here, was one of a plethora of learning opportunities for Triennial attendees



Altar Guild Honors: Vivian Edward, left received award, below; May Sherrod, center, First Vice President, National Altar Guild Association.

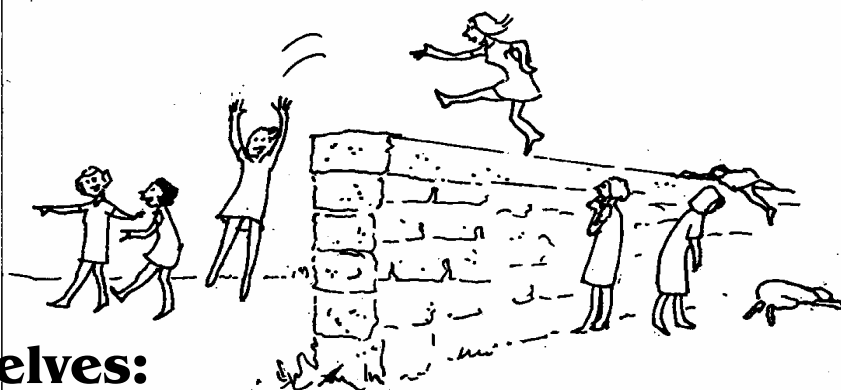


Everywhere there was evidence of the growing diversity of the church as well as the mission and long-cherished traditions of ECW.



ASSESSING YOUR CHURCH'S MINISTRIES FOR WOMEN.

Do not be afraid. Mathew 10:31



Ask Yourself:

1. Do our organized women's ministry groups understand our unique purpose (mission)? If so, is it in writing and do we remind ourselves of this purpose as we plan and budget? Is our group's purpose related to the mission of our congregation? Do we have a vision for our future? If so, what is it?
2. Have we asked the women of our congregation the needs they have as Christian women that our group may be able to address through activities?
3. Are we sensitive to the various needs of the different generations and life stages of the women in our congregation? How is that reflected in our organization?
4. What needs/responsibilities will cease to be met if our group stops doing them? How else could these needs be met through the activities of our congregation?
5. What relationship/support do we have from our clergy? Have we discussed our group's status and needs with the clergy recently?
6. How do we recruit participation? Do we over schedule or plan too many events/duties/functions? What about our timing?
7. What are we doing for spiritual enrichment, fun, fellowship? What are we doing for outreach beyond the walls of our church? How much of what we do is fundraising, church upkeep?
8. Who is praying for God's blessing on the women's ministries at our church?
9. Do we need to change the way we do women's ministries at our church? If so, what are we going to do about it?

A Call to Action: Hungry Hearts and Hectic Lifestyles, ECW's Challenge 2003 ANNUAL MEETING



STEPS IN STARTING UP A NEW WOMEN'S GROUP/ ORGANIZATION

1. Speak to the rector/vicar for initial support to move forward. Be clear on the mission/vision of the church and how they might interface with the ministries of a new women's group/organization.

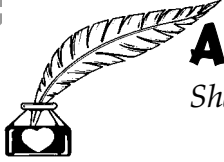
2. Gather a core group of 4 – 6 women who believe in the need for organized women's ministries. This group will write and sign a brief covenant pledging to work toward the organization of a group and discern its mission, engage the congregation's women in a focus group, plan, organize and carry out activities for the first year.

4. Connect with any information your church may already have about person's spiritual gifts, interests, talents in order to draft an initial list of women who may be interested in women's ministries. This information should be a basis of information for invitations, recruiting help, etc. Especially note new women members to the church.

3. Invite all the women of your congregation to a focus group event. In the focus groups ask the women about their needs, hopes and dreams for the development of women's ministries at your church. (avoid surveys)

4. Core group review the documented results of the focus group event and set goals for one year which should include:

- ◆ the writing of simple guidelines for how their group will work for one year (frequency of meetings, how the group will govern itself, etc. They should investigate different models for organization and determine the one best suited to their need given their unique congregational dynamics)
- ◆ a variety of activities scheduled over the course of the year (not too many – less is better!!) and what teams will be responsible for carrying them out and recruiting others to help
- ◆ publicity methods/responsibilities for the activities
- ◆ how activities will be paid for
- ◆ networks with church staff members and a plan to inform and work with appropriate persons, including keeping the rector/vicar well informed
- ◆ prayer support – how and when they will pray together about the future of women's ministries to seek God's guidance and blessing!



A HISTORY OF OUR HISTORY TO DATE

Shara Partin

For years preserving the archives of the ECW consisted of Presidents meeting in parking lots after Annual Meeting to pass cardboard boxes containing records of previous administrations from trunk to trunk. The repositories were unused space in the attic, basement, or closet the President's home. Sometimes the boxes were taken out and used as references in preparing for meetings and events. Occasionally irrelevant material was thrown away because space became an issue. Wonderful funny, touching stories were told on rides to meetings and conversations over meals. (Does this sound familiar?) Slowly but surely our history was being lost.

One of the lures for our Cottage Campaign between 1993-1997 was a place to store our archives. At that time we thought the new ECW Cottage at The Summit would be the location. When I began writing the little history, *Serving More Than Tea*, I realized that we had a significant amount of information but it was scattered about and kept in memory rather than stored where future searchers could find it easily. Your willingness to fund that project from 1998-2000 gave me confidence that when a place was found money would be also.

Three years ago funds were made available to prepare and furnish a small room adjacent to the archive library in the Diocesan House. May Sherrod and I cleaned and painted the room and bought good furniture. We chose to use archival quality folders rather than boxes for our material because they are easier for women to handle. Abigail Rovener from Raleigh was hired as a part time archivist to begin sorting and organizing. Notice of a safe place for historical material was sent out and some new things came into being. Relevant material from other areas of the building were brought to the new Women's Archive Room. The Women's Auxiliary journals and materials in the general diocesan collection were moved into our collection. This process continues and slowly a significant body of material is being gathered.

It has not been all sweetness and light despite the generosity of the board under Gail and Sylvia. Twice last year the basement at Diocesan House flooded causing damage to rugs and furniture which fortunately insurance paid to replace. Our records were safe because they were up on shelves and not on the floor but all work stopped for several months. The room were cleaned and put back into some semblance of order. Abigail resigned to take a full time job. The journals from 1883-1997 are at a book repair specialist for restoration or binding, they should be back this winter. I have been working the Diocesan Department of Records and History to fund a part-time historian/archivist who would spend time working in our collection as well as the diocesan general collection. If the Diocesan House property is changed we will be moved to the new location.

Why am I telling you this other than to bring you up to date and thank you? Well, the job is just begun. Watch for material about women and their work and send it to the archive. If you are in the Raleigh area and love to mess around in old stuff please let Lisa or I know.

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Profiles of the Board

[Editor's note: As part of the Diocesan ECW's better communications initiative, you will over the next few years be learning more about the members of the **Executive Board**, the people elected to act on your behalf. A few paragraphs do not a life story make, of course, but these periodic profiles will provide a sense of the women who serve as your eyes and ears and voice within the greater sisterhood of ECW.]

THE BEGINNING:

I was born in eastern North Carolina to Baptists whose roots in the Old North State date to the mid-1700s. Several years after my birth, my father rejoined the U.S. Army. Thus began an odyssey that took our family, which would ultimately number six, across the country and several continents and, thanks to my mother, a teacher, into the doors and heart of the Episcopal Church U.S.A.

At the age of 11 I was confirmed in the church. A number of my high school years were spent in Europe. My time with the Episcopal youth group in Frankfurt, Germany was particularly formative. Among many other things, we traveled to France to meet with and sing for a convocation of American bishops gathered in Paris, and worked and worshipped alongside Benedictine monks who lived in an ancient monastery in a German city that had once been conquered by the Romans. By the time I was a senior in high school we were living in Arizona. It made sense, given the time and place, to attend the University of Arizona in Tucson.

No matter where we lived, however, our touchstone was North Carolina. It was a part of our hearts and home, and it was the place to which we always returned. Those returns could be for extended periods, such as when my father was deployed to Vietnam.

THE MIDDLE

A year after graduating from college I married Karl Towle, whom I'd met while at the U of A where he had studied to become an engineer and I majored in journalism. The pursuit of higher education and career advancement took us to Chicago, Boston, upstate New York and central New Jersey, about a 40-minute train ride from New York City. The longing to raise our children in a different environment (fewer crowds, more sun, and slower pace) coupled with a desire for a lower cost of living, greater job opportunities and physical proximity to family led us to North Carolina's Research Triangle Park area. We've lived in Cary for nearly 13 years.

Through it all I have been greatly blessed. The opportunity to report and write for many publications, including *Time* magazine and *The New York Times*, has led to awards for my writing. And last fall, a book I authored, *Heritage of Healing: Two Hundred Years of Medicine in Wake County*, was published. Karl, a computer engineer, and I co-own Liskar Communications.

I have served as president of the Society of Professional Journalists' Triangle Pro chapter as well as the Friends of the Page-Walker, a Cary-based non-profit focused on the arts and historic preservation. After eight years on the boards of both Church Women United of North Carolina and Church Women United of Raleigh/Wake County, CWU honored me with its Valiant Woman Award.

THE HERE AND NOW

No matter my circumstances, I've always found a home in Episcopal churches where, like a legion of women, I have participated in ECW activities and Bible studies, served on altar guilds, taught Sunday school and Vacation Bible School and worked in the area of social ministry. I am very proud of the framed certificate on my office wall that notes my completion



of The University of the South's four-year Education for Ministry theological study program.

If you want to know my heart, though, then know my family. Karl and I have been married for 23 years and have three daughters. The oldest attends the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; the second-born is a high school freshman; the youngest is in the first year of middle school. As I said at the annual meeting in November, one reason I accepted the call to be president of the Diocesan ECW was because the legacy of Episcopal Church Women is important to me and I want to help keep it alive and well for my children and the generation of young women who will follow them.

These then are pieces of my life that when taken together, hopefully, offer a fuller picture of who I am. Should you ever have any questions or concerns don't hesitate to contact me. My door, e-mail box and phone are always open.

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ECW WORKS

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

The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina
201 St. Alban's Drive -Raleigh, North Carolina 27609

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SAVE THE DATE FOR RAISING SPIRITS!

Presented by Christ Church ECW on **February 6-7, 2004** at St. Mary's School, 900 Hillsborough Street, Raleigh. The keynote speaker on the theme "*Strong Women, Soft Hearts*" will be Paula Rinehart, Traveling Light Ministries. Registration forms available on-line at www.christ-church-raleigh.org.

ECW WORKS is a publication of the Episcopal Church Women, Diocese of North Carolina. To order a subscription, please send your name, address, and \$4.00 check (payable to ECW) and mail to **Betty Temple, Treasurer 1003 Patrick Street, Tarboro NC 27886**. To correct or change a mailing address for **ECW WORKS**, please send information to Lisa Towle, ECW President, 110 Dutchess Drive, Cary NC 27513-4209 lisa@liskar.com **To submit articles for ECW WORKS, send to Mary E. Hawkins EDITOR 1805 Primrose Place, Durham NC 27707. Phone: 919-682-4647, FAX 919-530-7985, email: hawkins@intrex.net**