Registration is now open for the 126th Annual Council of the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia, February 16-17, 2018 at the Williamsburg Lodge Convention Center. Go to www.bit.ly/diosova126, for the most current information about Annual Council.

**Keynote Speaker: Scott Bader-Saye, Ph.D.**
Scott Bader-Saye is the Academic Dean and Helen and Everett H. Jones Professor of Christian Ethics and Moral Theology at Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, Texas. His publications include two books, Following Jesus in a Culture of Fear and Church and Israel After Christendom. His topic will be "Fear and Love in a Divided World."

**Registration & Hotel**
You may register individually or you may register your entire delegation. Early registration through January 12, 2018 is $125 per attendee. Clergy spouses/partners, youth aged 18 and younger, and college students may register at the $50 rate. Payment is due no later than Jan. 12, 2017 to avoid a $25 late registration fee. Registration for exhibitors is also open. Attendees will need to make their own hotel reservations. Discounted rates will be available at the Williamsburg Lodge and The Woodlands. Go to www.diosova.org for more information. Make hotel reservations no later than January 15, 2018 to insure availability and discounted rate.

Scholarships are available for churches that need assistance to pay for Council registration fees. If you would like more information about scholarships, please contact Susan Allen, sallen@diosova.org or 757-213-3391.

**Nominations for Elections at Annual Council**
The following elections will take place at Annual Council: Standing Committee (one lay, one clergy); Disciplinary Board (two lay, one clergy); General Convention (one young adult lay alternate). Get more info and the nomination form at www.diosova.org.

**Youth Delegation Application**
Every year a special delegation of 12 youth in grades 9-12 are invited to attend Diocesan Council. Go to www.diosova.org for more info and an application form. Applications are due by January 19, 2018.

**Communicator Credentials**
Council registration fee is waived for church communicators who submit the application form no later than February 2, 2018. More information and form are available at www.diosova.org.

Pilgrims travel to the Holy Land with Bishop Magness

Bishop Magness led 28 pilgrims from Southern Virginia, including Bishop Hollerith, to the Holy Land October 17-28. These are just a few photos of their travels.

Clockwise from top left: Bishop Magness performs a renewal of marriage vows in Cana; Bishop Hollerith meets an old friend at St. George's Cathedral; celebrating Bishop Magness' birthday; Bishop Hollerith, Bishop Magness and the Very Rev. Nancy Meck, rector of Johns Memorial, Farmville, and dean of Convocation 8; Renewal of Baptismal Vows at the Jordan River; Holy Eucharist at the Sea of Galilee.
Clergy transitions

The Rev. Lorna H. Williams began as Associate Rector for Children & Youth at St. Andrew's, Newport News, on October 1, 2017.


The Rev. Becky Crites left Epiphany, Danville, on September 30, 2017.

The Rev. Dr. Regina Christianson left Emmanuel, Chatham, on October 16, 2017.

The Rev. Dr. Katherine Dunagan started as interim rector at Epiphany, Danville on November 1, 2017.


The Rev. Dr. K. Drew Baker will leave Epiphany, Danville, on November 30, 2017.

The Rev. Gini DiStanislao will begin as Rector of Manakin, Midlothian on December 1, 2017.

The Rev. Marjorie Holm started as interim rector at Emmanuel, Franklin on December 1, 2017.

The Rev. Lisa Green will begin as Associate Rector at St. Martin's, Williamsburg, on December 11, 2017.


Plan now to participate in the Good Book Club during Lent 2018

Forward Movement is excited to announce the Good Book Club - a church-wide invitation to all Episcopalians to read Luke and Acts during Lent-Easter 2018. Participants in the Good Book Club will begin reading Luke the Sunday before Lent, February 11, 2018, and finish up the Book of Acts on the Day of Pentecost, May 20, 2018. We hope you’ll join us, and the many churches, individuals and organizations who will be a part of this special project.

Several organizations have already announced partnerships with Forward Movement on the Good Book Club, including Episcopal Church Foundation, ChurchNext, Episcopal Migration Ministries, and The Episcopal Church and Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry. Partner organizations are creating resources or encouraging their constituents to take part in the effort.

The Good Book Club website (goodbookclub.org) lists the daily readings, as well as available resources to support people as they read the scriptures. Resources also will be available in Spanish at clubbiblico.org. And a note to Forward Day by Day readers: Forward Day by Day will use Good Book Club readings during Lent-Easter 2018, instead of the usual daily lectionary.

For now, you can sign up for updates or learn more about partnering with us at goodbookclub.org. We hope you’ll read along with us, and Episcopalians around the globe!

St. Paul’s to host Trinity Institute

St. Paul's, Newport News, will be a Trinity Institute Partner Site for the 2018 conference to be held Feb. 2-3, 2018. Mark your calendar and plan to attend this important event.

We all want to create a better world, and that requires action and connection. Discerning shared values is crucial to forming powerful partnerships and moving forward with courageous intention. Explore how you and your community can set a collaborative course at Values in Action, a Trinity Institute conference designed to help you get grounded and connected so you can get going. The 2018 conference features leading activists, theologians, authors, and experts on how to integrate core values into strategic and effective action, including the Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church; Michelle Alexander, author of The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, and Pádraig O Tuama, poet, theologian, and mediator.

For more information on the Trinity Institute broadcast and to register, go to www.diosova.org.
Thank you for your support of Episcopal Relief & Development
The Very Rev. Keith Emerson, St. Paul’s, Suffolk; Diocesan Episcopal Relief & Development Coordinator

I am deeply grateful to the people and parishes of our diocese who have given money to Episcopal Relief & Development over the summer months (July-September). It has been a time of incredible need and we in the Diocese of Southern Virginia have responded generously. During this period, we made 555 contributions for a total of $112,144.37.

I am grateful for donations made by the following parishes and organizations:

- **Water & Sanitation and Hunger Food Security**
  - Emmanuel, Franklin
  - St. John's, Hopewell

- **Sudan Relief Efforts**
  - Bruton Parish, Williamsburg

- **Undesignated Gifts**
  - Emmanuel, Hampton
  - Christ Church, Amelia Courthouse
  - St. Stephen’s, Newport News
  - Church of the Advent, Norfolk
  - Christ and Grace, Petersburg
  - St. Luke’s, Powhatan
  - All Saints’, Virginia Beach

- **US Disaster/Hurricane Harvey Relief**
  - Christ Church, Amelia Courthouse
    - St. Luke’s, Blackstone
    - St. Mark’s, Bracey
    - St. Thomas’, Chesapeake
    - St. Matthew’s, Chesterfield
    - St. Cecelia Guild, Eastville
    - Emmanuel, Hampton
    - St. Martha’s Guild, Hopewell
    - Manakin, Midlothian
    - St. Andrew’s, Newport News
    - St. Paul’s, Norfolk
    - St. Michael’s, North Chesterfield
    - Christ and Grace, Petersburg
    - St. Mark’s, Suffolk
    - Old Donation, Virginia Beach
    - Emmanuel, Virginia Beach
    - Good Samaritan, Virginia Beach
    - Christ the King, Yorktown

Once again, thank you to everyone who has contributed. Together we are healing a hurting world.

Presiding Bishop speaks to diocesan Clergy Conference

This year’s diocesan Clergy Conference, Nov. 28, featured a very special guest speaker - Presiding Bishop Michael Curry. Bishop Curry spoke to the gathered clergy on preaching. In addition to the three talks he presented, Bishop Curry also participated in an open Q&A session with the clergy. The day ended with a wonderful dinner prepared by Chanco’s chef. A portion of the cost of registration was donated to Bishop Curry’s discretionary fund. More pictures are posted on our Facebook page.

Churches form united youth group

The four Episcopal churches in Hampton have joined to form a united youth group called HEY (Hampton Episcopal Youth). Youth from Emmanuel, St. Cyprian’s, St. John’s, and St. Mark’s, held their first HEY event on in September at St. Mark’s. Nineteen youth, along with adults gathered for bubble soccer, games, fellowship, and pizza. The group holds monthly events, and also to participates in Diocesan youth events.

Once again, thank you to everyone who has contributed. Together we are healing a hurting world.
Bishop Magness speaks at retreat for combat vets

Bishop Magness was the keynote speaker at the closing ceremony for the Welcome Home Initiative retreat for combat zone veterans on Nov. 4. During the ceremony, Bishop Magness presented the Rev. Nigel Mumford, retreat leader, with a Chaplain’s (camouflage) stole.

The Welcome Home Initiative program is an intense, focused three-day retreat for military veterans, and their spouses, who served their country in combat and may be suffering, in varying degrees, from post-traumatic stress.

Mission of the Holy Spirit news

*Keith Josey, Lay Pastor, Mission of the Holy Spirit*

As I reflect on the struggles and success of the Mission of the Holy Spirit, I am overjoyed that each of you support this ministry. Do you find yourself asking “What is the Mission doing?” or “Why does the Mission need my support?” I want to take a few moments to share some answers and encourage your continued support.

The Mission of the Holy Spirit is more than an outreach program; it is a ministry that provides hope to everyone who attends. Over the years, we have seen many changes but our core purpose is the same: “to effectively change lives.” We fulfill that goal in a variety of ways.

Worship is first and foremost vital for our families, and offers opportunities for the church to help make substantive changes to a community in need by being the heart, hands and feet of Christ in the world. Thank you to every clergy person who volunteers to celebrate at our services—we enjoy having you with us!

Education is our next goal. 20 years ago, our focus was keeping our members out of jail and reducing teenage pregnancies. Through tutoring, encouraging reading and other educational activities, we have changed that dynamic: most members graduate from high school, and many go on to college, trade schools of the military. Thanks to all who support us through your contributions; this allows us to offer scholarships and other assistance, making higher education a reality for many.

Finally, the Mission achieves our goals through psychosocial activities. "Bridging the Gaps" was implemented during the summer months, and focuses on bringing families together and raising the level of functioning for all.

Vision of hope is what we provide. Throughout the crises and chaos of life, people are often just searching for hope. By creating an environment where faith can be developed and gifts can come to life, we have impacted all of the people whom we serve. Your partnership allows this. By being in a relationship with the Mission and continuing to provide support you are helping to effectively change lives.

With the holiday season approaching, we are counting on you more than ever to help keep our vision of hope going for the many families connected to this ministry. 2018 will be an exciting year as a new generation of children find their gifts through our efforts and new relationships are created. I look forward to meeting you, speaking at your churches and finding new ways for us all to stand together as one.

Campus Ministries retreat at Chanco

The Episcopal Campus Ministries from Christopher Newport University, Longwood University, Hampden-Sydney College, Old Dominion University, and College of William & Mary joined together for an overnight retreat at Chanco in November. With the theme of "Sabbath Time," the students centered their retreat around the Daily Offices, and concluded their time together with Eucharist. Taking time to nourish themselves in the beauty of God's creation, the students joined together for praying, hiking, zip-lining, rock climbing, guided meditation, and time around a campfire. The students enjoyed having time to be together as members of campus ministry in Southern Virginia.
Parishes partner with Healthy Families Virginia
The Very Rev. Susan Grimm, St. Timothy’s, Clarksville and Trinity, South Boston

St. Timothy’s, Clarksville, and Trinity, South Boston, undertook a special summer outreach program for our local Healthy Families Virginia program agency, headed by a Trinity parishioner. Healthy Families is a national program administered at the state and local levels, to provide support for parents of children from birth to age five. Not tied to income, the Healthy Family mentors can help new parents to raise healthy, happy, and well-adjusted children, by providing information and training about everything from the right bathwater temperature to developmental goals to connecting families with other providers for special needs. The premise of the support is research that shows that for every $1 invested in helping families with children in this age range, $5 to $6 can be saved in later interventions and treatment costs.

Our local branch serves Halifax, Mecklenburg and Charlotte counties, and we found out that their limited grant money would go farther in providing mentors if we helped with some of the items they help provide to families. Initially focused on bath items for ages 0-5, our outreach expanded to clothing and diapers. A great visual reminder were the two antique baby prams loaned to us by a parishioner and we filled those prams up! We encourage you to find your local Healthy Families branch to see how you can support them.

“Food Truck Fridays” brings community together

Redeemer, Midlothian, joined with their neighbors in the Salisbury Homeowner's Association to host "Food Truck Fridays" in September and October. The event went from 5 p.m. to dusk every Friday. Folks were invited to bring a lawn chair, visit with neighbors and enjoy great food. Kids played on the playground, teenagers hung out and adults socialized. There were a variety of food trucks each week - including Bon Bon Asian Fusion, Smoknpigz, Sweet Cakes, Cheezilla, Smokey Joe BBQ and Boardwalk Hot Dogs. These fun Fridays were a huge success in 2016 and Redeemer was excited to do it again this year.

Monthly “Open Mic Night” in Smithfield

Christ Church, Smithfield, invites you to join them for their monthly "Open Mic Nite" and enjoy musicians, comics, poets, and storytellers. The evening will provide a safe and supportive venue for the community to explore and share their music, poetry, humor, stories and more. Nursery is provided. A coffee bar sells drinks and snacks with proceeds going to Christ Church outreach programs. This is a regular monthly event - so mark your calendar for the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. and join the fun!

Blessing Boys & Girls Club students
Lisa Adams, St. George’s, Newport News

On a cool and breezy Sunday in September, St. George’s, Newport News, parishioners gathered at the Boys and Girls Club for a special service for youth to bless them and their backpacks, and help fill the backpacks supplies they need. What a great start to the school year to get equipped with God’s grace and provisions. All enjoyed the worship, energetic music, school supplies, and a great fried chicken feast. The really exciting news is that four of the youth who came to the picnic have starting coming to church. What a great witness to the importance of going out into the community to share the Good News.

“Baby Shower for Mary” benefits women in need

The children of St. John’s, Portsmouth, sponsored a Baby Shower for Mary this summer, collecting maternity and baby supplies for Care Net, a non-profit that brings free, practical help, hope, and resources to women facing pregnancy decision in Hampton Roads. Under the leadership of these younger sisters and brothers in Christ, the generous response from the people of St. John's Church was overwhelming! Just before the beginning of school this Fall, they were able to travel to Newport News in person to deliver the gifts and learn about this wonderful and growing ministry.
Community gathers at Fall Festival
*Rose Parker, St. Augustine’s, Newport News*

St. Augustine's, Newport News, held its Annual Fall Festival on Saturday, October 21. The day of fun in the sun included a bounce house, games, face painting, free food and drinks and a clothing give-a-way. Also on-site and providing vital community resources were the Newport News Police and Fire Departments, Healthy Families, WIC, the Newport Sheriff's Department, VA-BLOC, Transitions, The Get Up Project and Riverside Regional Hospital.

**Holy Apostles celebrates 40th anniversary**

Thirteen original members of Holy Apostles, Virginia Beach, the diocese’s only Episcopal/Roman Catholic ecumenical community, joined with about 150 other guests on Sunday, November 5, in the celebration of its 40th Anniversary.

Past Episcopal and Roman Catholic clergy joined with the Rev. Alan Mead (the Episcopal interim Co-pastor) and the Rev. René Castillo (the community's Catholic Chaplain) for a two-hour reception followed by Evening Prayer. Bishop Hollerith was in attendance and delivered the reflection following the service's scripture reading. Bishop Hollerith then asked the attendees to re-dedicate themselves to promoting ecumenism "... (and) to spread the Good News of our life in Jesus Christ who calls us to oneness."

On prominent display was the Papal Blessing bestowed upon the community by Pope Francis in recognition of the assembly's 40th Anniversary. Also displayed was well wishes from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry.

**James Solomon Russell Museum moves forward**

James Grimestead, chairman, provides this update on the progress of the James Solomon Russell - Saint Paul's College Museum and Archives. The purpose of the museum is to preserve and honor the legacy of Archdeacon James Salomon Russell and the archives of Saint Paul's college, which Russell founded.

The floor plan for the museum display rooms has been completed. Earlier the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors approved using the former school board office at 219 North Main Street for the museum. The museum was granted 501(c)3 federal tax exempted status in April 2017 and has obtained membership in the Virginia Association of Museums.

"This membership gives us direct association with over 2000 other museums in the state of Virginia. It offers training in all aspects of museum operations, gives us access to equipment donations from other museums, and provides school credit to students who visit the museum," said Grimestead.

Another significant accomplishment this year was to purchase a computer system to catalog the archives. With over thousands of items to catalog, the process will take several months. The museum committee also now has an email address: jsrspc1888@gmail.com.

Grimestead said the next goals are to set up a grant-writing committee, obtain showcases for displays, and to set up a committee to organize the grand opening, tentatively set for May 2018.

Get more news from Southern Virginia!

Sign up for our weekly eNews at www.diosova.org.
Hickory Neck celebrates 100th anniversary of consecration  
*The Rev. Charles Bauer, Hickory Neck, Toano*

On October 29, Hickory Neck, Toano, had much to celebrate - past, present, and future! We gathered as a community in front of the Historic Chapel to mark the 100th Anniversary of its Consecration. Though the Chapel dates to 1774, it ceased serving as a church after the Revolution until its restoration in 1915. On October 24, 1917, the Rt. Rev. Beverley Dandridge Tucker, Bishop of Southern Virginia, consecrated the building for the growing new community. We then gathered in front of our New Chapel and burned our mortgage note, signifying a successful effort to pay off the debt for our new worship space - and several years ahead of schedule. Finally, the congregation entered the church as members of a brass trio triumphantly played "When The Saints Go Marching In" for a celebratory in-gathering of our pledge cards to support our future. The Rt. Rev. Wayne Wright, retired Bishop of Delaware, preached on the challenges and joys of answering God's call. We are thankful for all of God's gifts and blessings here at Hickory Neck!

**Why weren't colonial churches consecrated?**  
*Martha W. McCartney, Hickory Neck, Toano*

When King Charles II ascended to the throne in 1660 and became the Church of England's head, he granted the Bishop of London jurisdiction over all of the colonies’ Anglican churches. High ranking colonial officials had the right to issue marriage licenses and see that wills were probated, and he also assigned clergymen and could induct (permanently assign) them if asked to do so. However, properly educated men who wanted to become Anglican ministers had to travel overseas in order to be ordained by the Bishop of London or another Bishop if he was unavailable.

Just as there was no one in the American colonies who was qualified to perform ordinations, here and in England, there was no provision for the consecration of churches, chapels-of-ease, or graveyards. In 1712 Anglican officials crafted a text for a consecration ceremony they hoped would be added to the Offices of the Liturgy but it never received Royal Assent and therefore never became an officially sanctioned service of the Church of England.

Anglican Bishops who wanted to consecrate a new church could create and perform a ceremony if they wanted to, but because there were no Bishops in the American colonies and only a Bishop could consecrate a church, *none of Virginia’s colonial churches* — including Hickory Neck — were consecrated.

After the close of the American Revolution and the establishment of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church formally separated from the Church of England and the Anglican Prayer Book was modified to create an American Prayer Book. This first Book of Common Prayer, published in 1789, included a service for the Consecration of Churches, a liturgy that was used until the prayer book was revised in 1892.

**Outreach opportunities for your congregation in downtown Newport News**

St. Paul's, Newport News, feeds their homeless congregation four times a week and they need help to continue this mission. You are welcome to just relieve a regular group or take on a monthly spot. It requires about four people, three hours total and the cost is (depending on your menu) $40 to $70. They serve on Sunday 9:45 a.m., Monday 7 a.m., Friday 5 p.m., and Saturday 12 p.m. They also need donations of non-perishable food and clothing (please call before drop-off so someone can receive your donation). This is a wonderful opportunity for church groups, work colleagues, scouts, and families.

**Care packages for college students**

Young members of St. John's, Portsmouth, baked goodies for "Exam Care Packages" that were mailed out to college students from St. John's and beyond with the message, "We hope you enjoy these treats as you prepare for and take your exams. See you soon! Your sisters and brothers in Christ from St. John's Church."
Becca brings Thistle Farms love to the ECW Annual Fall Meeting

Thistle Farms opened for business at the ECW Annual Fall Meeting - Love Heals Conference. Some 200 people, who gathered to hear the Rev. Becca Stevens speak, met the Thistle Farms founder face-to-face when they shopped for natural body and home products, candles, healing oil and books. Into every product handcrafted by the women of Thistle Farms goes the belief that love is the most powerful force for change in the world. Becca; the Thistle Farms Nashville staff; Kim Stevens, retail store manager; Sophia Crawford, logistics director; and Connally Penley, road trip logistics coordinator; set up shop at St. Francis, Virginia Beach, on Saturday, Nov. 4.

When ECW Diocesan President, Helen Sharpe-Williams introduced Becca, she thanked the ECW for helping arrange their trip to Virginia, and she thanked everyone for a great round of shopping. Twenty years ago, Becca started Thistle Farms to provide sanctuary for survivors of trafficking, prostitution and addiction. Thistle Farms' sales help fund this mission.

Becca said she started Thistle Farms because, "I wanted to have something I would want if I was coming off the street." She wanted "radical hospitality." No one who asks for help is left alone. "It's a partnership," she said. "Women do recover."

Today the Global market of Thistle Farms helps employ more than 1,800 women worldwide and the national network has more than 40 sister communities mostly started by ECWs.

During the ECW business meeting, the Rev. Connor Alexander, rector of St. Francis, installed new board members: Deborah Austin, membership chair, St. Marks, Suffolk; Ann Allen, Prayer and Worship Chair, Grace, Norfolk; and Kathy Haney, recording secretary, Christ Church, Danville. Many thanks to St. Francis for hosting the meeting.

Participants moved by Becca’s message of love

"I thought Becca’s presentation was very dynamic and stimulating. What she and Thistle Farms are able to do for women in all stages of recovery is quite amazing." - Marilyn Meek, Ascension, Norfolk

"The Diocesan ECW Annual Fall Meeting was a huge success! The Rev. Becca Stevens has created an amazing place for women who need a safe place to heal. Her message is 'Love Heals' and the products the women make and sell carry that message. It was a pleasure to hear Becca speak and to meet two of the women who have gone through the program at Thistle Farms. Thanks to those who were responsible for bringing Becca to Virginia Beach and to St. Francis for hosting us." - Mary Alligood, ECW President, Redeemer, Midlothian

"The Rev. Becca Stevens shared her life story and her ministry of providing a place women needed to go to escape the clutches of human trafficking, prostitution and/or addiction. In Becca's down-to-earth style of sharing her story and her ministry, she described how she realized the women caught in the web of human trafficking, prostitution and/or addiction needed a place to live and most of all, a means of income." - Susan Boze, St. Aidan's, Virginia Beach.
Women’s Advent Retreat: Living the Magnificat

By Susan Boze, St. Aidan’s, Virginia Beach, Chanco Program Committee Member

Friday, December 1, was a beautiful mild late fall evening at Chanco on the James Camp and Conference Center. A number of women from around the diocese stepped back from the busy world outside Chanco for a time together to quiet our hearts and minds as we enter into Advent and prepare for Christmas. The Women’s Advent Retreat offered two options: an evening program Friday, Dec. 1 and/or a full day program Saturday, Dec. 2.

On Friday evening, we began the Advent retreat by creating an individual prayer scarf. As the fabric paint colors flowed onto our blank scarf, each woman created individual and beautiful scarves to proclaim, as Mary did, in the opening line of the Magnificat: “My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” The night air was still warm and we gathered on the bluff of the James River by the cross for a surprise treat, a bonfire and smores! Oh, and songs too! Saturday the additional women arrived for the day-long portion of the retreat. The plan for the day provided ways to explore and interpret the Magnificat with reflection and discussion of the verses. We wondered about the possibilities of “who was Mary?”, did she struggle with saying yes to God? We continued our exploration by looking at how people through the ages expressed their interpretation of the Birth of Christ through Marian icons.

We concluded the afternoon with the creation of an Anglican Rosary for use with a portion of the Magnificat for our personal prayer time during Advent and celebrated the coming of the season with Advent Lessons and Carols.

The Chanco Program Committee is committed to offering a Women’s retreat during Advent and Lent. Mark your calendar for the next retreat on March 23-24, 2018. Watch for more information and registration in early 2018.

St. Mark’s Women’s Day 2017

The Reverend Betty Ricks-Montgomery, assistant pastor at the Greater First Baptist Church – Orlando, in Suffolk was the keynote speaker at St. Mark’s Women’s Day, Sunday, October 9. ECW Vice President, Priscilla Benns, introduced Rev. Ricks-Montgomery. After the service, everyone enjoyed a reception. Tia Moring, chair, Bettie Swain, Sharon Goforth, Deborah Austin and Renee Roper-Jackson planned Women’s Day 2017 an annual event at St. Mark’s.

Christmas Tea with Mrs. Claus

The ECW at St. Francis, Virginia Beach hosted a Christmas Tea with Mrs. Claus December 2, and Mr. Claus (Santa) arrived as a special guest. “Santa told the children the story of the real St. Nicholas,” said Maureen Fuster, ECW president and Christmas Tea chairperson. Children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors sampled Mrs. Claus’, AKA Mary Bligious, tasty home-baked cookies and scones. Santa’s elves served the goodies with hot chocolate, British cream tea and coffee. Young guests posed for photos with Mrs. Claus and mailed letters to Santa in a special mailbox. “Everyone had a great time, the food was delicious, and we raised some much needed money for our outreach,” Maureen said.
Women As Peacemakers

Peacemaking is a skill that can be learned. “It starts with reconciliation,” said Berhanu Mengistu, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Urban Studies and Public Administration at Old Dominion University. “Then, we have to engage in mediation to find a win-win solution.” Dr. Mengistu laid the foundation for the discussion at the Women As Peacemakers seminar held at ODU October 27. Women-to-Women, chaired by Susan Broaddus, sponsored the seminar.

Building on Dr. Mengistu’s introduction, Dr. Willene Johnson, president of Komaza, Inc. said, “We have to open up our minds. In order to be peacemakers, we have to understand the situation.” Dr. Johnson has done much work in Africa and has facilitated workshops for practitioners engaged in peacekeeping and economic reconstruction in conflict areas.

“Women are now taking the role of peacemakers in many areas of conflict,” Dr. Johnson said. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, created in 2000, identifies the critical role of women and defines ways in which national governments and international organizations can support women’s active role in preventing and resolving conflict. “Conflict is not a bad thing,” she said. “It is part of how we change the world to a better place. But, nonviolent ways of conflict resolution and change must be nurtured to build lasting peace. The drivers of conflict need to be identified. Women who are often victims in the conflict can help identify the problems. The social and economic issues are very closely related. To me the most important thing is to prevent relapse. Women’s ideas are essential. We will come together to find a better way.”

The third speaker, Dr. Yossa Way, Professor in the Department of Theology of the Anglican University in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), spoke of the origin of the Anglican Church in the DRC. This started in 1894, when the Chief in Boga asked his counterpart in Uganda to send him people to talk about Christianity after he heard verses such as “Blessed are the peacemakers.” In 2002-3 there was the inter-tribal war in the region of Bunia between two tribes who are well represented in the Anglican Church. With widespread shooting occurring in Bunia over a period of time, women of different denominations organized a march throughout the town and effected a cease-fire.

He told about the numerous militias throughout the country and about how several women have started organizations to deal with the women victims of violence. He also said there is a special building for prayer of intercession and for mediation with political forces on the campus of the Anglican University. In particular he mentioned a woman who travels to the site of a large militia made up of her own tribesmen. She goes out and talks to them individually and has been successful in having a number of guns given over to the government and the young men returning home to civilian life. Asked how she was received, Dr. Way said she has no fear and has been respected because of her courage and persistence. A lively Q. and A. discussion continued for an hour.

October UTO donations bountiful

Ronda Toll, Christ the King, Tabb

Donations to the United Thank Offering (UTO) collected during October ingatherings throughout the Diocese have been coming in at a swift and steady pace - what a blessing! Please send UTO donations to Ronda Toll, Diocesan UTO Coordinator, at the following address: 42 Cherbourg Drive, Newport News, VA 23606.

ECW Falls in Love with New UTO Prayer

The National UTO Board recently created a simple prayer (memorable and easy enough for children to recite) that can be said when making an offering in a Blue Box. This prayer, which will soon be featured on Blue Boxes, was shared by the Diocesan UTO Coordinator at the ECW Annual Fall Meeting on November 4. The reaction was immediate. The ECW loved it! Here's the new prayer:

Almighty God, I give you praise for blessing me in many ways. Create in me a grateful heart and with this gift, a blessing start. Amen.
World Day of Prayer Brunch
Anna Price, St. Thomas, Freeman, Virginia

St. Paul’s Memorial Chapel, Lawrenceville, and St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Freeman, sponsored a World Day of Prayer Brunch. St. Thomas hosted the brunch September 21. Anna Price and Iris Jones co-chaired the event. Cleo Goodwyn, served as mistress of ceremonies. Edna Parker, St. Paul’s Memorial welcomed some forty guests. Anna Price, St. Paul’s Memorial, gave the purpose. Her theme was Thomas Pain’s quote, “These are the times that try men’s souls.” The times are trying because of fires, tornados, floods, violence, unstable government and the threat of war.

If you’ve been to Chanco, you are well familiar with the term “the spirit of Chanco”. If you are a camper, you see it in new friendships, in Eucharist on the bluff, in the adventure of trying something completely new, and you hear it in the Chanco song sung every evening as you lock arm in arm with friends old and new to close out the day. If you are a retreat guest, you have seen the spirit of Chanco in the team building activities on a low ropes course, or the adventure of a zip line, or worship outdoors, or in the loving faces of new friends. If you’ve never been to Chanco, you may have seen the words “spirit of Chanco” but not having had your own Chanco experience, you may wonder, “What is that all about anyway?”

The good news is that more and more friends are becoming acquainted with the spirit of Chanco. With two brand-new Women’s Retreats in 2017 that each had over 50 participants, strong Happening and Cursillo weekends and flourishing camp programs for multiple years in a row, the spirit of Chanco is thriving! The board and staff of Chanco on the James is incredibly grateful to all those who make these events possible through gifts of time, talent and treasure. Volunteers, staff members, donors, and guests give the spirit of Chanco its vibrant life and are the vessels through which God works to offer His ministry year-round at Chanco on the James.

One Cursillo participant describes this spirit beautifully sharing, “Thanks be to God for wonderful people like you and all involved in Cursillo. I truly saw the rainbow of God’s hope, love and grace through the team’s infectious, generous joy, the community's outpouring of palanca, and my sister/fellow candidates' unfettered kindness”. If “God’s hope, love and grace” and “infectious, generous joy” sound appealing to you, find out more at www.cursillodiosova.org. Cursillo weekends are held three times annually and offer an experience of learning, laughter, friendship and faith.

A camper shares her experience of the spirit of Chanco writing, “Chanco brings a glistening happiness in my life and whenever I’m present in the spirit of Chanco my life seems complete. Chanco is a place where you can forget all your worries and personal problems. Chanco is a huge part of my life and will never be forgotten. The memories I’ve made during my time at Chanco make me who I am today. (continued on page 12)
The Spirit of Chanco

By Talley Banazek, Development/Marketing Coordinator, Chanco on the James

I’ve continued coming to Chanco for seven years in a row and I hope to come here for many, many more. Not only did Chanco introduce me to a new type of happiness, but it also introduced me to my best friend, Carter. We don’t see each other out of Chanco, but each year we seem to get closer and closer and that is because of Chanco. Chanco will forever and always be my home.”

Come join us at a place many consider their “second home”. Winter Camp is around the corner January 12-14, 2018, Happening #68 is March 9-11 and a Co-Ed Cursillo weekend is being held April 19-22 to name just a few of the upcoming opportunities to experience the “spirit of Chanco.” Camp Chanco 2018 promises to be as full of adventure, faith, friendship and fun and registration is in full swing at www.chanco.org. Don’t miss it! And if you are a parent or grandparent, giving the spirit of Chanco for Christmas might solve all your Christmas shopping conundrums! See below for the list of 2018 camp dates and rates and visit our website to register today! Merry Christmas to all our friends who make the spirit of Chanco possible and may God’s grace, love, peace and joy fill your holiday this season and always.

Your gift to Chanco transforms lives

Chanco changes lives. Your gift makes the difference. Each year hundreds of campers experience God’s love in Christian community in our summer camp programs while challenging themselves with new experiences, making new friends and having fun. Retreat participants at EYC events, Happening, Cursillo, parish retreats, vestry retreats and more deepen their relationship with God and with one another. Perhaps most importantly, many young people who would not otherwise have a Chanco experience are able to have one thanks to your generosity. Chanco awarded 75 scholarships and over $44,000 in 2017 in financial assistance including multiple full scholarships to youth from Boy’s Home of Virginia and ForKids, an organization supporting homeless youth and families.

Chanco depends upon gifts to the Annual Fund each year to make continued improvement to its property and programs and award scholarships so that every child who wishes a Chanco experience may have one.

Chanco depends upon $85,000 in its Annual Fund to sustain its ministry. Please prayerfully consider your gift to Chanco this year and give as generously as you are able. Help us keep costs low, offer extensive financial assistance to camper families and continue to make the improvements to our property and programs that makes Chanco on the James the best camp and retreat center in Virginia!

Don’t wait! Make a difference today by donating to Chanco’s Annual Fund. You may mail a check to Chanco on the James with “Annual Fund” in the memo line and mail to Chanco at 394 Floods Drive, Surry, VA 23881 or make an easy on line donation by visiting our website at www.chanco.org.
Calendar of Events

For more upcoming events, visit www.diosova.org.


Pre-Happening Staff Weekend - Feb. 24-25, 2018. at Chanco on the James. Contact Youth Missioner Ashley Scruggs for info,ascaruggs@diosova.org or 757-213-3393.


79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church: July 5-13, 2018, Austin Convention Center, Austin, TX. www.generalconvention.org for more info.

Safe Church training
Go to www.diosova.org for information and registration. Online training is also available.

- January 20, 2018 – St. Mark’s, Hampton (registration open now, closes Jan. 16)
- February 3, 2018 – St. Barnabas, North Chesterfield (registration open now, closes Jan. 30)
- February 10, 2018 – Epiphany, Norfolk (registration open now, closes Feb. 6)
- February 24, 2018 – Bruton Parish, Williamsburg (registration open now, closes Feb. 20)
- March 10, 2018 – Merchants Hope, Hopewell (registration open now, closes March 6)
- April 14, 2018 – St. Paul’s, Suffolk
- April 21, 2018 – Holy Trinity, Onancock

- April 28, 2018 – St. Paul’s & St. Andrew’s, Kenbridge
- May 12, 2018 – Galilee, Virginia Beach
- June 2, 2018 – Trinity, South Boston
- September 8, 2018 – Ascension, Norfolk
- September 22, 2018 – St. Andrew’s, Newport News
- October 13, 2018 – St. Aidan’s, Virginia Beach
- October 27, 2018 – St. Matthias’, Midlothian

Pilgrimages

Scotland & England in May 2018
A Pilgrimage to Scotland and England is being organized for May 2018. After a time for quiet and reflection on Iona, the group will travel to Melrose. At Melrose, they will walk the Way of St. Cuthbert, approximately 70 miles, to Lindisfarne. After completing the Way of St. Cuthbert, they will visit The Shrine of St. Cuthbert at Durham Cathedral. Pilgrims will continue their time with a visit to Edinburgh. For more information, contact Doris Custer (CusterDD@gmail.com) or Dale Custer (rdalecuster@gmail.com).

Ireland in May 2018
If you’re interested in a 12-day tour of Ireland, the Friends of Bruton invite you to join them May 1-12, 2018. Go to bit.ly/brutonireland for trip brochure.

Holy Land in April 2018
Westminster-Canterbury, Virginia Beach, is hosting a pilgrimage to Israel April 6-15, 2018. Cost is $4690 per person, double occupancy, or $5710 per person, single occupancy. Air travel, lodging, transportation in Israel and meals (except lunches) are included. For more information contact the Rev. Doug Gray, 757-496-1651 or doug.gray@wcbay.com.

Holy Land for Advent 2018
St. John’s, Portsmouth, is pleased to announce our next international pilgrimage opportunity, Walking in the Footsteps of Jesus, from November 29 to December 9, 2018. This pilgrimage is open to anyone who desires to take this journey but is limited to a total group size of 17-30. Is God calling you to join this group? Cost from the Norfolk airport for this 11-day spiritual adventure (including all expenses and two meals daily) is $3,379 double occupancy (excluding airline taxes and fuel surcharges) and decreases depending on the number of Pilgrims over the minimum number of 17 taking the journey. Your spot can be reserved by making a $300 deposit. Contact the Rev. Derek Harbin, derek@stjohnsportsmouth.org.

Mark your calendar for 2018 Diocesan Youth Events

Mark your calendar now for these 2017-2018 youth events at Chanco on the James! Registration is now open for Fall events. Get details and registration at diosova.org.

- Feb. 16-17, 2018 - Youth Delegation to Annual Council, for grades 9-12
- Feb. 24-25, 2018 - Pre-Happening Staff Weekend
- Mar. 9-11, 2018 - Happening #68 for grades 10-12
- May 18-20, 2018 - May Weekend for grades 6-12