



THE GRAPEVINE



EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN WINTER 2020

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Hello Ladies in Christ,

How are you? As we continue to honor our vision and mission as Episcopal Church Women (ECW) during these turbulent times, I can only think of three words to sustain us: LOVE, HOPE, and FAITH.

The following is a wonderful poem by Rusty ("Ed") Gibson which I would love to share.



ECW Meeting Schedule

2021

March 20—Spring Executive Board Meeting, via Zoom

LOVE, HOPE and FAITH

We live tomorrow
the dreams of today.
Our hopes of the future
gives us faith along the way

Love is the river
of this wakened state
Its never out of time
its never too late

It gives us life
as it flows through our lives
It tears through confusion
loneliness and strife

Love cuts a clear path
through the rest of time
You can see where it has been
and watch it unwind

Free as a river
that you can't control
You cant even say
where it might flow

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President's Message continued

Hope can keep you going
when everything else fails
It keeps you company
on the loneliest of trails

Faith is ever daring
in the face of defeat
It can bring you courage
that nothing can beat

Faith is never doubting
in yourself or your beliefs.
Holding on to what you know
when content is just a dream.

Faith can give you strength
to face what the future brings
Combined with hope and love
you need the three of these

Love is like a River
Hope is like a dream
Faith is just believing
with nothing to be seen

So dream of tomorrow
and Love for today
Hope with all your heart
Let Faith show you the way

I sincerely appreciate your continued support, recommendations, prayers and blessings as your President during this challenging year, and with the help of God, I hope to be His advocator for all His Creation as we journey forward.

Lord make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life." Amen.

May your Advent Season be blessed. I wish to all a joyful and spiritually filled Christmas, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord and continue to have a safe and healthy New Year.

Yours in Christ,

Laura L. Manigault,

ECW President

Note: April is Autism Awareness Month and we are planning to have a virtual program concerning Autism Spectrum Disorder. More information to Follow.

Our Spring Executive Board Meeting is Saturday, March 20, 2021 via Zoom.

ECW Annual Fall Meeting Program Welcomes Autism Society President

By Dr. Renee Escoffery-Torres

ECW Vice President and Program Chairman

The Annual ECW Fall meeting held in October, was the perfect platform to launch the first in a series of discussions as part of ECW President Laura L. Manigault's Signature Program, "Dare to be Different: Let Us Unmask the Mystery of Autism Spectrum Disorder." Our guest speaker for the discussion was Mr. Diego Zuniga, President of the Tidewater Autism Society of Virginia. Diego, as he gave me permission to call him, is an Engineer working in Information Technology. His son's Autism diagnosis led him and his family to a community of "amazing people on a journey full of surprises...." He is also part of the Virginia Commonwealth University Partnership for People with Disabilities. As President of the Board, he has the responsibility to provide oversight for activities which are conducted under the directives given by the National Autism Society, and conduct daily activities in the Tidewater area. He also serves as the Executive Director of the Board, as they work to create "an inclusive community where all are accepted."

The Zoom format discussion held very insightful information, and provided a comfortable approach to the morning's program. My first question related to our current situation, and how his family is handling the pandemic of COVID-19. The second question related to unpacking the statement of the Society's mission: "Calling to create an inclusive community, where all are accepted." Mr. Zuniga discussed some of the activities and events that the Tidewater Autism Society offers to support this mission in the Greater Hampton Roads community, and he spoke specifically about "Respite Nights," providing caregivers an opportunity to enjoy quality time.

My final question related to Autism and Spirituality. After relating information about my granddaughter on the Spectrum, and her spiritual journey of Confirmation and participation in her parish as an Acolyte, Diego spoke to how churches can be welcoming spaces for families with children and adults on the spectrum, and talked about the cultivation of his son's spirituality.

Questions from the audience were equally engaging, ranging in topics from an overview of resources for persons with ASD, to hiring persons on the Spectrum and what employers should consider. All in all, it was a fascinating and illuminating discussion, and set the stage well for future conversations.

The ECW plans to continue our series next spring during the month of April, which is National Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Month. Please be on the lookout to join us, virtually!





**Nancy Polick Sands
Province III ECW President
The Diocese of Southern Virginia**



At the Province III Episcopal Church Women 101st Annual Meeting on August 22, 2020, Nancy Polick Sands was elected President.

I am well known to the Diocese as I am a former ECW President for the Diocese of Southern Virginia.

I am a member of Christ Episcopal Church in Danville, Virginia. I am a current member of the Vestry, former ECW President, serve on the Altar Guild, a Lay Reader and a member of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.

This year we have been asked to do many things that we have never had to do in our lives. We have experienced a terrible pandemic called Covid 19. My faith through this has been strong and it has carried me through this year. I have experienced many trials and tribulations in my life and it has been my faith that has carried me through all of them and made me stronger. In March of 2019, I lost my husband Alan to Brain Cancer. This is one of the worst things I have ever gone through in my life. If it were not for my faith in God, my family, my church family and my many friends I am not so sure I would have survived. But again my faith in God carried me through this hard time in my life. For the next three years, I want us to focus on our faith and be focused on the mission of the Province III Women.

Thank you for giving me this honor and I will lead the women of Province III to the best of my ability along with the help of all my ECW sisters.

This is also a first for the Diocese of Southern Virginia as this is the first time we have a President and Vice President elected from the same Diocese. Laura L. Manigault, our current ECW President in the Diocese of Southern Virginia was elected Vice President.

I would like to leave you with this Prayer. "Come Lord Jesus, and dwell in my heart in the fullness of your strength; be my wisdom and guide me in right pathways; conform my life and actions to the image of your holiness. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul and my mind. Let me serve you in my life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen."

ECW Dues Deadline Extended to November 30 - Help Fund Outreach

Each fall the ECW Diocesan Board asks all Episcopal Church Women to help fund outreach in the diocese, nation and world. Each parish is asked to contribute annual dues of \$3 per member and, as members of the Episcopal Church, we are all members of ECW. Two of the dollars (\$2) fund the ECW Diocesan Budget below. At year end, diocesan budget recipients receive contributions allotted by percentages based on the amount of money received. The remaining dollar helps pay administrative expenses.

Episcopal Church Women also make voluntary contributions to following organizations and scholarships:

Church Periodical Club and Miles of Pennies

Elise Holladay Scholarship Fund – for high school graduates to further their education

Book of Remembrance – Gifts in memory of loved ones also fund Elise Holladay Scholarships.

God Bless the Children – Jackson-Field and Boys Home of Virginia graduation gifts

With These Hands – Holy Cross Anglican School, Belize Feeding Program

2020 ECW Diocesan Budget

Diocese

15% Chanco on the James

15% Dept. of College Ministries

7% Boys Home of Virginia

16% Dare to Be Different

12% Dos Santos

12% Mission of the Holy Spirit

Nation

7% Washington National Cathedral

World

10% Episcopal Relief & Development

6% Women-to-Women

The deadline to send all contributions is extended this year to November 30. Please mail one check payable to: ECW Treasurer with the Annual Contribution Report to: Nancy L. Smith, ECW Treasurer, 509 Holgate Crescent, Virginia Beach, VA 23452.

The report form is now online via the Diocesan website (www.diosova.org/ecw).

Many thanks!

Christmas Tree Blessing

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light. ~John 1:5

Creator God, we gather around this evergreen tree in thanksgiving for creation and your love. We wait with joy for the coming of your Son, Jesus. Bless this tree of light, that it may brighten our night and remind us that Jesus is a light for all people. Bless us also, that we may give the gift of light to others. Amen.

From *Common Prayers for Children and Families*

by Jennifer Gamber & Timothy J. S. Seamans`



Third Annual Women's Advent Retreat

December 4-5, 2020

DON'T MISS IT!



We are very excited to announce that programming for this year's Advent Retreat will be led by Bishop Susan Haynes and will focus on preparing for the coming of Christ, remembering the incarnation, and how we care for ourselves as we do so. The cost for this event is \$95 for a shared room (recommended only for those sharing a household) and \$135 for a single room, or \$40 to come for the day on Saturday or to live stream the event. Don't miss this fantastic event of faith and fellowship re-connecting with old friends and making new ones from throughout our diocese!

Visit WWW.CHANCO.ORG to register today.

Call 888-7CHANCO (888-724-2626) or

Email us at hospitality@chanco.org with any questions.

**Chanco on the James
394 Floods Drive,
Spring Grove, VA 23881**