



Diocese of Western Massachusetts
Episcopal Church Women and United Thank Offering
Report to Diocesan Convention 2016



Episcopal Church Women

ECW in the Diocese of Western Massachusetts continues to engage women's ministries whenever they need support. The president's role has always been a liaison between the diocese and parishes, but I now spend more time as a liaison to the Province 1 and National ECW and the UTO Board. Serving on the Province 1 ECW board as the communications committee I maintain the Province 1 ECW Website:

<https://province1episcopalchurchwomen.wordpress.com/> I also help maintain the UTO Board Blog: www.UnitedThankOffering.org The National ECW website is: <http://ecwnational.org/>

- Our major focus at present is the United Thank Offering, supporting parishes and parish coordinators around the diocese and organizing the spring and fall gatherings.
- ECW has a display table at the diocesan convention where both ECW and UTO information and materials are available; individual requests are answered as needed.
- We continue our commitment to adopt Martha at *Our Little Roses Orphanage* in Honduras, a collaboration with the Diocese of Massachusetts ECW: \$320 a year
- With the funds available we pay our annual Province 1 ECW dues of \$250, set aside money to send a delegate to triennial meeting, and support UTO in the diocese.
- Outreach funds since last convention went to:
 - Diocese of Navajoland to the to support their recovery ministries (Bishop Brooks Fund), \$1,000
 - Building Bridges Veteran's Initiative, \$300
 - Domestic Violence/Trafficking:
 - Thistle Farms, \$200
 - Women at Risk, \$200

United Thank Offering

United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church to nurture the habit of giving daily thanks to God and offering coins in a "Blue Box." Tangible offerings are then shared with people all over the world in the form of grants for self-determined need.

The Heart of the ministry is Thanks to God ♥ the Action is Giving.

If you don't already have a United Thank Offering Ministry in your church starting one is easy!

- Order some blue boxes (They are free.) <http://episcopalmarketplace.org/Products/United-Thank-Offering>
 - Talk about offering tangible thanksgivings by dropping coins in the box, and saying a little prayer.
 - Share stories about how these coins are joined with others around the world and sent out as grants.
 - Ask people to count up their coins twice a year and gather them in gratitude for God's blessings.
 - I am available to help ecw.wma@gmail.com or 508-248-6112 Susan Howland
- ✘ Our Combined 2015 United Thank Offering was \$10,914.43 with 31 Churches participating.
✘ Our combined 2016 mail-in Spring gathering was \$ 1,143.10. **Thanks be to God!**

Grant application information:



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Each year the UTO Board invites every diocese to submit a grant application and an additional application on behalf of their companion diocese; every penny collected goes out for a grant!

- The timeline for granting is as follows:
- **First Friday in September:** Young Adult/Seminarian Grant materials and application available.
 - **First Friday in November:** Young Adult and Seminarian Grant application deadline.
 - **First Friday in December:** Annual Grant materials and application available.
 - **First Friday in March:** Annual Grant application deadline.
- Young Adult/Seminarian Grant Recipients announced after the winter Executive Council Meeting.
 - Annual Grant Recipients announced after the summer Executive Council Meeting.

Suggested Ingathering Dates for parishes:

- Sunday near All Saint's Day
- Sunday near Ascension Day

There are two **diocesan** ingatherings yearly:

- **The Fall ingathering will be during the diocesan convention Eucharist, this year Friday, October 28, 2016. 5:00 pm, Christ Church Cathedral, Springfield, MA.** Make check to: The Episcopal Diocese of WMA, with UTO in the memo; this offering may also be mailed as below.
- **The Spring UTO ingathering will be MAIL-IN.** The UTO Board suggests a Sunday near Ascension Day this coming Spring, **May 28, 2017**, as an ingathering date for parishes. Make check to: The Episcopal Diocese of WMA, with UTO in the memo, and mail by June 15, 2017 to: The Episcopal Diocese of WMA, ATTN: Esther Barker, Diocesan Accounting Manager, 37 Chestnut St., Springfield, MA 01103.

If you have questions or need information/advice about the United Thank Offering or Episcopal Church Women contact Susan Howland at: ECW.wma@gmail.com or check: www.diocesewma.org/aboutus/ecw or call Susan Howland at: 508-248-6112.

In Gratitude, *Susan Howland*, Diocese of Western Massachusetts ECW President and UTO Coordinator