ECW 2016 Annual Report to the Diocese

On January 19, we hosted a reception at All Saints, Richmond honoring our guests, The Rt. Rev. Peter John Lee, his wife Rev Gillian Mary Lee and 4 others from Christ the King, South Africa. We celebrated our 25 year relationship with the Mothers Union of Christ the King.

Our Winter Board Meeting was held at St Asaph’s, Bowling Green on February 6.

On March 3rd we hosted our Lenten Quiet Day Retreat at Roslyn Conference Center. Our theme was Death is Conquered We are Free…So What? The implication of Easter faith for discipleship

led by The Rt. Rev. Edwin F. “Ted” Gulick Jr. and music was led by Martha Burford.

Our Spring Meeting was held at Grace & Holy Trinity, Richmond on April 16. We had 60 in attendance and one 7 year old daughter. Women came from as far away as Abingdon Church, Gloucester and Grace, Haymarket.

Mother Phoebe Roaf, Rector of St. Phillip’s Richmond led our program on the 5 Marks of Mission focusing on the 1st Mark: To Proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. We broke into small groups for discussion and the women enjoyed the chance to meet others from around the diocese and share. The common comments were focused on food - “Feed them and they will come” and a new idea was suggested from one of the groups…we need an Episcopal TV Network. Everyone else is doing it!

We heard a report from past president, Beblon Parks on the United Nations 60th Conference on the Status of Women.

As outreach, we packed court advocacy bags with specific items to help the victims while in court pressing charges against their trafficker. Items such as lavender oil to smell to calm their nerves, adult coloring books, silly putty, spicy candy and more. All of these items requested and received by Elizabeth Ihara from Gray Haven, a non-profit in Richmond focused on providing hope, restoration, and opportunity to survivors of human trafficking.

When our guest speaker, Kathryn Weber, head of human trafficking for the FBI in Richmond spoke, we all sat up, listened and asked questions. She suggested that we as citizens help her to locate the victims saying they cannot do this alone.

We announced that with the encouragement of Bishop Shannon, we are in the process of developing a human trafficking awareness poster for our churches and for restrooms along 95 to be ready at our Fall Meeting.

The ladies from Aquia came in a bus to this meeting and invited everyone to their church for the Fall Meeting on Thurs. October 13. Bishop Susan will be with us and deliver our program.

The new format was well received again this year. Starting at 1:00 pm with program, ½ hour of fellowship and refreshments at 2:30, followed by the speaker and ending with Holy Eucharist. Our Holy Eucharist service was led by The Rev. Carmen Germino of St James’s Richmond. She has such a calm way about her and helps to hold you in the present moment. So many commented on her captivating and interesting sermon on the Gospel, John 21:1-19. The setting sun streaming through the stain glass windows over the altar at Grace & Holy Trinity was exceptionally beautiful.

I was asked by the president of the ECW at Christ Church, Middlesex to speak at their ECW Meeting on August 13. There were 30 women and their priest in attendance on a Saturday morning. I shared news from our diocese such as our Gifts & Scholarship program as well as a draft of our human trafficking posters. The ladies approved our posters and thought they would make an impact where displayed.

Our Summer Board Meeting was held on August 20th in Richmond. We met and welcomed our soon to be UTO Chair and made plans for our Fall Meeting as well as reviewed our human trafficking posters.

Our Fall Meeting and United Thank Offering Ingathering was hosted by the Rector, Rev. Jay Morris and the Women of Aquia on October 13, 2016. We met in the Great Hall, their new Christian Formation Building. It was a pure joy working with the women of Aquia Church. They presented a beautiful display of delicious food at both breakfast and lunch. Their work and attention to details was most appreciated. We had 140 in attendance.

For the past 4 years we have heard heart breaking stories from victims, police officers, the FBI head of human trafficking in Richmond and have lifted up prayerfully and financially ministries that help victims. We decided to do something more and created awareness posters. We sent them to Bishop Shannon Johnston for his opinion and he thought they were excellent and appropriately stark for this important initiative. He said he is grateful for the work ECW is doing on this issue. Each church took home 8 posters to display. We provided the posters in English and Spanish as we have 5 Hispanic Latino churches in our diocese.

We lifted up our Communion Alms recipients hearing a presentation from The Rev Lynn Litchfield from GraceInside Chaplain Services for prisons as well as Gifts & Scholarships, the only diocesan scholarship program assisting college students and seminarians.

Our Viva Voce program has been lifting up ministries helping victims of human trafficking and domestic violence covering all of our 15 regions every three years. The donations this year went to The Haven, STEP, Artemis House, Homestretch and New Creation.

Our Altar Guild is holding a Swap Meet to be held at our Annual Convention. Churches are asked to clean out their sacristies and bring extra items to be swapped. Anything left over will be sent out with mission teams.

We had a full slate of new board members and were fortunate to have The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff to install them. Our gathering continued as Bishop Susan led our program “Walk in Love” as she shared photographs and stories from her ministry and travels including her trip to Guatemala with the covenant group of the Anglican Church of the Central Region of America (IARCA), her visit with Pope Francis, and her ongoing relationship with the Diocese of Liverpool. Following lunch our Holy Eucharist service was led by The Rev. Jay Morris and The Rt. Rev. Susan E. Goff.She preached and was our Celebrant. We are all grateful to have had her with us! It was a glorious day.

Deanne Samuels, President of the ECW of the Diocese of Washington DC asked me to speak about human trafficking at their Fall Meeting on Saturday, Oct 29. Our posters were well received.

Our Overnight Board Retreat was held at Roslyn Conference Center November 9 and 10.

We had a business meeting planning for 2017, a reception including past presidents; Ruth Gibson, Anna Lou Flynn and Beblon Parks as well as our guest priest, The Rev Molly Bosscher from St. Paul’s Richmond, who led our evening Holy Eucharist service in the chapel. Our spiritual program Thursday morning was “Finding Joy in Every Season of the Soul” led by Jill Baughan. We are grateful for this time together.

United Thank Offering received $75,809.60 from our diocese in 2016. Every penny will be sent directly to National UTO for awarding grants.

It is truly a joy serving as President of the ECW of the Diocese of Virginia.

Faithfully Submitted, Jodie Pully