



NATIONAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN

ecwnational.org
2024 - 2027

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To: Province III President and Diocesan Presidents/ Representatives and Certain Parish ECW Presidents

Fr: Beblon G. Parks, Province III Representative to the National Episcopal Church Women Board of Directors

Re: Report on the January 2025 NECW Board Meeting

Date: February 15, 2025

My second NECW Board Meeting, held at the Fairfield Inn Hotel in Birmingham, AL, January 17-21, 2025, was as jampacked as the first. It seemed our feet were barely on the ground when we found ourselves working our way through the agenda. The meeting was proceeded by a plethora of emails with attachments to supplement and support the agenda items.

With the exception of commending the Dioceses of Alabama ECW on winning the coveted **Martha Stewart Excellence in Hostessing Award** (I made that up.), I will start this report with the key action items of the Board meeting.

The members of the DOA ECW rolled out the red carpet and lined it with gifts, treats and plain ole Southern Hospitality. They joined us for a tour of the historic 16th Street Baptist Church and hosted dinner at a local restaurant. They also provided transportation for us to the Cathedral of the Advent for breakfast, prepared by men of the church, and Sunday Services.

I will save my "day by day" commentary until after I share the key discussion and motions approved by the Board. That way, if you get tired of reading this, you will have the most important information first to share with your diocesan ECWs and parishes.

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Summary of Wright Trust Discussion (UTO and NECW)

The UTO submitted a motion to the Executive Council to change the funding allocation derived from the Wright Trust Fund to a 50/50% split between the UTO and ECW in 2023. In response to this, the NECW board has submitted a motion to the Executive Council asking that all Wright Legacy Trust Fund monies be allocated to the NECW. The ECW notes that UTO currently holds more money in their trust fund coffers and receives more annual income for administrative expenses than the ECW. It is also noted that in April 2024 the Executive Council approved UTO bylaw changes to include all genders and UTO now holds itself to be a ministry of the whole church and is no longer an exclusively women's ministry. The Wright Trust is to be applied to the use of official women's organizations, and UTO is no longer a women's ministry organization per their current by-laws. Currently the Wright Trust Fund dividends are split between the ECW at 79% and the UTO at 21%.

Motions Approved by the NECW Board

1. To allocate \$500 for a sponsorship for the Association of Episcopal Deacons Conference.
2. The NECW board voted to donate \$1000 to Sawyerville of Birmingham, AL. The mission of Sawyerville, a ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama, is to create opportunities for children and youth in Hale County through free summer programs, mentoring, and scholarships. All of their programs work to serve God, broaden the horizons of participants and staff, improve race relations in Alabama, and enrich the lives of those living in poverty.
3. In response to the wildfires in Southern California, the NECW board voted to donate \$1000 to the Diocese of Los Angeles One Body One Spirit annual appeal.
4. After attending Sunday services at the Cathedral of the Advent in Birmingham, the NECW board voted to donate \$100 to the church.
5. The board voted to advocate and address issues of murdered and missing indigenous women as our Social Justice initiative for the year.
6. The NECW will pursue completion of a history of Triennials that was started by the 2018-2024 President and to investigate publishing pricing.



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7. At the invitation of The Diocese of Taiwan in Taipei, President Lisa Bortner and Province VIII Representative Ginny Guzman-Walsh will attend the Taiwan Diocesan Convention in May for the purpose of creating goodwill and understanding between the Diocese and the ECW ministry.
8. The NECW Social Justice Chair along with the National ECW President will be representing the National ECW at the NGO United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York City from March 10-16, 2024. Other members of the board will be attending the meeting at their own expense.
9. The Ad Hoc Creation Care and Environmental Committee's job description for the Member at Large position was approved. The position will be advertised and chosen in the upcoming months. Look for more information on this in the ECW News Blasts, the Facebook and on our website.
10. The board voted to create two scholarship programs. The first is to be called Women in Theology and will be awarded to women pursuing a master's degree in theology in the amount of \$2500. The second scholarship is to be called Women in Healing Professions and will be awarded to a woman pursuing an advanced degree in a healing profession in the amount of \$2500. The criteria for the scholarships and applications are to be released in June 2025.
11. The NECW Virtual Event Series will continue with the next session being held on April 5 on human trafficking. The following event, scheduled for July 12th will be on prison ministries.
12. During lent the NECW will promote *Thursdays in Black*. The World Council of Churches website explains: "The campaign is simple but profound. **Wear black on Thursdays**. Wear a pin to declare you are part of the global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. Show your respect for women who are resilient in the face of injustice and violence. Encourage others to join you."
13. The NECW chose their 2027 Triennial theme: "Women at the Well: Faith in Action".
14. The NECW continues to encourage all ECWs to register and be counted. You may register your ECW on our website at ecwnational.org.

DAY BY DAY COMMENTARY



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Day One, January 17, 2025

My travel to Birmingham was without any delays although the cancellation of my scheduled flight out of Atlanta caused a prolonged layover. I used the extra time to catch up on emails. My room was perfectly located across the hall from our meeting room. (A lucky break.) Our first activity was an evening Worship Service

Day 2, January 18, 2025

After Opening Prayer and the establishing of a quorum, the minutes of the October 2024 minutes were approved.

Reports of the Officers were given starting with the President, followed by the 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, including the reading of correspondence, Treasurer and report of the Finance Committee. The report of the Member at Large for Social Justice was followed by reports from each Province Representative.

Day 3, Sunday, January 19, 2025.

On Sunday we had breakfast and worshipped at the Cathedral of the Advent. After the worship service we returned to the hotel to continue with the Board's meeting agenda. This included reports from bylaws/policy and procedures committee and meeting standard. The worship committee shared information on Morning Prayers that will be held through March on the NECW Facebook page. After lunch we heard reports from the Virtual Events Series Committee and the Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee. It was announced that the first virtual event was a *Gratitude Mini Retreat* held January 11, 2025.

Day 4, Monday, January 20, 2025

A highlight of today was a tour of the Birmingham Civil Rights Museum. The Board meeting continued with discussion of the following New Business Items: Process for Province Grants and Updating Marketing Materials. Committee Meetings were held following the discussion of the new business items.

Our next meeting is scheduled for May 1-4, 2025 in Billings, MT.

Day 5, Tuesday, January 21, 2025. Travel Home.

Thank you for the privilege of representing Province III on the National ECW Board of Directors.