**The United Thank Offering**

**The Diocese of Virginia**

**Mission: Put gifts into the Blue Box with thanksgiving, prayer and generosity. Take blessings out of the box for grants to expand the church's faithfulness to God's mission**.

 August 9, 2015

Report to the ECW Executive Board

Among many blessings at the Triennial Meeting of the Episcopal Church Women, June 24-July 2, 2015, in Salt Lake City, Utah, were the announcements of the 2015 United Thank Offering Grant Awards. The United Thank Offering of The Episcopal Church awarded 55 grants for a total of $1,558,006.85 for the mission and ministry of The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. The grants were awarded to 46 domestic and overseas dioceses, which included 34 Episcopal Church Dioceses, 5 Companion Dioceses, 5 International Dioceses and 2 grants to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society mission offices for Overseas Missions and Young Adult Service Corp. To celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the United Thank Offering, each Province received an award for a young adult (ages 21-31) project.

According to the President of the UTO Board, all 90 grant applications were reviewed by the Grants Committee and ranked based on focus and criteria. Those receiving the highest ratings were funded until the money ran out. The board was unable to fund 14 grant requests because of lack of funds and 21 grant requests because the applications were out of criteria.

As you know, each diocese may request a grant to address compelling need in the diocese and a grant to address an international need, in companionship/partnership with that diocese. The Diocese of Virginia received the following grant awards: 1. "St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Port Royal) Community Kitchen Upgrade" ($14,996.16) 2."Vehicle for the Rt. Rev. Wilson Kamani, Diocese of Ibba, South Sudan" ($46,290.00) Companion Diocese of Ibba in Ibba, South Sudan; and 3. "Charis Community" the Young Adult Grant for Province III ($1250.00).

The complete list of 2015 Grants is available at **www.episcopalchurch.org/UTO**

I express my thankfulness and appreciation to the UTO Board and the Executive Committee of The Episcopal Church for their consideration of these grants and to each and every one of you for the faithful work that supports the United Thank Offering. The in-gatherings from the Blue Boxes--all coins and bills placed in the boxes in thanksgiving for the blessings that we receive every day--unite to change lives.

The focus for the 2015 grant awards was the Fourth Mark of Mission: to seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation. The focus of the young adult grant was to provide seed money for a new project that was based on any one of the Five Marks of Mission of The Episcopal Church.

For additional information about the United Thank Offering and Grants, please visit:

**www.EPISCOPALCHURCH.ORG/PAGE/UNITED-THANK-OFFERING**

 **or**

**www.UnitedThankOffering.org**

As you plan for the Fall In-gathering in your parish and to order UTO boxes, envelopes, and other resources, please visit:

**HTTP://EPISCOPALMARKETPLACE.ORG/PRODUCTS/UNITED-THANK-OFFERING**

Summary of In-gatherings for The Diocese of Virginia

 Total for Triennial: 2012-2014 --$293,564.35

Total for 2015 Spring In-gathering, as of 7-15-2015: $44,357.84

***God of glorious and radiant abundance, we give you thanks for all that is--for stars in their nebulae, for wind in the trees, seed in the pod, food on our tables, and the grace of fellowship we enjoy in the banquet.***

***We give thanks for your presence in our midst, as the Holy One, as the eternal spirit, and in the faces of each of your children. May your loving kindness follow us all the days of our lives, and into the eternal.***

***We ask this on behalf of all creation, that we may in our turn strive to love as you do.***

***In your holy name we pray. Amen*.**

 **\_\_ The Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schori**

With thanksgiving,

Cindy Helton

UTO Diocesan Coordinator

540-373-6382

wlhelton@verizon.net

www.ecw.thediocese.net