

144th Annual Meeting

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut
May 29, 2025



Be The Branch



EPISCOPAL CHURCHWOMEN IN CONNECTICUT

Welcome to the 144th Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut Annual Meeting. A day to rejoice in God's Glory and give Praise and Thanksgiving to all the glorious Women's Ministries that come here together today to Celebrate.

Agenda

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 9:00 a.m. | Guest Registration |
| 10:00 a.m. | Welcome
<i>Dr. Paulette Blythe Russell, ECW CT President</i>
The Holy Eucharist
The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens, Celebrant
The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey W. Mello, Homily |
| 11:30 a.m. | Business Meeting - Introductions
<i>Dr. Paulette Blythe Russell, ECW CT President</i>

Presentation of ECW President's Cross and Gavel
<i>The Rt. Reverend Jeffrey W. Mello</i>
ECW CT President's Report
<i>Dr. Paulette Blythe Russell, ECW CT President</i>
ECW CT Secretary's Report
<i>Geraldine McHugh-Williams, ECW CT Secretary</i>
ECW CT Treasurer's Report
<i>Julia Johnson-Roy, ECW CT Treasurer</i>
ECW Honored Women Presentations
<i>Denise Cain Welsh, ECW CT Vice President</i>

Adjourn Business Meeting
<i>Dr. Paulette Blythe Russell, ECW CT President</i> |
| 12:30 p.m. | Introduction of Guest Speaker
<i>Dr. Paulette Blythe Russell, ECW CT President</i>
<i>The Rev. Dr. Susan Lee, Speaker</i> |
| 1:00 p.m. | Luncheon/Grace
<i>The Rt. Reverend Laura J. Ahrens</i> |
| 3:00 p.m. | Benediction
<i>The Rt. Reverend Jeffrey W. Mello</i> |



Episcopal Church Women Prayer

Almighty God, bless, we pray, our work in mission and ministry in the world; and make us so thankful for the previous gift to us of your beloved Son, that we may pray fervently, labor diligently, and give liberally to make known throughout the world the redeeming love of our Savior. Amen

We are all women of the Episcopal Church; rooted in the past and growing into God's Future.

Mission

ECW exists to support all women in their Mission and Ministry in the World.

Vision

For all Women of the Episcopal Church to become a vibrant blend of all ages, coming together as a peacemaking, healing part of the church. To aspire to be a God spark, shining and sharing the love of Christ.

Goals

To encourage familiarity with and participation in the programs of Episcopal Church Women.

The structure of Episcopal Church Women has its roots in the local congregations. Each level makes its own unique contribution to the mission and ministry of women through local congregations, diocesan ECW Boards, Provincial ECW, and National Board of ECW.



Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut The First Hundred Years

1880	Mrs. John Binney of Middletown met with Bishop John Williams to suggest the establishment of a Connecticut Branch of the Women's Auxiliary, Bishop Williams agreed. Bishop Williams appointed Mrs. Elizabeth Hart Jarvis Colt of Hartford as the first president and Mrs. Harriette Giraud of Middletown as the first Vice-President. The Connecticut Branch of the Women's Auxiliary held its first organizational meeting in April of 1880 in the Chapel of Christ Church, Hartford. Bishop Williams appointed the officers and managers for the six archdeaconries. The constitution was adopted.
1881	Connecticut's first Annual Meeting was held April 21, 1881, at Trinity Church in New Haven.
1886	Connecticut by-laws were adopted on May 19, 1886. The monthly "Auxiliary Envelopes" pledge system was constituted for parishes. Now known as the "White Envelopes."
1893	First mention of the United Thank Offering in the Annual Report.
1910	Approved the Articles of Incorporation making the Connecticut branch of the Women's Auxiliary a legal entity in Connecticut and the Diocese on May 23, 1910.
1925	Constitution and By-Laws were revised to allow for the election of officers rather than their appointment by the bishop. The first election of officers was held in 1926.
1937	Dr. and Mrs. Clifton Brewer gave Miss Jennie Loomis of Windsor (6 th president) a gavel made of olive wood from Jerusalem. This gavel became an instrument of order and has been handed down to each succeeding president.
1943	Miss Pardee was elected the first President of Connecticut Council of Church Women, now known as Church Women United.
1946	Miss Pardee received an award of merit...the silver cross known as the President's Cross. The cross is now worn by each succeeding president.
1952	The first Women's Auxiliary Report to the Diocesan Convention was made by Mrs. Florence Plant (9 th President)
1958	The Triennial Meeting by-laws were adopted forming Episcopal Church Women, Episcopal Church, USA. Subsequently, designating diocesan groups to be known as the Episcopal Church Women.
1960	Name changed to Episcopal Church Women of Connecticut during 1960 Annual Meeting.
1965	Change in Constitution of the Diocese of Connecticut allowed women to be delegates to the Diocesan Convention.
1967	The Diocesan Board was reorganized, and the archdeaconry system was eliminated.
1978	Mrs. Robert A. Robinson (13 th president) elected President of Province I ECW.
1980	The One Hundred Year Anniversary involved a yearlong celebration with participation from every parish. The celebration culminated in a special Annual Meeting on May 8, 1980, with a skit outlining the challenges and determination of the founding members and heartened by the singing of the same hymns sang during the very first missionary meeting in 1880.

Bibliography

Robinson, Ann Harding, D. Litt. *Morning Glories and Evensong: A Century of the Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut*. Hartford: Church Missions Publishing Co., 1981.

Burr, Nelson R. *The Story of the Diocese of Connecticut*. Hartford: Church Missions Publishing Co., 1962.

Episcopal Churchwomen - The First 150 Years; Website <https://ecwnational.org/the-episcopal-churchwomen-the-first-150-years>





The ECW helps raise funds for outreach ministries by coordinating with women in the church to help assist with charities. ECW works from a nucleus rooted in parish chapters that then reach out with and through other organizations to identify agencies that need support and to assist in fundraising for their ministries. Working Hand and Hand with our Episcopal Churches and their Communities, and reaching beyond to help those in need. Here are just some of the ways that we are supporting God's Mission.

- Clergy Daughters, Scholarship Grants
- Camp Washington
- The Bishop's Fund for Human Need
- Episcopal Relief & Development
- SIM, Society Increase Ministry
- UTO Bessie Franklin Fund
- Diocesan Library, Campus Ministry
- African Educational Programs
- My Sister's Place
- Miriam's Closet
- Diaper Ministries
- Common Good Gardens
- Camp Hispaniola
- Laundry Love Program
- Hunger Outreach Programs
- Special Family Needs Program
- Columbus House
- Days for Girls
- School Backpack Programs
- Center for Children Advocacy
- CNA Training Program
- Bridgeport Home of the Brave
- Warming Centers, Safe Harbor
- Music Moves Hartford
- Carol's Cupboard
- A Sacred Place
- Home of Brave assists Women Veterans
- Care Bag Ministry
- Quilts of Valor
- The Olive Branch
- Niantic Story Book Program



Episcopal Church Women (ECW) President's Message

Empowering Women in Christ's Ministry: The Impact of ECW

The Episcopal Church Women (ECW) continues to carry out its mission to empower women in fulfilling Christ's ministry throughout the world. Our vision is to cultivate a dynamic coalition of women from all ages and backgrounds, uniting as a force of peace, healing, and service within the Church.

As I embark on my journey as the new President of the ECW for Connecticut, this being my first Annual meeting as president, I recognize that the work ahead is substantial, but also filled with promise. We must work collaboratively to expand ECW membership throughout the State of Connecticut.

Our vision is inclusive, reaching all six regions: Northwest Region, Northeast Region, North Central Region, Southeast Region, and Southwest Region. By broadening our reach, we can strengthen our network and build a more inclusive community that reflects the richness of our Episcopal tradition.

My goal is to have at least one parish represented at our upcoming Annual Meeting from all six regions. I firmly believe that when we work together, we can achieve extraordinary results. My guiding philosophy remains: **"Whatever the mind conceives, we can achieve."** With this growth mindset, the sky is truly our limit.

Today we re-establish the recognition of long-serving women in our churches. Through this initiative, we honor the dedication of women who have contributed so much to our churches and strengthen our network by inviting more women to join our mission. A tradition we plan to continue under the present board.

The Executive Board continues to welcome your ideas, suggestions, and recommendations to increase our membership and encourage broader Church participation in the ECW. By sharing your insights and working together, we can develop innovative ways to engage our communities and inspire more women to join our mission.

Let us unite our heads, hands, and hearts to ensure the success and the continued growth of the ECW throughout Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Paulette Blythe-Russell
ECW President



Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipients

Nominees

The Rt. Reverend Laura J. Ahrens

Vicki Mark-Anthony

Kathi Bacchi

Mary Bowers

Kim Clarke

Madison Day

Rachel Desmond

Pat Dorio

Heather Greaves

Hattie Henry

Andrea Mitchell

Elaine Phillips

Rachel Scotch

Betty Silva

Dr. Lynn Thomas

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



The Rt. Rev. Laura J. Ahrens
Home Church: Episcopal Church in Connecticut
Nominated by: The ECW Board

We proudly nominate The Rt. Rev. Laura Ahrens, as an Honored Woman, recognizing her dedication and contributions to the ministry of the Episcopal Church Women. She exemplifies the mission and values of ECW through her faithful service in the following ways:

In the heart of our diocese, there shines a beacon of hope, love, and joy. This beacon is none other than The Rt. Rev. Laura Ahrens, a woman of God whose unwavering faith and boundless compassion have touched the lives of countless individuals. Her journey has been one of dedication, service, and an unyielding commitment to the teachings of Christ.

From the moment she became our first female bishop, consecrated Bishop Suffragan in 2007, she has been a source of inspiration and strength. Her gentle words of encouragement, her acts of kindness, and her heartfelt prayers have brought comfort to those in need and have uplifted the spirits of all who have had the privilege of being in her presence. She has been a guiding light, leading us through times of uncertainty with a steadfast faith that has never wavered through three distinctly different episcopates!

Her love for God and for her fellow human beings is evident in everything she is and does. Whether she is leading prayers on the Wednesday call, preaching a good word in a lucky parish on Sunday morning, visiting sick clergy, or simply offering a listening ear, Bishop Laura embodies the true essence of Christian love. Her joy is contagious, spreading warmth and happiness wherever she goes. Her smile and laughter are a source of comfort to so many of us.

As we gather to honor women in our diocese, we are reminded of the profound impact Bishop Laura has had in our lives from her pastoral presence at Camp Washington and on our school and college campuses with our youth to gathering clergy women specifically and women in general, in our diocese. To the clergy kids living in her neighborhood, she is affectionately known as “Bishop Cupcake” because of her loving cupcake drop-offs throughout the year!

She has shown us what it means to live a life of purpose and to serve others with a heart full of love, kindness, and joy whether she is running or biking along the beautiful trails in our state or assisting with the work of the Episcopal Board of Examiners and their work. Her legacy will continue to inspire us for generations to come.

Thank you, Bishop Laura, for being a beacon of hope, love, and joy. Your faith in Our Risen Lord and dedication to Christ’s mission have made our diocese a healthier, more Christ-centered place, and we are forever grateful for your presence and support.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Vicki Mark Anthony

Home Church: Christ Church Easton

Nominated by: Bob Ellwanger and Diane McCann

For the past five years Vicki has worked tirelessly as our Senior Warden, and especially so in the absence of any Clergy or staff since September 2023. She is our mainstay, continually overseeing each of our various ministries/outreach efforts, obtaining supply Priests months in advance, coordinating with the parish nursery school, guiding the vestry, as well as leading/preaching countless Sunday morning worship services.

She does all this with humility and grace, and occasionally gets to regale parishioners with her banjo playing. Whether making home Eucharistic visits with those parishioners who are unable to attend a service in person, to serving meals at nOURish Bridgeport, to leading the caroling at our annual Christmas tree lighting, to securing ticket-takers at our hugely successful concerts on the Hill summer series, to leading our weekly book group sessions.

Vicki is indefatigable in her service to the parish. No-one exemplifies the mission and values of ECW through her faithful service than Vicki.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut

144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Kathi Bacchi

Home Church: St. John's Episcopal, Stamford

Nominated by: Phyllis Wilson

Attendance: Kathi and her husband Ron (our current senior warden) came to St. John's in Stamford in 2007. She is a devoted member and leader of the parish and can be counted on to help and never expects recognition for her service. St. John's is deeply blessed by her service.

Usher: Since 2011, Kathi has served as one of our few ushers and she ensures that parishioners and visitors are welcomed, questions answered and directs newcomers to the clergy and greeters.

Parish Nurse: Is one of two RN's serving the parish. Since 2012, Kathi volunteers to conduct blood pressure screenings the second Sunday of the month after service to ensure the health and welfare of our parishioners. She also attends to anyone experiencing a medical incident while at church. This is a greatly appreciated ministry.

St. John's Community Foundation: Was one of eight parish and seven community members serving on St. John's Foundation (2016 – 2019). The Foundation members receive grant submissions in November and in February review roughly 40 requests for varying amounts and determine allocations to disburse funds to the agencies in support of their work in the community.

Vestry: Kathy served on the Vestry from 2016 – 2021. **Junior Warden:** 2018 – 2019.

Senior Warden: 2020 – 2021. Actively involved in leadership and support to parishioners, laity, administration and as Senior Warden in assisting the interim priest.

Outreach Chairperson and active member: Starting in 2012 as a member and becoming the chair, she organizes and participates in many of our Outreach activities including providing a monthly lunch for 70 day laborers; teams with St. John's Garden Ministry to harvest fresh fruit and vegetables grown at St. John's to be delivered to over 70 nonprofit agencies through the Food Bank of Lower Fairfield County; provided three Baskets of Hope (useful household items) for homeless residents transitioning into new-to-them apartments; Undies Project collected new underwear for homeless men and women; Easter plants and Christmas fruit and candy baskets obtained and delivered to our shut ins; collected toiletries for the homeless at a local soup kitchen; Threads of Warmth – two huge clothing collections and distributions at New Covenant Soup Kitchen to homeless and low income through our connection to the Interfaith Social Ministry Collaboration; financial support to Episcopal Relief and Development for victims of hunger and displacement in the Middle East; roses to parishioners on Mother's Day; Target gift cards to SIRS for refugee families from Afghanistan; gift bags with personal care items by members at Bennett Cancer Center at Stamford Hospital; food drive for local food bank to help families during summer when school lunches were not available; school supply drive with the Interfaith Social Ministry Collaborative and Bethel AME church; 25 gift cards donated to Homes for the Brave for housing and services to homeless vets; teamed with St. John's Lutheran and

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut

144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient

Kathi Bacchi (continued)

Home Church: St. John's Episcopal, Stamford

Nominated by: Phyllis Wilson

First Congregational to provide 250 Thanksgiving dinners from a local restaurant and distributed to 172 homebound; organize parish collection for Dove Christmas food gift cards and toys donated to Person to Person agency; support to our Bon Samaritan Clinic and school in L' Acul, Haiti and other programs too many to mention.

Interfaith Social Ministry Collaborative (originally known as Faithful Futures / Working Beyond the Walls): Since 2018, Kathy has represented St. John's in this interfaith group started by Fr. Mark Lingle in 2018. Local churches and synagogues work together to conduct many outreach events in the community.

Thrift Shop: In 2019, due to the church closing, Kathi facilitated merging the Thrift Shop (open Thursdays and Saturdays from 10:00 – 3:00) previously located at Stamford's First Congregational Church to St. John's and in addition to volunteering there she prepares the monthly financial reports and disbursements of proceeds to local charities.

Nominating Committee member: Served on in 2023 and 2024.

Christmas Nativity Program: Help with the annual Christmas Village marketplace by serving as a volunteer for the Thrift Shop's table.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Mary Bowers

Home Church: St. John's Episcopal Church, Essex

Nominated by: Wardens, Scott Konrad & Sandy Loether

It's our pleasure to nominate Mary Bowers of Ivoryton, CT, for recognition by Connecticut's Episcopal Church Women. A faithful communicant at St. John's, Essex, Mary exemplifies Jesus' values in word and deed.

Through her legacy of service to the Shoreline Soup Kitchen (which St. John's hosts and supplies); her initiative to establish *Bill's Blessings*, a free commissary at St. John's established in memory of Mary's late friend and parishioner-volunteer, Bill Bevan, to satisfy personal care needs of the resource-challenged; her energetic leadership of St. John's 80-year rummage sale that fuels outreach; her regular liturgical service as acolyte and lector; and her professional work as a caregiver, Mary demonstrates genuine concern for the least of these, our brethren. She's the model of servant leadership, inspiring others through humility, quiet confidence, and action over rhetoric.

While we're fortunate to have many among our community who live the Gospel, we can think of no one more deserving of recognition than Mary Bowers based on our experiences as co-wardens.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Kim Clarke

Home Church: St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Cheshire

Nominated by: Michaela Hauser, Martha Blume, Kristin Peters, Mo Lederman

Kim Clarke has been a member of St. Peter's Church since 2003. Soon thereafter, she was asked by the Rev. Sandra Stayner to plan and lead our emerging children's and youth ministry, which is still very active today; it serves children and teenagers of all ages. After Kim handed over this ministry to another leader, she served for well over a decade as an effective parish administrator.

In January 2023, Kim became Senior Warden. She boldly led St. Peter's through the simultaneous retirement of our rector and associate priest, diocesan approval for a half time Priest-in-Charge, and the departure of our music minister. In addition to leading Vestry meetings, following ECCT's guidelines for parishes in transition, she hired guest clergy and interim organists and held countless meetings involved with the transition team to prepare the parish to call a new priest. During that time, our parish administrator retired, and Kim filled many of their duties and in collaboration with the Vestry, hired a new office administrator. Through all of it, she never wavered in her determination to remain calm and confident that all would be well, and to continue to assure the parish and vestry that we would travel along the process smoothly, remain intact, and come out stronger on the other side.

Her good humor, warm heart, strong leadership, positivity - and her faith - helped us to maintain our vital programs, leave behind projects that were no longer fruitful, and welcome new individuals and families along the way. Some other programs that began under her leadership were: the Ecojustice Council's Contain & sustain crowd sourcing campaign, which resulted in the distribution of hundreds of reusable silicone containers; the Longest Night Service, co-sponsored with the Cheshire Congregational Church; the Christmas Bazaar and the Nearly New Boutique, both projects supported by the ECW.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Madison Day

Home Church: St. Mark's Episcopal Chapel, Storrs

Nominated by: Vestry, St. Mark's

Madison is a kind, gentle woman who has consistently worked for St. Mark's to meet the parish's needs for over 10 years. Her dedication to our church cannot be fully acknowledged. Madison is an excellent example of a Christian servant-leader. She faithfully served as senior warden for many years, including shepherding us through a lengthy rector search. She is always willing to take on time-consuming tasks such as coffee hour, counter, gardening, Eucharistic Minister, and stewardship chair.

Madison has demonstrated true leadership by listening to concerns, both minor and major, about our church and calmly taking action, always working toward reconciliation. We endured a long period without a rector, during which Madison regularly led morning prayer, even offering sermons that broadened our minds and hearts. She also led an excellent Christian Formation program. Madison is always guided by a strong spiritual light. Not only has she faithfully served our parish for many years, but she has received a call to the priesthood and will be starting seminary this fall.

We will always be grateful for the ministry she provided to us as a volunteer. Madison held our parish together through difficult times and kept it a welcoming, thriving place.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Rachael Desmond

Home Church: St. James's Church, West Hartford

Nominated by: Cindy Welch, Co-President, Women of St. James's

Rachael has supported St. James's in many ways, both through the "Women of" and the church itself. She joined St. James's in 1971 and has been very active in the life of the church ever since. She has served on the Vestry, and was the first female Senior Warden at St. James's. While serving, she Co-Chaired the Capital Campaign in 1985 and served on two search committees for new clergy. During her time with the Women of St. James's, she tirelessly ran the Rummage Sales in October and May every year up until the pandemic. She has been president, co-president with me, and ran the Greater Hartford Antique Show that was a huge undertaking and very profitable for the church. She was also the First Vice President in charge of Programs for the "Women of" for many years. Up until the pandemic, we met every Tuesday from October until May, with a program at each luncheon. She directed a team of ladies who put together a calendar of speakers and activities. Since the pandemic, we meet every other week with Rachael ensuring that all of the ladies are happy, feel welcome, and are greeted with warmth and a smile.

As you may already know, Rachael is a past president of the ECW of Connecticut, serving 6 years utilizing her leadership skills and sparkling personality. Among her other activities at St. James's are Lay Reader and Intercessor, Usher, Pastoral Care Team, New Member Welcome Committee, and supporting many of St. James's mission projects, such as: Making Sandwiches for Loaves and Fishes Serving lunches at Loaves and Fishes Annual school backpacks Food pantries Christmas gifts for children And, in her spare time, she studied and graduated from the EFM program, a four-year program of study and reflection for lay Christians where you study, worship, and engage in theological reflection in a small group community.

Many women at our church respect Rachael and look to her for guidance, experience, fellowship and friendship. Over the years, she has been a support for the church mission through her faith and dedication.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut

144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Patricia Dorio

Home Church: St. Andrews, Meriden

Nominated by: Priest & Archdeacon of St. Andrews

I have been a member of St. Andrews Episcopal Church for over 40 years, consistently embracing the spirit of service and fellowship that defines our congregation. In March of 2004, alongside Rev. Jams White-Hassler, who was then Deacon of St. Andrews, and a few other committed members, I was blessed to help establish the Prayer Shawl Ministry. When Rev. Jane White-Hassler was ordained a Priest and later transitioned to another Call, she entrusted me with the privilege of continuing this meaningful ministry, a task I have carried forward with immense gratitude.

My professional journey in Health Care has illuminated the profound impact of small gestures, such as the comforting embrace of a shawl made with love and blessed by our clergy. For 32 years, I worked as a CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) on the Memory Care Unit at Masonic Care in Wallingford and I now work at The Village of Kensington Place in Meriden as an Activity Aide. Over these 5 years this role allows me to offer companionship and meaningful activities to residents, enriching their lives and bringing comfort during challenging times. These experiences have deepened my understanding of the healing power of care and kindness, which lies at the heart of our Prayer Shawl Ministry. Over its 21-year history, the ministry has flourished into a cherished tradition in our church, with contributions from over 50 women throughout the years. I am humbled by the dedication of these members, especially the two original participants who continue to knit and pray to this day. Together, we have created countless shawls that have carried our prayers, blessings, and love far beyond the walls of St. Andrews—to hospitals, nursing homes, and individuals facing personal trials in other communities. Each shawl is more than a gift; it is a tangible expression of faith and compassion, woven by the collective hands and hearts of our ministry members. The ministry's impact is truly a shared achievement. Through the years, we have heard inspiring stories of how these shawls have brought solace to the grieving, courage to the ailing, and peace to those burdened by anxiety. As we gather monthly to knit, crochet, and pray for the recipients, our group of 10-15 women fosters a spirit of connection and spiritual growth that binds us closer as a church family. The friendships and shared purpose that have emerged from these gatherings are as meaningful to me as the ministry itself. Looking back, I am profoundly grateful for the opportunity to steward this ministry, but I know its success is a testament to the collective love, faith, and dedication of all its members. Together, we have built something that not only embodies the spirit of St. Andrews but also extends its grace and compassion to countless others both in good times and in trying ones. It remains my honor to serve alongside these remarkable women, whose contributions have ensured the ministry continues to flourish and touch lives in profound ways.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Heather Jordan Greaves

Home Church: Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford

Nominated by: Cathedral's Congregation Committee & Dean Howell

Heather was born in Bridgetown, Barbados, where she was an active member of St. Barnabas Anglican Church. Her deep faith and early commitment to parish life laid the foundation for a lifelong journey of service and leadership in the Church.

After migrating to Canada, Heather attended and graduated from Shaw College. She later moved to the United States, where she began worshiping at Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford with her beloved late aunt, Monica Best, and her children. The Cathedral quickly became her spiritual home and a nurturing space for her young family.

Heather's involvement in parish life at Christ Church Cathedral has taken many forms over the years. She has served faithfully as a choir member, lector, usher, and Lay Eucharistic Minister (LEM). She was also a member of (WSAC)—the inspiration of what is now Church Street Eats—as well as a member of the Church Councils and the Cathedral Chapter.

Known for her unwavering faith in God and her seamless expression of hospitality, Heather brings warmth, generosity, and grace to all she does. Despite a demanding schedule, she devotes much of her limited free time to overseeing the care of her elderly aunt and offering steadfast support to her seven grandchildren.

Heather is married to Michael Greaves and is the proud mother of three children: Terrence, Theresa, and Timothy. Her life is a living witness to faith in action, grounded in love, service, and a deep commitment to her family and faith community.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Hattie Henry

HOME CHURCH: St. Monica's Episcopal Church, Hartford

NOMINATED BY: St. Monica's ECW

Mrs. Hattie Henry at 104 years young is a woman of faith and dedicated to serving the Lord and her community. She has been an active member of St. Monica's Episcopal Church in Hartford CT since 1970 and has been a proud member of the Episcopal Church Women for 55 years. Mrs. Henry has helped to organize countless events, fundraisers, and service activities.

Mrs. Henry serves on the Board of the St. Monica's Elderly Housing Corporation and is a faithful member of St. Monica's Adult Bible Study Group.

Mrs. Henry stays busy in the Hartford community too. She is a member of the Northend Senior Center where she acts as a mentor to many and can be seen taking computer classes! She is also an avid quilter and is featured in the book "Communion of the Spirits" by Roland L. Freeman and several of her quilts are on display in art galleries.

In 2023, Mrs. Henry was awarded the Lifetime Legacy Award by the Blue Hills Civic Association. In 2021, on her 100th birthday, Mrs. Henry was featured on NBC CT, click here to see her television debut:

<https://www.nbcconnecticut.com/top-video-ott/royal-celebration-for-hartford-womans-100th-birthday/2471805>

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Andrea Mitchell

Home Church: St. Martin's Episcopal, Hartford

Nominated by: Denise Welsh

I am honored to accept this award for the recognition, dedication and contribution to the ECW. I've been attending St. Martin's Episcopal church since the 1990s since I was a little girl. Some of the roles I played in the church included being a part of the Sunday School where I would sing and get various invitations from other churches to sing which now I have passed onto my daughter, also I'm a proud mother of 3 beautiful kids that gives me the power and strength and inspires me to continue doing what I love to do. I was also an acolyte and a member of the youth group where we did community service and helped the elderly. I remain a member of St. Martin's Episcopal Church along with my mom who is a part of the vestry, brother and children who actively participate in the church as well.

Back when I was in school I was part of the allied health academy because I always had a passion and love for helping people, which is what led me to become a healthcare worker. I have been a healthcare worker for over 18 years. I am a part of a healthcare organization called Service Employee International Union New England. We are a division of healthcare workers that takes care of the sick, disabled, aged and dying. Our division ranges from nursing home, group home, hospital, child care, state and homecare workers.

I am a part of the faith and community team. Our vision is to end poverty for care givers, invest in black, brown and impoverished people. To fund our communities in the area their lacking as we fight for racial economic justice. My role as being part of the faith and community team is having conversations with the members along with their faith leaders from different denominations within the greater New England areas. The goal is to unite different faith leaders of different churches around different issues that affect the community including the lack of funding for programs for our children, mental health, addiction, homelessness, food insecurities and community safety. We have formed the faith and power assembly which is faith leaders from different churches meeting monthly to address these issues that is affecting our communities. Thank you for this honor. I will continue to be a advocate and a light for the voiceless, powerless and helpless.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Elaine Phillips

Home Church: Grace Episcopal Church, Hartford

Nominated by: The Rev. Rowena Kemp

We proudly nominate Elaine D. Phillips as our 2025 Honored Woman, recognizing her dedication and contributions to the ministry of the Episcopal Church Women. She exemplifies the mission and values of ECW through her faithful service in the following ways:

Elaine, her husband Tom and their family have been members of Grace Church Hartford for the past 40 years. She has been active in our parish since the tenure of the seventh rector The Rev. Christopher Rose. She has served as a member of the choir, altar guild, a bookkeeper and bulletin liturgist and archivist (This is a huge deal in an Anglo-Catholic parish with complex liturgies!). Her most important contribution to our community has been as a longtime treasurer in the lean years as well as the not so lean years. It is due to her diligence, austere measures, planning, mentoring, and foresight that our community continues to thrive despite our membership size.

When asked to describe her contributions, former rector, The Rev. Richard Maxwell described her in this way:

"In my time as an active clergyman I served six parishes, including more than a decade as the rector of Grace, Hartford. In all those parishes I never encountered a parishioner more dedicated to the church than Elaine. She is a phenomenon. As a small parish, Grace relies on a few hands to do a great deal of work, and Elaine's hands were the most reliable.

She was an excellent treasurer during my entire tenure, preparing budgets, paying bills, keeping the books, issuing reports, and offering sage business advice. Elaine is flawlessly honest, fair, and organized, even reminding me when it was time to begin preparing to take a sabbatical when she knew I wasn't paying attention to that. She also prepared the service bulletins for several years. As an Anglo-Catholic parish, those bulletins were sometimes quite complicated, and Elaine's deep knowledge of liturgy was invaluable. A devoted member of the choir, Elaine's presence and voice could always be counted on. She even found time to assist the altar guild and prepare tasty contributions to our potluck suppers. I suppose it's appropriate that Elaine was the parish treasurer for so long because she is herself a treasure. Her crown in heaven is undoubtedly laden with so many stars that I wonder how she'll bear the weight."

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Rachel Scotch

Home Church: Trinity Church on the Green, New Haven

Nominated by: Rev. Heidi Thorsen, Lisa Levy

We proudly nominate Rachel as our 2025 Honored Woman, recognizing her dedication and contributions to the ministry of the Episcopal Church Women. She exemplifies the mission and values of ECW through her faithful service in the following ways:

Rachel's heart and soul come to our Episcopal community filled with a passion for social justice. By trade, she is a Right to Counsel Housing Attorney and Public Defender at New Haven Legal Assistance. As a member of Trinity, she has been one of our most dedicated volunteers in the Chapel on the Green Ministry (CotG) which provides spiritual fellowship and lunch to the unhoused and hungry every single Sunday on the New Haven Green. She also sang in the parish choir and is among our newest Vestry members.

Before coming to New Haven, she lived in Boston, attending common cathedral (the worshipping community after which CotG is modeled) and actively volunteering at MANNA (Many Angels Needed Now and Always), a ministry formed with and for the unhoused community. CotG has been in existence for almost 17 years and serves an average of 60-80 people every Sunday, 52 weeks a year. Today, Rachel feels she found her "home" here at CotG and can be seen setting up or serving food, washing feet on Maundy Thursday, talking with the parishioners of CotG, cleaning up, or hosting lunch for 100 people with her husband on holidays and other days. "Sharing food with people is the most fundamental thing you can do to experience your shared humanity," Rachel said in a recent edition of the CotG Newsletter.

In her capacity as a lawyer, Rachel recently helped a refugee mother of three from West Africa keep her apartment and negotiated with the landlord for an affordable rent moving forward. She is also taking classes to teach English as a second language, another example of Rachel's calling and commitment to connect with people across the lines that so often divide us.

Outside of work, Rachel enjoys daily hikes with their rescue dog and kayaking with her husband. She is an avid baker (one of her recipes earned the 2024 Big E Grand Champion in the Quick Breads category!), and loves following the Red Sox and Bruins (be sure to ask her about the decade she spent working at Fenway Park!).

Rachel Scotch is a woman who puts our Episcopal faith into action, both at church and in the greater community.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Betty Silva

Home Church: St. John's Episcopal, East Windsor

Nominated by: Connecticut Board of the Episcopal Church Women

With great joy the Connecticut Board of the Episcopal Church Women nominates Betty Silva as an Honored Woman for 2025. Betty has faithfully served her congregation of St. John's, East Windsor, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, and The Episcopal Church for many years. We especially honor and give thanks to God for her service to Episcopal Church Women in numerous capacities.

A lifelong Episcopalian, Betty has been a member of Episcopal Church Women for over 40 years, and retired last year after serving for six years as President of Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut. Her years as President included the challenging times of the COVID pandemic when she personally and passionately researched grantees, ensuring that organizations and ministries were awarded much needed funds. Throughout Connecticut donations to ministries and peoples in need remained alive and well, despite the pandemic impact on in-person business as usual. As a dedicated and devoted President Betty would follow up with Board members and freely offer herself to help as needed—caring for the Board as well as for the grantees and peoples in great need.

In addition to serving Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut, Betty held active leadership roles in the National Episcopal Church Women, United Thank Offering Committee, National Altar Guild, and served as President of Province I's Episcopal Church Women. Attending multiple Triennial meetings, she represented Connecticut with pride and wisdom, bringing back her learnings and ideas to the local level.

At her home parish of St. John's, East Windsor, Betty served in many leadership capacities—on the Altar Guild, as Senior Warden, as Parish Clerk, as a passionate Episcopal Church Woman. Her dedication at the local parish level moved her to serve in numerous leadership roles in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut—on the Diocesan Altar Guild, in Deanery leadership, on BDEC, for Diocesan United Thank Offering.

Throughout her years, Betty has faithfully answered God's call to serve inside and outside the walls of her church, championing the rights of women and instilling in others to care for all God's children. She has lived into Paul's words in his first letter to the Corinthians: "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." We are grateful for Betty's lifelong offering of her gifts for the common good.

Episcopal Church Women in Connecticut 144th Annual Meeting Honored Women Recipient



Dr. Lynn Hayes Thomas
Home Church: St. Stephen's, Bloomfield
Nominated by: Julie Johnson-Roy, Senior Warden

Lynn joined St. Stephen's in 2009. The faith she carries in her heart is evident in the work, time and talent she so generously shares with our parish.

She joined the vestry soon after and as Junior Warden has been an intricate member of our parish.

Working as an informal secretary Lynn has prepared the weekly program for services and headed the cleaning crew. Her hard work along with her team kept our sanctuary and parish hall sparkling.

Some of the responsibilities Lynn has taken on include leading morning prayer and coordinating lay reads.

She has completed the lay preacher course by Ginnie Glassman and for the last two years has offered well thought out sermons touching the hearts of the people of our parish.



Welcome Guest Speaker: Reverend Susan Hagood Lee, Ph.D.

“UN Pathways for Women’s Human Rights.”

BIOGRAPHY Susan H. Lee April 4, 2025

The Rev. Susan Hagood Lee, Ph.D. is an Episcopal priest and sociologist from New Bedford, Massachusetts. She earned her bachelor’s degree at Brown University, a Master of Divinity degree from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in sociology from Boston University.

Rev. Lee was ordained to the diaconate in 1988 and the priesthood in 1989 by Bishop George Hunt of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island. She was part of the second wave of ordained women in the Episcopal Church. She served for 33 years in urban ministry at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Fall River, Massachusetts, working extensively with Cambodian refugees and their children. In 1989, Rev. Lee led a community task force that established the first battered women’s shelter in Fall River, Our Sisters’ Place. She served for several years as the Massachusetts Diocesan Refugee Coordinator for Episcopal Migration Ministries, resettling refugees from Cambodia, Vietnam, Ethiopia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Bosnia. In the late 1990s, she led an anti-death penalty group, the Bristol County Chapter of Massachusetts Citizens Against the Death Penalty, and contributed to the defeat of the death penalty in Massachusetts.

As a sociologist, Dr. Lee conducted research on widows in Cambodia, accompanied by parishioners from St. Luke’s Church, and wrote a scholarly book on her interviews, *Rice Plus: Widows and Economic Survival in Rural Cambodia*. She served on the faculty of Boston University’s College of General Studies for two decades, including teaching in a Study Abroad program in London, England. She has published articles on women in Cambodian Buddhism, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and San Francisco’s efforts to implement CEDAW, the international women’s treaty.

Dr. Lee has attended annual sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women for 20 years as a representative of Sociologists for Women in Society, a professional association. In 2017, she co-founded the US Women’s Caucus (uswomenscaucus.org), a national alliance of US individuals and organizations active at the United Nations, and served as President from 2021-2024.

In New Bedford, Dr. Lee is a member of the Women’s Alliance and serves on its committee on bodily autonomy, *Our Bodies Our Lives*. In March 2024, she was elected to the New Bedford Ward 5 Democratic Committee on the Presidential Primary ballot and serves as vice-chair.



Episcopal Church Women are Christian women who support the Church and each other through individual and corporate ministry by affirming and promoting the work of our Lord Jesus Christ through prayer, worship, study and action for the benefit of all.

Today we give thanks to the many women who have dedicated years of service to the Episcopal Church Women Organizations, serving in many roles, with some of our Board members ministry work representing more than 50 years.

DIOCESAN BOARD- Executive Committee and Program Leaders

President, Dr. Paulette Blythe-Russell

Vice-President, Denise Cain Welsh

Secretary, Geraldine McHugh-Williams

Treasurer, Julia Johnson-Roy

Administrator, Lois Frankforter

Chaplin, The Rev. Linda Spiers

White Envelope Grants, Cecile McPherson-Tinker

UTO, Claudia Dixon

Special Assistance & Social Concerns, Judith Moeckel

Publicity Coordinator, The Rev. Rowena Kemp

Immediate Past President, Betty Silva

Regional Representatives:

North Central, Evelyn Green

Southeast, Allison Fresher

Southwest, Olive Grant

Daughters of the King, Donna Ricketts

Girls Friendly Society, Karen Rowe



The Connecticut Board of the Episcopal Church Women extends a warm and sincere thank you to everyone joining us today. A special thank you to our Bishops, Deacon, Readers, Speaker, Musician, and Girl's Friendly for the table centerpieces.

Participants in the Service

Celebrant: The Right Reverend Laura Aherns, Bishop Suffragan, Episcopal Church in Connecticut

Preacher: The Right Reverend Jeffrey Mello, Bishop, Episcopal Church in Connecticut

Deacon: The Rev. Edrice Viechweg, Deacon, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Fairfield

Intercessor: The Rev. Edrice Viechweg, Deacon, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Fairfield

Crucifer: John Scott, Christ Church Cathedral, Hartford

Musician: Lan Ya Huang, organist, St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Hartford

Lectors :

Claudia Dixon, St. Martin's Episcopal Church, Hartford

Olive Grant, St. John's Episcopal Church, Stamford

Go forth into the world in peace.

Be of good courage.

Hold fast that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil.

Strengthen the fainthearted.

Support the weak. Help the afflicted.

Show love to everyone.