

ECW Province III
Annual Spring Meeting, April 25, 2026
Province President's Report

It has been an honor to serve as your Provincial President, for the last 18 months. In 2025 and 2026, we partnered with the UN Council on Women, the Worldwide Anglican Communion and Council of Churches, in support of #16DaysOfActivism, culminating on International Human Rights Day, standing against violence perpetuated against women.

We hosted National ECW workshops on gratitude as a spiritual practice, understanding human trafficking, and Robert's Rules of Order. As a recognized entity of the Episcopal Church, we even attended The international Conference on Women at the United Nations in March 2025 and 2026, both in person, and virtually, as I did on Zoom. This year, as part of the NGO CSW 70 at the UN, I attended the workshop on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, hosted by the NECW and the Episcopal Church.

In 2025, I also provided reflections during our National ECW Lenten Series with the WCC, called Thursdays in Black , and our own Stations of Hope, providing a no holds barred perspective on rape and sexual violence. I spoke before the Province III Synod and galvanized the efforts of an ECW in Brooklyn, New York, and spoke to the Church Periodical Club at their Annual Conference in 2025.

After hosting the executive board meeting in October 2025, in November, and December, and throughout this

year, I attended weekly morning prayer, sponsored by the National ECW. I submitted articles for the winter spring edition of the communiqué and was appointed to the national ECW communications committee.

One of the highlights of my time as Province III President, was when I was able to present gifts to the Venerable Monks during their 100 day Pilgrimage for Peace, on behalf of PROVINCE III. It was a very spiritual gathering, and I was proud to provide a token of our solidarity to them, once they entered our Province in the Diocese of Southern VA.

And this year during Lent, we again participated in Thursdays in Black, I attended several various workshops sponsored by the WCC, and a Lenten Series sponsored by the Episcopal Women's History Project, and participated again virtually with women around the world, at the United Nations. I also attended two NECW meetings, called by President Lisa Bortner, one exclusively for Provincial presidents held in August, and a joint meeting of Provincial presidents and ECW board representatives, held in January.

As Reverend Bobby Shieves said, "We must continue to engage with discernment, disagree with Grace, and remain beacons of Hope, as the world is aching for women who remain faithful to seek justice... [We must] speak when it is hard, and serve, when it is harder."

Through our affiliated organization, the Church Periodical Club, or CPC, Province III was awarded two National Book Fund grants, and a seminarian grant at Virginia Theological Seminary for 2025. Upcoming awards for 2026 will be announced later this year. Yes

we, the ECW—are those women who are unique and discerning and fully engaged as we “continue to do God’s work... in the world.

I mentioned to the members of the Province III Synod that even if individual parishes or dioceses may not have an organization designated as ECW—for whatever reason—it does not mean that this expanding and encompassing ministry does not continue in your parishes and dioceses, even by another name.

This is important to reiterate, and I provided an example of a parish in West Virginia of a woman’s organization functioning in the church, but not under the name “ECW,” but instead as a Guild.

In Province III, Diocesan ECWs offer scholarships and grants for community service projects and scholarships to deserving students in the field of theology, social work, community service and health care, as reported for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

I am so proud and inspired by the work of women of the Episcopal Church, conducted by these 12 dioceses in five states. For example, the Diocese Of Washington, led by Stephanie Byrd, continues to do spiritually inspiring work in our communities, especially with immigrants. In the Diocese of Delaware, an active ministry involving incarcerated women reflects God’s grace, and the women in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, spearheaded by our ECW Province III Secretary Mary Rivera, held a rally last year to reinvigorate the ECW in this Diocese, and is hosting this, our Annual Province Spring meeting.

The year 2025 has been an interesting, compelling, and

some would even say tumultuous year for the Episcopal Church.

But the ECW has always been an organization of steadfast resilience, and I am convinced that together we will continue the work of this important ministry, in courage, in optimism, and in unshakable faith.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve; if you are in the states of Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia, especially in the new Diocese of the Susquehanna, please let me know what you are doing in your communities, and how we can be of help. May God continue to bless each and every one of you.

Dr. René Escoffery-Torres
President, ECW Province III
Diocese of Southern Virginia

