

# United Thank Offering Report

## September 2006

The gathering of UTO women at the National Convention in Columbus, Ohio, was an exciting time. It was particularly interesting to attend the early morning grant hearing with the UTO committee. We were given a list of grants that had been awarded and were given the opportunity to make a case for projects which had not been granted. In one case a UTO coordinator, whose project had been granted a substantial amount, stepped forward to share some of their funds to another project which seemed to her to be worthier and in greater need. The spirit of sharing was pervasive expressing the mission of the United Thank Offering to expand the circle of thankful people, making all more aware of the abundance of God's blessings.

The General Convention Eucharist, with the symbolic presentation of United Thank Offering donation checks by each UTO coordinator to the Presiding Bishop Frank T. Griswold during the offertory, was meaningful and impressive. With the plate offering from the Eucharist, plus recently returned funds from an unused grant, three additional grants were funded. The United Thank Offering committee funded more than **\$2.4 million in 2006 grants** for projects at home and abroad. Of 196 requests totaling \$7,235,649.77, 113 grants were funded. 59.4 % went to dioceses in the US, and 40.6 % went to overseas and regional grants.

**ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH PRE-SCHOOL, ATHENS, was awarded a \$8,500 grant** to hire a bilingual staff member and to provide Spanish language instruction for other staff to increase communications and to build better working relationships between the staff and the Hispanic families whose children attend this pre-school.

Your diocesan UTO committee asks each convocation coordinator to ask ECW members attending convocation meetings to encourage all parish UTO coordinators to:

Arrange dates with their rectors for two UTO Ingathering Sundays: Spring, before May 15 and Fall, before November 15;

Publicize the meaning of UTO several weeks before these dates;

As soon after the Ingathering as possible, mail check (no cash or personal checks) payable to Episcopal Church Women and marked **UTO** to: ECW, Diocese of Alabama, 521 North 20th Street, Birmingham, AL 35203-2611;

Note that any other UTO donations received at any time should be sent on a regular basis; checks should not be held in their accounts;

Checks for UTO should **not** be sent to the UTO Coordinator.

The members of the United Thank Offering Committee have tried to be in touch with a UTO coordinator, contact person or rector of each parish in the Diocese of Alabama to encourage establishing regular UTO Ingatherings. A list of the committee members is on the Episcopal Church Women's website. It is our goal to develop programs of Thanksgiving throughout our diocese. We wish to encourage the use of the "Blue Box" to give thanks daily through prayer and donations. We hope to identify areas in which there is need and develop projects worthy of making grant applications. If anyone is aware of a project which might meet the criteria of need in the diocese, please inform the director that:

Grant applications are usually available by October and may be obtained from The Rev. Rob Morpeth at Carpenter House, page 4;

**Completed grant applications should be in the Diocesan office by December 31 for approval by Bishop Parsley;**

Copies also need to be mailed to the Diocesan UTO Coordinator, Tora Johnson, 525 Paige Hill Road, Anniston, AL 36207; and,

A Short Form Application for a UTO Grant, to assist with formation of a request, before the grant forms from the national office are mailed, is available on line or from Tora Johnson.

The National UTO Committee asked that we inform everyone about the **Memorial and Gift Trust Fund** as a possibility for memorial or honorary donations. These funds are put into a trust to help the UTO Committee with administration and granting. These are separate and apart from the UTO Ingathering donations which are entirely granted.

Contributions to the Memorial and Gift Trust Fund should be marked **#852**; and, Should be mailed to Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society, UTO, Box 12095, Newark, NJ (not to the Diocese of Alabama office).

Tora Johnson  
UTO Coordinator