

**REPORT ON ECW: THE HUB OF THE PARISH
PLTE WORKSHOP
ST. LUKE'S – BIRMINGHAM
APRIL 5, 2008
Gethryn S. Giles**

Even though it was a rainy dreary day, the ECW workshop at the Parish Leadership Training Event on April 5, 2008 was glowing with color, not only with a rainbow of colors used in the handouts, but with the attitude of fun and learning among the participants and presenters.

There were 26 persons in attendance, counting the ECW Board members. This number was not impressive, but compared very well with the other workshops which were offered at the same time. One was cancelled due to no one signing up in advance and another workshop had only 3 participants. Of the 157 persons attending the entire event over ½ of them were there for the Bishop's workshop for parish vestry members.

Several observations were made of this first every ECW workshop at this annual training event. There was not enough time in the two hour time frame to adequately cover the agenda items. This required a time keeper and resulted in several presentations being cut short. But, the workshop ran on schedule and ended at the appropriate time with each presenter being able to at least give minimum coverage to their subject.

At the end the participants were asked to write down recommendations for future such workshops. Generally the comments included making this an all day event instead of a two hour one; including information about programs, project development; fundraising and parish ECW organization. Other comments included how to attract members and what should be the relationship with the rector of the parish. Another suggestion was to break into groups, maybe by parish size and share ideas.

After the workshop was over the members of the Board gathered to critique the event. It was agreed this should be done again, either at the next PLTE or maybe in workshops at the Fall Conference. Since parish ECW officers serve for two years or more, the next workshop should be done differently in order to attract the same attendees. Presenters should cover fundraising, programs, relationship with clergy and organization - putting emphasis on each parish ECW having By-Laws.

Thanks for all who worked so hard to make this a very successful event.