

# Participating Level

Now you have an organized ECW. What do you do next?

- ❖ Maintain your regular programming of faith, fellowship, education and service activities.
- ❖ Explore activities that would encourage group participation
  - Women's Bible study group
  - Day out for moms
  - Knitting ministry
  - Yoga
- ❖ Focus on an underserved group in your church whether it is the young moms, working women, or senior women.

This is a wonderful time to increase your participation in the Diocese. Meet the vibrant women from the area and encourage members to participate in ECW events.

There are several organizations within ECW that may enhance your women's experience:

- ❖ Daughters of the King
- ❖ Church Periodical Club
- ❖ Expand your understanding of the United Thank Offering

If your church does not already participate, consider conducting a United Thank Offering (UTO) ingathering at least once a year. The UTO is national grant funding program administrated by the ECW and details can be obtained by contacting the Diocesan UTO coordinator. For further information about any of these groups, please see our website.

The next step: [Leadership Level](#)

# Leadership Level

Your ECW meets regularly and some members participate in Diocesan events. How can your ECW move forward?

- ❖ Expand your programming to include parish-wide events under the ECW banner. Consider sponsoring speakers with a focus on women's issues and interests.
- ❖ Reach out to women in crisis, both in your church and in the community.
- ❖ Encourage the women in your church to participate in the Diocesan events
- ❖ Meet other women from throughout the region and re-light the fire!
- ❖ Women from your parish may choose to represent you by joining the diocesan board, attending Province V meetings, or attending the ECW National convention, Triennial, which is held at General Convention.

The income from our endowment provides our philanthropic funding. Providing additional financial support, the Voluntary Financial Contribution, is also important.

- ❖ Add support in your parish annual budget or hold a fundraiser which benefits your women's ministries and the diocesan ECW. These monies provide for the programs and administration of the ECW
- ❖ Consider a gift to the endowment in honor or memory of a parish member. Help expand the outreach of the ECW.

Help keep the ECW a vital part of your faith community!

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN**  
Diocese of Chicago

[www.ecwchicago.org](http://www.ecwchicago.org)

6-19

# Join, Participate, Lead



How to Establish an  
Episcopal Church Women  
Chapter in Your Church



**Episcopal Church  
Women**

*Diocese of Chicago*

The Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Chicago seek to support all women in our parishes without restriction by creating a greater connection between us through our faith and sisterhood with programs of education and service.



Women serve as lay and ordained ministers and lay readers. We minister on altar guilds and in church schools and nurseries. Women serve on vestries, diocesan commissions, and national Episcopal committees. We attend Bible studies, visit the home-bound, help maintain the church properties, and cook for others.

At some churches, women participate in formally structured ECW groups with officers and scheduled meeting dates. At others, we talk informally to plan a parish event. The degree of organization of chapter's falls somewhere in between at most churches.

All women of the Episcopal Church by definition belong to the ECW. If the women of your church are interested in affiliating with the Diocesan ECW and becoming a recognized chapter of the Episcopal Church Women, the [\*Joining Level\*](#) is where you start.



## Joining Level

To help provide a structure to your new organization, we suggest that you participate in three to four events each year which are parish-wide events open to all interested women. Here are suggestions following "Faith, Fellowship, Education & Service".

### Faith

These events would focus on the spiritual side of women and could include:

- ❖ A program presented by your clergy
- ❖ A special worship service or an interfaith event
- ❖ A presentation on the Bible or other thoughtful book of interest

### Fellowship or Sisterhood

Events focusing on just having fun are sometimes hard for women to accept! Set aside a time for the women of the church to enjoy each other's company and reach out to women of each generation.

### Education

The ECW, Diocese of Chicago, provides three Diocesan-wide events each year: ECW Annual Meeting & Convention in the spring, and the Altar Guild Conference and Fall Gathering & Retreat in the fall. The ECW also sponsors presenters at the Diocesan Convention.

- ❖ Bring community organizations to your parish to speak about their services
- ❖ Encourage an all-parish book selection and discussion
- ❖ Provide opportunities for members to share their gifts and experiences

## Service

Beyond bake sales, women of your parish have a lot to offer.

- ❖ Research a new service project or take ownership of an existing project that needs a new approach
- ❖ Encourage a special "women's day" at an ongoing service event
- ❖ Be sure to acknowledge the women who provide the service
- ❖ Meet other women with energy and ideas!
- ❖ Promote these events by posting flyers and in "The Mirror", our diocesan-wide newsletter and other places where women gather at your church.
- ❖ Participate in honoring a special woman in your parish.

We also have a website where you can find information regarding women's issues and concerns and updated information about our upcoming events - [www.ecwchicago.org](http://www.ecwchicago.org)

Encourage the women of your church to make a *voluntary financial contribution*. Participating in the VFC provides funding for ECW communications and administrative expenses. It will be a point of pride that you support the ECW.

Through the ECW, the women of your church will be connected to other women in your Deanery, the Diocese, Province V - our Midwest region, and outward to our sisters in the Anglican Communion.

Your next goal is the [\*Participating Level\*](#).