

REPORT TO SYNOD 2019

The purpose of the Toronto Diocesan Anglican Church Women is to be a focus for Christian community among all Anglican Women, affirming their gifts and encouraging their ministries through fellowship, worship and service.

In 1966, by resolution of General Synod and with the agreement of all involved, Anglican Church Women was formed by the amalgamation of the four existing women's ministries: the Mother's Union, the Chancel Guild, the Church Year and the Women's Auxiliary. On November 22, 1967 the Toronto Diocesan Anglican Church Women was legally incorporated in the Province of Ontario, undertaking to carry forward the aims and programs of all four founding ministries.

Today, the Toronto Diocesan Anglican Church Women is an umbrella organization which assists, informs and encourages the Parish A.C.W. Groups. Through the combined efforts of these Groups, we are able to give financial assistance to various projects. Through the Diocesan ACW newsletter: ideas are shared, Prayer Links for the quarter listed, messages from the Chaplain written to ponder, Parish A.C.W. activities highlighted, Social Concerns and Action projects discussed. The Board of Directors meet monthly to share ideas, discuss financial decisions and report what is happening with the Parish ACWs around the Diocese.

Anglican Church Women are using their gifts in all aspects of ministry in their Parishes and beyond: lay readers, lay anointers, Eucharistic ministers, Altar/Chancel Guilds members, sidespersons, counters, Church School teachers, choir members, bible study leaders, prayer group members, prayer shawl knitters, lay visitors, bazaar and event organizers, garden group workers, cemetery administrators, caterers for funerals, coffee hour providers, Out of the Cold workers, refugee sponsorship committee members and the list goes on...

Some Anglican Church Women choose to meet in formal Groups known as "the A.C.W.". These groups allow for more intentional involvement. They provide fellowship and support for their members as well as structure for encouraging their members' ministry and spiritual growth. They are as varied as their members. The number of meetings/events per year, the number of groups, the time the groups meet, the type of activities they wish to be involved in, are all decided by the gifts, needs and interests of the women in their church.

At the Diocesan level, our work includes:

- Council of the North – to support the work of the Council of the North through a major donation
- Theological Student Bursaries – to provide to assistance to women theological students
- Lay Ministry/Vocational Deacons Bursaries – to provide assistance to women pursuing training in Lay Ministry or for the Vocational Diaconate
- Missionary Appeals – to provide assistance to women who are participating in a mission event usually outside of Canada
- Threshold Ministries – (formerly Church Army) to help their work and continue support on behalf of the founding Chancel Guild commitment

- Chancel training and information – to share knowledge pertaining to Chancels and Sanctuaries of our churches and chapels

-Memorial Book – to provide a permanent remembrance for any A.C.W member who has died.

- Ecclesiastical Needleworkers – to provide working space and support for the group of women who meet every Monday to create and sell altar clothes and small linens as well as custom, hand embroidered vestments and hangings. They also repair and remount old hangings and vestments.

- Social Concern and Action Special Projects – to facilitate increased awareness of social issues in our communities, our areas, the nation and the world. Each year, each Area chooses an organization to receive our Special Project financial support in keeping with the Social Justice theme, voted on by the members at the AGM. Many groups invite speakers to address them about various social issues in their communities. The theme for 2019 is Safe Houses (Shelters) for Women. The organizations for 2019 are: East Metro Youth Services, Chantel’s Place, Bridgenorth and North House.

Newsletter – to publish a newsletter three times a year. The newsletter is sent to every parish in the Diocese earmarked for the women’s groups. Many women choose to have their own personal subscription.

Ecumenical work – to be involved with various ecumenical activities in our Diocese such as World Day of Prayer Services, Catholic Women’s League AGM, WICC.

Interfaith work – to work with members of other faith communities, primarily around children and women’s issues.

Diocesan A.C.W. is funded mainly by donations from Parish Anglican Church Women Groups, some of which money is designated for Council of the North, Special Projects, Bursaries etc. These donations are supplemented by the sale of public relations items such as A.C.W. pins, chancel pins, newsletter subscriptions, memorial book inscriptions, P.A.L subscriptions and individual donations. The work of the Ecclesiastical Needleworkers and investment income cover the office expenses.

The 2019 Annual General Meeting was hosted in York Scarborough Area by St. Timothy Agincourt. The theme was “Working with Change”. Bishop Robertson brought greetings on behalf of the College of Bishops. The keynote speaker was Alexandra Shimo, the author of “Invisible North: lessons from a Troubled Reserve”. She presented slides and spoke about her experience in Kashechewan.

“Working with Change” will be our focus as we move forward. Identifying ways to use technology to enhance our ministry, encouraging changes which could include new activities, new events, new focus or new ways to do traditional events.

We extend our sincere thank you to all who support us through donations, encouragement and prayers.

Respectfully submitted,

Enid Corbett, MA, ODT

President, Toronto Diocesan Anglican Church Women