



# ECW News

## Go Tell It On The Mountains

March and April 2026



You are invited to join the Episcopal Church Women to an event with Lisa Bortner, National Episcopal Church Women President.

All women in the Diocese of Western North Carolina are invited (you do not need to have an active ECW) to come and listen to Lisa talk about the ministry and mission Episcopal Church Women (ECW) are doing within the Church and the world.

**Location:** St. John's Episcopal Church, 290 Old Haw Creek Rd. Asheville NC 28805

**Time:** 10:30 am to 2 pm.

**Date:** Saturday, April 11, 2026

**Deadline:** April 6, 2026

Box Lunch: choose ham, turkey, or vegetarian sandwich

Cost: \$25

### Two Ways to Registration for Event:

1. Print form and send your check and form to Diane Mance by deadline April 6, 2026 (form on page 2)
2. Go to our website [www.ecwwnc.org](http://www.ecwwnc.org) scroll down to events, fill out the information, choose your sandwich, and pay using the **PayPal button**. The women can choose to pay using PayPal or a debit/credit card.

## ECW April 11, 2026 Registration Form

Join us! Come and meet the National Episcopal Church Women (ECW) President, Lisa Bortner on April 11, 2026.

**Theme: ECW in today's Church and the world.**

For more information contact Mary Ann Ransom nanaransom43@gmail.com or 828.230.0557

**Date:** Saturday, April, 11, 2026 10:30 am to 2 pm

**Location:** St. John's Episcopal Church, 290 Old Haw Creek Rd. Asheville NC 28805

**Time:** 10:30 am – Registration & Socializing,

11 am to 12 noon – Program 12:30 Lunch & discussion 2:00 pm Depart

**\$25 per person for Box Lunch: Circle: Ham, Turkey or Vegetarian**

**Registration Deadline: April 6, 2026**

**Name:**

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**Address:**

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**City and zip code:**

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**Phone:**

**Email:**

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**Church:**

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**Two ways to register and pay:**

**1. Make check payable to ECWWNC, send check and form with lunch preference to Diane Mance, 105 Poppy Lane, Asheville NC 28803**

**2. Go to ECW website [www.ecwwnc.org](http://www.ecwwnc.org) and scroll down to events, fill out the information, choose your sandwich, and pay using the **PayPal button**. The women can choose to pay using PayPal or a debit/credit card.**



## Our Story 1872 – 2026 (154 years) Diocese Western North Carolina

- 2/13/1872 Active branch, Trinity Church, Asheville (We were part of Diocese North Carolina.)
- 4/15/1878 Active branch, St. James, Lenoir
- 1895 Asheville and Lenoir separated from Diocese North Carolina. At that time ECW was called The Women's Auxiliary. Miss Fanny Patton was the Secretary, as the President was called then. The Presiding Officer at that time was the Bishop.
- 1897 The First Annual Meeting of the Women's Auxiliary of the District was held in Asheville.
- 1920 The Women's Auxiliary of Asheville sent a resolution to US Senators and Congressmen urging them to pass the bill prohibiting salmon fishery in Alaska for canning and export. They feared hardship and possible starvation of the Yukon Indians.
- 1922 New Diocese of Western North Carolina was formed. In that year, the Women's Auxiliary became an organization to the newly formed diocese. Bishop Horner insisted on keeping the appointment of the President in his hands. He still presided at all the meetings.
- 1924 A Constitution was carefully adopted and Mrs. Michael Schenk of Hendersonville became the first elected President of the Women's Auxiliary.
- 1926 Mrs. Fred Thomas was elected President and served six years. Two terms
- 1920's – 1930's During Depression years the Diocesan funds of the Women's Auxiliary were lost due to two bank failures. At that time all pledges from the ladies were paid in full. Women put an item in the Budget to provide for a missionary to serve Franklin and the Highlands areas.
- 1920's – 1930's The women were paying the salary for a Chaplain and his Secretary at Oteen. The Women's Auxiliary also bought two acres of land for the new conference center called Kanuga.
- 1940's During the war – Women were called to aid the Red Cross and collect articles for World Relief. Clothes and supplies were gathered and sent to England.
- 1959 Annual Meeting, The women adopted the new name of Diocese of Episcopal Churchwomen (ECW) replacing the name, Women's Auxiliary.
- 1960 Deanery system was passed. Each Deanery had a Dean and an Episcopal Churchwomen representative.

1967 President Mrs. Bess Byerly started the Spring Planning Days which offered leadership workshops to aid the branches of ECWs.

1970's Emphasis of ECW shifted from missions to Christian Social Concerns. ECW financially aided Hospice, The Deaf Ministry, and Battered Women, and they educated women on Jail and Prison ministry, Ministry to the Aging, Child Abuse and many other social issues.

1980's Emphasis had been World Peace and World Hungry.

1983 Diocesan Board initiated a new project to help with problems of World Hunger, The Heifer Project International to purchase live animals to be given to a hungry family instructed in their care.

1984 There were Fifty-four (54) organized ECW Branches in Diocese Western North Carolina.

1985 – 1996 During this time, some programs and projects funded included: Campus Ministries, Migrant Hispanic Ministry, Lambeth, Task Force on Aging, Task Force on AIDS, Bishop's Fund for Continuing Education, Clergy Assistance, Camp Henry, Towel Ministry, Bishop's Discretionary Fund, Mother-Baby Camp, Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, Episcopal Radio and TV, Thompson Children's Home, Kanuga and Valle Crucis Conferences, St. Augustine College, Cora-Commission on Religion in Appalachia, Women in Ministry and Ministry.

1997 – 2009 This time period, ECW continued to fund the previous year's programs plus a Program named Ministry to the Poor.

2009 – 2026 ECW continued to fund many of the above ministries and added Women's Prison Ministry, HOPE Center (a cancer program for women), Diocesan Youth Ministry for Education, Church of The Advocate Kitchen Program, Blue Ridge Mountain's Dental Program in Cashiers, ESL Program at La Capilla de Santa Maria.

### **What happening at the Grace Church ECW in Morganton, NC**

The Grace ECW 2026 programs will be centered upon the theme of "2026 Moving Forward with Grace and Gratitude". Our programs this year will reflect the 250 anniversaries of the country and the history of Grace Church. A field trip to the Morganton History museum is planned for April 11th and a discussion of Grace Church Heritage on June 10 th . On Sept.19th Grace ECW will host the WNC PROVINCE IV- ECW president as program speaker.

The Grace ECW's "Sunshine Ministry" is working with Grace Church's Pastoral Care Volunteer Coordinator, Kathy Peters to support, encourage, and celebrate with parish members including the homebound at different life stages & milestones. This year Easter and Christmas caring packages will be delivered to Grace Church members that are not able to attend services in person.

(Continued from page 4) **What happening at the Grace Church ECW in Morganton, NC**

In February the Grace ECW hosted a welcome breakfast for The Rt. Rev. Jose A. McLoughlin, Bishop, when he visited Grace Church for the installation service of The Rev. John C. Simpson, Rector, followed by confirmation services for the St Mary's/ St. Steven's and Grace Parish.

A large group of Grace women recently participated in the February Lenten Retreat with Katerina Katsarka Whitley at St. John's Marion.

In June of last year the Grace ECW organized & hosted a Helene Eucharist service with Rev. Kelsey Davis preaching the sermon. The service was followed by a lunch and conversation on the Emotional Life Cycle of a Disaster, Phases of Disaster Response. Over \$500 was raised through a Coffee Hour Book Sale and donated to the WNC Disaster Relief Fund. The Grace ECW has committed 2026 to continuing to raise funds.

### **Stories from St. Paul Lake James**

ECW at **St. Paul Lake James** (Morganton) is focused around **Faith in Action** through care and feeding of our congregation and local community. A card ministry, seasonal social events and meals, as well as weekly coffee hour brunch within the congregation ripple out into our community. Our annual ECW fundraisers have progressed from a "**Basket of Blessings**" (parishioners gave funds to add "flowers" on a poster basket to represent what we were grateful for coming out of COVID in 2021), to voting for our favorite pets: "**Cats vs. Dogs**" in 2022 (which ended in a tie despite the dogs begging for votes because of being "man's best friend" as their message was countered by the cats "Cats rule! Dogs drool!") and then "**Cats, Dogs, or Others**" in 2023 (with video messages from quite a variety of animals— Pearl the Black Pig, a calf, chinchillas, even tortoises)...those darn cats won! Then we created **Mother's Day** (2024) and **Father's Day** (2025) gift baskets/plants/ bake sale as an excuse to justify extracting money from each other's wallets...because the funds raised were divided among 10-15 local charities. In 2025, we wondered if we could make a greater impact by giving the entire fundraising result to a single charity vs small amounts to each of many. After we researched the various recipients of our funds, we found that we really could NOT eliminate any...and that even a few hundred dollars was able to create a meaningful impact at each recipient organization.

In the community, we demonstrate our **Faith in Action** as we participate in a variety of projects (Dignity Bags, Options, Toy Drive, BUCM Soup Kitchen, etc.). Our biggest involvement seems to be as volunteers at the Glen Alpine Food Pantry, Inc., a partnership of 8 churches of different denominations providing weekly grocery boxes to about 300 low-income Burke County families each week...450 different families each month compromised of about 1000 individuals, many working

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poor, some on disability, 20-25% elderly, 20-25% children. A coalition grant for locally grown fresh produce connected the pantry with several other rural Methodist churches and the Good News Garden at St. Mary's & St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

We **Renew our Spiritual Formation** through our ECW retreat, and in partnership with our parish's St. Mary Magdalene Daughters of the King chapter.

All these activities constitute our **Joyful Witness** at St. Paul Lake James.

### **Various Ministries at St. Mary's/St Stephen, Morganton NC**

By Bernadette Moore

Soup for the Soul Ministry distributes food items and homemade soup to Senior Citizens, in two apartment complexes, for seniors once a month. We currently serve 35 recipients.

Our recipients look forward to seeing us each month. We also give hugs, love and prayers.



Church members: Fr. Logan, Bernadette Moore, Michael Moore (Bernadette's son), Debbie (Bernadette DNL), and Terence Moore, (Bernadette's son). Loading cars with food to deliver to Senior Citizens.



Father Logan loading his truck to deliver food items and homemade soup to Senior Citizens



The Dignity Bag program was brought to SMSS ECW (St. Mary's- St. Stephen's) by Martha Britt.

Twice a year we make bags of personal items for the girls at Freedom High School. We include a note card with words of inspiration for each young lady.

The program was started when it was discovered that girls would skip school because they did not have personal items during their periods.

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**Website: [www.ecwwnc.org](http://www.ecwwnc.org)**

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News of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW)  
Diocese of Western North Carolina

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with others!