



# THE DAILY THANKS

**The United Thank Offering**  
**Expand the Circle of Thankful People**  
[www.episcopalchurch.org/UTO](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/UTO)

**“UTO will significantly impact the lives of women and children because of Christ’s love.”**

November 2007

Every project, program, and ministry has a life cycle. With the UTO ingathering decreasing the UTO Committee has spent the last year considering if UTO has reached the end of its life cycle: Does UTO have a purpose in today’s world? Is there a reason to continue encouraging people in thankful prayer, and by extension in thankful offerings that become answered prayer for others

as UTO outreach grants? We believe there is.

In October 2007, we spent two days in intensive visioning and discernment led by Mary MacGregor, Director of Crosspoints: Intersections of Faith and Leadership. We explored change moments in UTO’s history, the lives of courageous women, what it means to be God’s hands in the world, and who is the body of Christ.

ity, mission, and ministry, and upon UTO’s mission to expand the circle of thankful people. UTO’s vision statement for a new century continues our historic mission to address compelling human need and expand the mission and ministry of the church.

UTO is over and above the pledge or tithe any of us makes to our local church. But UTO is not “over and above” stewardship. UTO *is* stewardship. The concept of the United Thank Offering is at the heart of the stewardship of baptism: united in one faith, one baptism, one God, as one church,

The result is the United Thank Offering Vision Statement: “UTO will significantly impact the lives of women and children because of Christ’s love.” This vision builds upon UTO’s core values of thanksgiving, generos-

Please continue on page 2

**Inside this issue:**

- Still Working After 100 Years 3
- Reflections on Gratitude—Not Your Average Sunday 4
- Wanted: A Few Good Women 5
- New UTO Coordinator 5
- President’s Message 6



Drafting class, ETVTC, Jerusalem, 2007

## Blessing An Answered Prayer

### New San Marcos Church is Dedicated

San Marcos’ new church building in Haina, Dominican Republic, was dedicated by Bishop Julio Holguín, Diocese of the Dominican Republic, with a standing-room only crowd and additional seats set up outside. The new

San Marcos is representative of UTO’s incredibly valuable support over the years to the Dominican Episcopal Church. Because DR is a cash resource scarce economy, UTO grants have built nearly 75% of the infra-

structure of the Dominican Episcopal Church, especially the schools and the church buildings. UTO’s value to the DR church is far more than cash; access to facilities

Please continue on page 3

The Daily Thanks is published by the United Thank Offering Committee twice a year. This information is provided as a help to UTO Diocesan Coordinators, Bishops, Clergy, and other contacts.

The Daily Thanks may be reprinted and used by any UTO contact, ECW, or church. A PDF version is available online at [www.episcopalchurch.org/UTO](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/UTO).

For additional information contact the UTO office at 800.334.7626 x5130, or your UTO Province Representative.



## UTO's New Vision, continued from page 1

Carrying water in the Dominican Republic, 2007



we give thanks for the willing sacrifice of Christ for our redemption, and offer ourselves to be God's hands at work in the world. More, we offer ourselves without regard for whether that world shares our beliefs. It is enough, simply, that Christ first loved each of us.

UTO's value is so much more than the actual dollars put in our "little blue box". Our act of gratitude for God's blessings in our lives provides the means to spread God's blessings to others in the form of UTO grants.

Who is the body of Christ? It is each one of us, more importantly it is every one of us both domestically and overseas unable to read and write, unable to find food or shelter, unable to earn a livable wage, watching our children die from lack of clean water and healthcare. It is everyone who is not remembered, and who is therefore left behind. Especially this means women and children, those who are often the least remembered, the most likely to suffer, and who with even a little answered prayer can provide exponentially greater hope and stability for their communities.

Like the first generations of women who started UTO,

our vision focuses on work directly impacting the lives of women and children. The UTO Committee members are committed to facing our own fear of change as we embrace the

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**"The United Thank Offering will significantly impact the lives of women and children because of Christ's love."**

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future Christ calls us to.

To embrace fully our new vision much will and must change about the UTO Committee's structure, work, and grant process. We intend to fully implement this new vision with the 2009 UTO grant cycle, starting fall 2008.

To implement this vision UTO will encourage grant requests for projects involving universal primary education, gender equality, and women's and children's healthcare, particularly work alleviating the profound human suffering addressed by the Millennium Development Goals.

- Women are 2/3 of the 1billion worldwide who cannot read
- 19 Sub-Saharan African countries have female literacy rates below 30%
- Less than 50% of girls ages 6-11 are in school in these countries
- 500,000 women die yearly from pregnancy and childbirth complications
- The 2nd best way to eradicate disease and poverty is to educate women. The 1st is gender-equality.

The UTO ingathering reached its peak in the 1960's, with a value today of over \$9million. Since then it has flattened to just \$2.5million annually. What is our goal for the next triennium? To once again bring to every person the concept of "the little blue box" as both a prayer tool and a thankful offering, and have an annual UTO ingathering reaching \$10million or more.

UTO is a spiritual and financial partner in the mission work of The Episcopal Church, through every person in every pew. Why? Because Daily Thanks Improves Daily Life, for every member of the body of Christ. Thanksgiving, after all, is a word of action.

*Elaine d'Lys McClurkan,  
Province VII UTO Representative*

Learning computer skills, ETVTC, Jerusalem, 2007





## Still Working After 100 Years

UTO's mission to expand the circle of thankful people results in the redistribution of our thankful offerings as answered prayer to others, UTO Grants.

### Julia Emery Hall, Liberia

In 1904 UTO, through the Women's Auxiliary, provided \$3,500 and \$14,500 to the Episcopal Church of Liberia to build Emery Hall, a part of Bromley Mission, for the establishment of a boarding school to educate young girls. In November 2005, Emery Hall held a 100th anniversary celebration. Although deeply damaged in the horrific civil wars, Emery Hall

and Bromley Mission have continued their work of educating young girls. Today, Emery Hall boards and educates over 60 girls in grades K-12, at a cost of approximately \$500US per year. All of these girls are orphaned and come from the displacement camps resulting from the civil wars. Emery Hall has also expanded to now include underprivileged young boys from local communities as day-students.

At the 2007 Face To Face UTO weekend, Emily Benjamin, Diocesan UTO Coordinator for Maryland, spoke of Emery Hall. Her grandmother taught at Em-

ery Hall, and both Emily and her mother were students there. Emily received a copy of Emery Hall's 100th anniversary program through friends still in Liberia.

### Instituto Episcopal San Cristobal, Panama

The Instituto Episcopal San Cristobal, Rio Abajo, Panama City, Panama, started life at St. Francis Episcopal Church as a preschool. A 1968 UTO grant of \$110,000 purchased the current property, and San Cristobal has now grown to three buildings, and grades K-12. San Cristobal has

Please continue on page 7

## San Marcos, DR, continued from page 1

and the programs that can be provided has helped develop within the people a sense of solidarity with a much broader church beyond the borders of the DR. Just as with the sacrament celebrated each Sunday, these facilities demonstrate how the physical takes on a spiritual dimension in our lives.

San Marcos' dedication lasted over three hours and included a parade, with the San Marcos School Band and flag bearers, through

the central section of Haina, the blessing of the door, the altar, the pulpit, and the baptismal font. Retired priest and missionary Phillip Wheaton, who founded the San Marcos mission in the mid-1950's, was the principal preacher.

The 2005 UTO grant of \$80,000 covered approximately 65% of the cost of the new two-story building. Our goal is to complete the second floor parish hall, which will also serve as the assembly hall for the adja-

cent San Marcos School, by September 2009. San Marcos School, located next door, is the largest Episcopal school in the DR, with over 1,000 students, both girls and boys, in grades preK-12.

*Bob Stevens is Executive Director of the Dominican Development Group, and a DFMS missionary; he served in the DR in the mid-1990s.*



Emily Benjamin, speaking at the August, 2007 Face To Face

The Emery Hall 100th Anniversary program is available as a PDF under "Grant Stories" on the UTO website.

Emily is a 3rd generation Emery Hall alumna. There are no pictures from her time at Emery Hall, because all was left behind when her family fled Liberia during the civil wars.

"Standing-room only" at San Marcos' dedication, August 2007





## Not Your Average Sunday

The Rev. Dr. Sean A. Cox

With falling rain and plummeting temperature, I wondered how many people would come to church on a recent Sunday morning. Like every Sunday morning, I had been up early to begin the day with prayer, breakfast, and the trip to church. As usual, I thought about who might be there and prayed for guidance on what to say and how to say it. Like every Sunday morning, I checked the lectern and altar before vesting in an alb and stole, grabbing a cup of coffee, and making my way to the front door to greet before the service began, and was delighted to see people braving stormy weather to come to church. I did some last minute recruiting of readers and chalice bearers, listened to the prelude, and went to the front of the church for

announcements. It seemed so normal, like any Sunday morning, with just a few differences:

- Nearly the entire congregation came alone.
- Everyone wore combat boots.
- Beneath my alb and stole was a camouflage utility uniform.
- The clarinetist carried a machine gun.

This wasn't your typical Sunday morning; this was the "Liturgical Protestant" service at Enduring Faith Chapel at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. Communicants of Lutheran, Episcopal, Moravian, Methodist, and other churches gathered at the chapel in the heart of Operation Enduring Freedom.

We sang hymns and said prayers from the Armed Forces Hymnal, which contains a hybrid service combining the Lutheran Book of Worship and The Book of Common Prayer. My sermon was taken from the Gospel of Luke's account of the parable of the Prodigal Son: We're the younger son who left home, trying to find our way back. We're the older brother, doing our duty and resenting the hell out of people who

don't. We're the waiting father watching for our wayward children to return. Our "younger brother" voice wonders if there will be places for us to return. Our "older brother" voice detests irresponsibility and holds high expectations. Our "father's" voice demands we welcome one another as God waits for us.

Holy Eucharist was celebrated, closing prayers were said, and I extended my arms to bless the congregation that quickly dispersed. Some returned to duty, others headed home, and a few still can't disclose their destination. I shook hands afterwards and thanked them for their service. After the last person departed, I returned the alb and stole and walked out into the rain.

"This isn't an average Sunday," I decided as another jet took off from the nearby airstrip. In this place, there's never an average Sunday; each is extraordinary because of God's ability to create faith communities, even here. There's never an average Sunday in Afghanistan, because God's people risk

**Fr. Cox and an Afghan boy. Bagram, Afghanistan, May 2007**

**"We had humanitarian assistance missions at the Korean Army hospital on base, and distributed clothes and shoes to locals. In the background are Air Force medical personnel providing security and assistance for the mission, a Joint operation between our services."**



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## Wanted: A Few Good Women

### Lynn Headley, Province VIII UTO Representative

As part of the UTO Committee's visioning work we realized we need a few good women; women willing to embrace the intersections between their faith and their action and become UTO leaders in their diocese.

UTO has historically been in front of important issues that ultimately become the work of the larger church. Our historic mission of providing outreach support around the world is one of

the things that binds the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion together. Now more than ever the important work of UTO needs women of all ages and backgrounds, with the skills needed to help plan, grow, and share UTO's vision across the parishes in your diocese.

To do this, an effective network of communication and leadership is necessary. UTO provides this training at an energizing and moti-

vating weekend called Face To Face. This weekend will give you the tools to understand the why of UTO, and how to expand participation within your diocese.

If you or someone you know is one of these women, our next Face To Face weekend training is August 1-3, 2008, at Toddhall Conference Center in Columbia, IL.

Want more info? Email Lynn at [pirrung@earthlink.net](mailto:pirrung@earthlink.net).



## Not Average, continued from previous page

all to gather, praise, receive, bless, and be blessed.

If Sunday has become "average" for you, think again. Don't let the Lord's Day become just another

box to check; embrace the Lord's Day like it's your last on earth. Praise God with your entire being, love with your whole heart, and commit your life back to the Giver of life.

*Rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Bryan, TX, and a Lieutenant Commander, Chaplain Corps, US Navy Reserve, Fr. Cox wrote this article while serving on active duty in Afghanistan, 2007.*

## UTO's Vision Captures New Coordinator

Elizabeth Beach Hacking has been appointed the new UTO Coordinator. Commented Beach Hacking: "The whole idea of people in the US giving from sheer gratitude of the bountifulness of their life here, knowing profoundly what it can do in a village in Africa, just captured me and pulled my two passions together—working for the

church and the poorest of the poor among us."

Beach Hacking follows JoAnne Chapman, previous UTO Coordinator, who retired in September after six years service.

Prior to joining UTO, Beach Hacking completed S.T.M. and M.Div. degrees at General Theological

Seminary. She holds a B.S. in Finance and Marketing and an M.S. in International Education and Development Management. Beach Hacking has served as a congregational consultant in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, and has worked for the Peace Corps in international development.



Elizabeth Beach Hacking

Please continue on page 7



## From the UTO President—Regina Ratterree

First let me say a special thank you to Connie Segura, President of the United Thank Offering Committee during the past year. Due to health concerns Connie has resigned as president. Her commitment continues as she remains Province IX UTO Representative. We appreciate her service, talents, and leadership.

I am excited to move from Vice President to President as the Committee focuses its vision on significantly changing the lives of women and children because of Christ's love. In addition to domestic work, the Committee supports work that addresses the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) overseas, with special interests in achieving universal primary education for children and

promoting gender equality and empowering women. For 2008 our grant policy has expanded possibilities for dioceses in the United States to use one of their grant applications to apply for ministry and mission work that will be done in their official companion diocese. We need to increase participation in Blue Box offerings so there is more money to grant for the work to be done.

Pamela Stewart, Province II UTO Representative, has been elected as the new Vice President. Elizabeth Beach Hacking has been hired as the new UTO Coordinator following JoAnne Chapman's retirement in September. Patty Tourangeau, Member at Large, continues as the Finance Officer; Jan Goossens, Province V UTO Representative, is the newly elected member of the ECW/UTO Joint

Committee, working with Regina, Pam, and three ECW members to further work of the women of the church and make plans for the ECW Triennial Meeting 2009.

The twelve elected members of the United Thank Offering Committee are working hard to provide good inspirational materials, training for Diocesan UTO Coordinators, an updated website, effective granting that addresses compelling human need, and increased participation in offerings and thanksgivings. It takes a team to do the best work, so we ask that you share with us your creative ideas, your tried and true ways of getting the job done, your plans for introducing UTO to those who do not know about it, and also your needs for assistance. Together we can make a difference!



## UTO Travels Many Roads

Lilly Henderson, a lay pastor in the Utah region of Navajoland, stands with Bonnie Anderson, President of the House of Deputies, during a July 2007 visit in Navajoland. Shown in Canyon de Chelly, they are standing in front of a new Sub-

urban, purchased with a 2007 UTO grant. This heavy-duty vehicle will serve the Native-American population of Navajoland, where distances are great and roads are poor.

Picture courtesy of Richard Snyder.



## New UTO Coordinator, continued from page 5

She has lived and worked in seven different countries, including Kenya and the Philippines.

Referring to UTO's new vision, Beach Hacking said,

"What I'd really like to do is bring UTO and all its gifts to the glory of the 21st century and really embrace technology and resources and skills that are exten-

sively available in the Episcopal Church."

## 100 Years, continued from page 3

award winning music and sports programs, and is entirely self sufficient. Each graduate is proficient in Spanish, English and French.

### ETVTC, Jerusalem

A 2002 UTO Grant of \$20,000 provided equipment for the Technology Education department of the Episcopal Technological & Vocational Training

Center in Ramallah, in the West Bank, the Diocese of Jerusalem. In the five years since its founding, ETVTC has grown to over 380 students, grades 7-10, both girls and boys, Christian and Muslim. ETVTC provides these Palestinian youth with vocational training and communication skills. Over 75% of ETVTC's graduates continue to institutes of higher education

### Doors of Hope, Diocese of Maryland

Agape Project, Inc. received a 2007 UTO grant of \$15,000, providing funding for a professional counselor for their transitional services program, Doors of Hope. A bridge for single mothers and their children between a variety of social services, Doors of Hope focuses on education and health related services.



**LtoR: Margaret Schul, UTO Coordinator, Easton; Leigh Sandifer, Executive Director, Agape Project, Inc.; The Rt. Rev. James J. Shand, Bishop of Easton; Pamela Russell, Agape Project, Inc.**

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Please let your parish and mission UTO and Outreach contacts know that The Daily Thanks & the UTO Vision Statement are available online as color PDFs:

- The Daily Thanks— under “UTO Resources”, then “The Daily Thanks”
  - The UTO Vision Statement— under “UTO Resources”
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**San Marcos' Dedication, Haina, Dominican Republic**

**“The Mass began with a starched color guard and band of young people from the school, who lead the altar party out into the sunny streets of Haina for a joyous parade, and processed right up to the door of the church.”, The Rev. Cynthia H. Montooth, ObJN.**