



STIR UP THE  
SPIRIT!  
¡CELEBREMOS!

# Triennial Today

Thursday July 2, 2015

48th Triennial Meeting of the Episcopal Church Women

Salt Lake City, Utah

## The Closing Ceremony Meditation



Can you believe we have come to this last day? Think back to the months — even years — in preparing for this 48<sup>th</sup> Triennial Meeting — now it is becoming history and a new group of officers will now lead the United Thank Offering Board and the National Episcopal Church Women’s Board. From the women who have served before, to the women who have been elected to serve now, and to all the women in the future who will take on these responsibilities—may we offer our thanks. I believe that the Emery Sisters are beaming in gratitude and delight for all that has been done and will be done through the women of The Episcopal Church.

In our Opening Ceremony we began with Paul talking about the fruits of the Spirit and I have attempted to bring these into our focus these last days: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, [faithfulness,] generosity, and gentleness. The last fruit of the Spirit Paul mentioned was self-control. This is what I am going to concentrate in this closing meditation.

I’m sorry — Paul? Come on! Self-control? Is this what we women really need to hear in the 21<sup>st</sup> century at a Triennial Gathering that calls us to “Stir up the Spirit! Celebremos!”? As on a few other occasions,

my Sisters, I am going to have to differ with a letter from Paul.

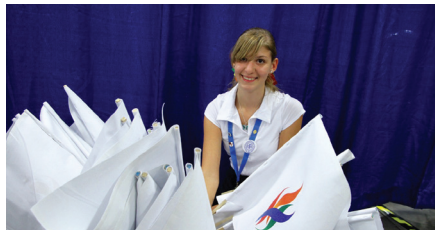
Now, before you may think I am too harsh, I will admit there are times when a discipline of “self-control” is necessary. As we all leave Salt Lake City, Utah to return to our homes, let’s look at this.

Self-control—if it refers to taking charge of our lives—yes! If this means to act in times of emergency with direction and life-saving skills—absolutely yes! If this means to keep silent when we as women need to take action in our communities—I have to disagree and say NO!

For centuries we women have been asked to use self-control on almost every level. This has a LONG history, my Sisters!! BUT, Jesus sought to change this when he healed, restored, connected with, and saw into the eyes, hearts and minds of the women of His day. Why, “in the beginning” says the writer of Genesis, we were created “in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.” (Gen. 1:27) God has given us gifts to do our very best in the circumstances we encounter in this world. Some may seem to have it easier than the others, but we are beloved and equal in God’s eyes—that is something we must always remember!

There are women and girls, men and boys in our society that desperately need our help. There are people who never experience a kind look, a recognition of who they are, and the love that they require. Some are homeless and living on the streets; some are barely hanging on to their homes and their dignity; some seem to have it all but are living an empty life. We are called to spread the Good News wherever we are. We have been given the Baptismal Covenant that has become a wonderful mantra for us:

- Follow the apostles’ teachings and fellowship, remembering there were women who were a part of this, such as Mary Magdalene, the apostle to the apostles, Bessie and Sara Delaney, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Verna Dozier among others. Persevere in resisting evil—God knows there are outbreaks everywhere and we must stand up to this—and whenever we fall into sin—feel our brokenness when we are out of sorts in our relationship with God, our neighbor and ourselves—turn around, embrace and return to the Lord.
- Proclaim by word and example—live out our daily actions and prayers in a visible way—the Good News of God in Christ.
- Seek and serve Christ in all persons—no matter where they come from, what they are doing—and love our neighbors as ourselves.



# In Their Own Words

## How did you first feel about coming to Triennial?

I was excited when I first found out. I was excited to find out what ECW was really like because I wasn't even sure what it really was.

## Do you have that God given spirit within you to be ready to share with your other Sisters in Christ?

I think I do because I love to spread the word about GFS and to talk about one of my greatest passions. I've been involved for so long that it is a way of life for me to live by the motto, "Bear One Another's Burdens."

## Why is it important to attend such an event?

It is important to get the word out at this event because I want GFS to grow throughout the country. Triennial is a good place to inform fellow Episcopalians about our program.

## What did you contribute to the event? I informed many people who did not know about GFS. I was surprised how many people did not know about GFS since it is such a big part of my life.

I helped the ECW leaders with some tasks such as making the flags for the race, holding the crosses for Bishop Schori, passing out programs at the Distinguished Women's Luncheon and counting the votes for the election. I spoke at the workshop about my experiences in GFS.

## How has the experience been so far?



I thought it was a nice experience. I was happy to be here and meet new people and understand more about the ECW. I really learned about more organizations that I didn't know about before.

For example, I learned about the Episcopal Relief and Development organization and the United Thank Offering.

*Amber is going to be a junior at Penn College of Technology in the Fall. She has been a member of the St. Mary's, Clementon, NJ branch of GFS for 15 years. She has attended two GFS World Councils, in Wales and Ireland, as well as many GFS National Assemblies.*

*She has worked at the GFS Holiday House in Cape May, NJ, as a waitress, where she helped serve meals and helped with cleaning. GFS is an important part of Amber's life and she has dreams of working on the GFS-USA board to incorporate her ideas for improving and updating GFS.*

Continued from Page 1

- Strive ALWAYS for justice and peace among all people—do what we can to participate in some way to help make this happen; march, demonstrate, write letters to the newspaper, and, especially teach our young ones the importance and necessity of this—and ALWAYS respect the dignity of every human being—whether we like the person or not, whether we know the person or not, this is what Jesus Christ wants us to do.

Our self-control should only come into existence if we try and commit harm, violence, or hatred upon people. All the other fruits of the Spirit, if we open our hearts and minds, will help us with this part. All the other fruits of the Spirit will allow us to take action on the wrongs, the hurts, the injustices we see in our communities. Our inner voices, given by the Love of God, need to be heard, not controlled.

I want to take this moment to thank the wonderful and incredible women and sisters of the National ECW Board for this amazing experience. Thank you, Matt, for sharing with us your God-touched gift of music. Thank you all, you wonderful women of our great church for your kindness in receiving me!

So, now, I want you to stand up and if you can't stand, stand up in your hearts! Keep your eyes wide open. Raise your hearts, minds and spirit up to the Lord, and repeat after me:

HERE I AM, LORD.  
IT IS I, LORD.  
LET ME BE  
THE VOICE  
FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NO VOICE.  
LET ME BE  
THE LOVING HEART  
FOR THOSE WHO ARE ALONE.  
LET ME BE THE HANDS  
FOR THOSE WHO NEED MY HELP.  
LET ME BE  
THE PRAYER  
FOR THOSE WHO NEED YOUR HELP.  
ALL THIS I OFFER TO YOU, O LORD  
LET ME CONTINUE —  
LET US CONTINUE  
TO STIR UP THE SPIRIT  
CELEBREMOS!  
AMEN.

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**Photos and Digital Downloads of the Episcopal Church Women 2015 Triennial Meeting may be viewed and ordered at:**  
[www.dlugophoto.zenfolio.com/ecw](http://www.dlugophoto.zenfolio.com/ecw)

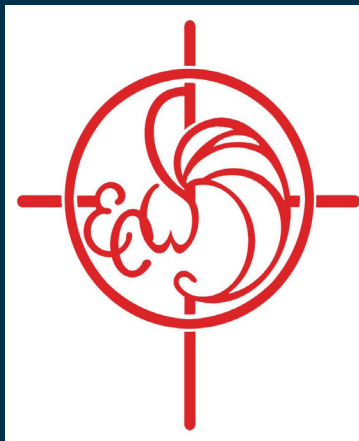
**Images will be edited and uploaded to this site from the meeting as quickly as possible.**





*Thank you, ECW, for your generous hearts and gracious spirits! A special thank you to all who participated in the UBUNTU Spirit Choir and Jazz Mass-- what an uplifting and memorable experience! Please feel free to contact me personally if you're interested in bringing the New Orleans Jazz Revival experience to your church, province, or diocese; purchasing any CDs (I'd be happy to sign them for you and they make great gifts!); or receiving my regular music newsletter via email. I look forward to keeping in touch with you, and thank you again for helping me stir up the Spirit.*

*Peace and blessings,  
Matt Lemmler*



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ecwnational.org