

ECW Province VIII – UTO Annual Report – 2022

Dearest Sisters,

The United Thanks Offering (UTO) invites every Episcopalian to **NOTICE** the good things that happen each day, **GIVE** thanks to God for your blessings, **MAKE** an offering for each blessing and, through annual UTO grants, your blessing become **BLESSINGS** for others throughout the USA and the wider world.

During the virtual Triennial Ingathering Ceremony at the 80th General Convention, UTO collected \$4.15 million (3-yr total). The amount raised from Province VIII lies in the middle of the range of all the provinces. However UTO Ingathering amounts have been lower during the covid years than in the past, and our goal for the near future is raise it back up and get more parishes participating in annual (Nov) or bi-annual (Nov & May) UTO Ingatherings. As briefly described below, UTO has created some excellent materials to help us do just that. See the **UTO website**, <https://unitedthankoffering.com> for resources and more details, and follow their Facebook page at <https://facebook.com/UnitedThankOffering> for up-to-date news and highlights from the grants.

This October, for the third year in a row, UTO is sponsoring the *EpisGoPal Race*, which encourages parishes to form teams to run/walk for pledges. The money raised can be donated to UTO, Episcopal Migration Ministries or both. The money donated to UTO will go to the annual Ingathering, where every penny goes to fund UTO grants, and the money donated to Episcopal Migration Ministries will go to their *Neighbor to Neighbor* program, which was funded by a previous UTO grant.

The UTO website has a wide variety of **UTO resources** to help parishes run an Ingathering. Its very easy to go to the website and order UTO blue boxes and envelopes for your parish, which are free of charge and only require a modest payment to cover postage. The UTO materials are printed by SHIMA in Navajoland, and thus you also bless that community when your order. As well as the traditional blue boxes, you can order color-your-own UTO boxes that will delight the artist in both children and adults. You can download the November Gratitude Challenge 2022 from the UTO website, which give you material that parishes can use in their weekly Sunday bulletin or newsletter or daily on the church's social media page that gives people short meditations on concrete things to be grateful for, because UTO is not only about raising funds for grants but igniting in each of us a passion for being conscious of, and grateful for, the many blessings we experience in our daily lives. The UTO website also contains a number of excellent resources to help you highlight gratitude in your parish's liturgy, choir, Sunday School lessons, etc. So go the website, take a moment to explore, and you might find something perfect for your parish.

In 2022, **UTO grants** focused on "Care of Creation", turning love into action by caring for God's creation to protect the most vulnerable, who bear the largest burden from pollution and climate change. A total of \$1.05 million dollars was given in grants for programs in the USA and throughout the wider world. Province VIII and the Diocese of California were blessed with a UTO grant. Jubilee Church Farm in Brentwood, CA, (located between San Francisco and Stockton) received a \$53,888 grant for their mission of creating the center of an affordable housing community built on diocesan land. It will serve as a place where people can reconnect with the land and their neighbors through worship, work and play.

UTO grant applications for 2023 are now open for submission. This year the focus of the grants will be on the worldwide incarceration crisis. Applications from the Anglican Communion will be due Jan 6,

2023 and applications from the Episcopal Church will be due Mar 6, 2023. See the UTO website for the link to the application, instructions, and announcements of webinars that will be held to help answer applicant's questions and provide additional information.

Please help us pass the word about UTO on to the parishes in your diocese so that we can multiply the blessings we give out in UTO grants. If you have questions about UTO, please contact either one of us at the email addresses listed below, and we would be delighted to help.

Yours in Christ,

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