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# Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism

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## THE VISION AND THE IMPERATIVE

The focus of our work as the Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism is stated immediately because of its urgency and potential for the Episcopal Church.

### **20/20: A CLEAR VISION: A Domestic Mission Imperative for the Episcopal Church**

Called to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, we will, with God's help, double our baptized membership by the year 2020. We will do this through:

- Creative strategies of evangelism
- Prayer and spiritual development.
- Recruiting and equipping innovative leaders
- Strengthening congregational life

*We invite all members and communities of the Episcopal Church to embrace this Domestic Mission Imperative. We issue this challenge so that we may be a healthy, dynamic, inviting church, reflective of the diversity of our society, deeply rooted in faith and the*

*gospel, so that we live out our baptismal promise to be disciples who make disciples of Jesus Christ.*

This Standing Commission believes that this Domestic Mission Imperative is achievable and that its elements are fundamental to the mission effectiveness of the church. The remainder of this report tells how the Commission came to this imperative, why the Episcopal Church is called to it, how we can achieve it, and where we believe this imperative leads us.

The Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism was newly formed by the 1997 General Convention. Its existence stems from the desire of that Convention to have the structure of the church more clearly reflect the mission of the church. Its creation evidences the necessity for the Episcopal Church to focus creatively and boldly on domestic mission and evangelism. The Commission was charged to report on the present context of the church's domestic mission, strategies of evangelism, and the status of congregational life, and to prepare policies relating to the same. Our work included historical reflection, reading of the present context, and conversation with people throughout the church, and the development of a prayerful vision for the future. The Commission continues to envision the future of mission and evangelism in the Episcopal Church. The result is the Domestic Mission Imperative and its call to the Episcopal Church.

### ***Reading the Present Realities of Domestic Mission: "What it looks like now."***

The Standing Commission used several means to read the present context of the Episcopal Church and the world that we serve. These included: meetings throughout the country; conference participation ["Congregations in Ministry: the Next 8 Years," St. Louis and "A Clear Vision of One Church," Diocese of Texas, 1998 and 1999]; "The Episcopal Network for Evangelism" homepage; considering recent research and publications in domestic mission, such as the Episcopal Church Foundation's "Zacchaeus Project."

We became aware of the following realities of our present context, strategies of evangelism, and status of congregational life:

- There is deep spiritual hunger and persistent spiritual seeking present in the people of our society.
- The society in which we serve continues to change rapidly and dramatically.
- There is a general questioning of religious structures. Traditional assumptions regarding American religious life do not hold true in our increasingly multi-cultural society.
- Many church members experience vitality in their local congregations but question institutions and structures beyond their congregational experience.
- We are becoming a more diverse church, but we do not yet reflect the diversity of our culture.
- North America is recognized as a significant mission field requiring the focused attention of the church. There is a growing body of research and reflection focused on domestic mission.
- New modes and strategies of evangelism are necessary if the church is going to be effective in our present context.

- There is great potential for evangelism among those who are unchurched/unreached.
- The church must find ways of recruiting and training leaders who can continue to read the reality of our changing context.
- Many dioceses, national church entities, and seminaries are seeking to be resources to congregations, and to support their effectiveness in evangelism, service, and mission.
- More than 40 Episcopal dioceses are strategizing and planning for congregational development and vitality and church planting.
- A growing community of dioceses is collaborating for evangelism in organized, comprehensive, and enthusiastic ways.
- There are new attempts to reach out to groups within society with whom the Episcopal Church has not historically been effective, especially people of color and young adults.
- There is a renewed interest in the planting and formation of new congregations in many sectors of the Episcopal Church.
- There is increasing desire to grow in faith, mission, and membership throughout the Episcopal Church.

Reading these realities convinces us that there is a readiness, indeed a sense of urgency, for the creation of new strategies for domestic mission and evangelism. These realities are the foundation from which we developed the Domestic Mission Imperative. This imperative is a vision and approach for our effective mission as we begin the next millennium.

***The Domestic Mission Imperative: “What must we do?”***

The Domestic Mission Imperative calls the church to grow. The vision at the heart of the Domestic Mission Imperative is one of life-giving mission for the church. We envision:

- A church taking new directions in mission and evangelism
- A church celebrating and enhancing the life and vitality of its local congregations
- A church realizing the faithful announcement of the Good News of God’s love and actively inviting others into that love.

The Commission intentionally proposes a vision and imperative that has growth at its very core. Growth gives a weight of reality to the call and stretches the church to achieve an actual goal. The vision of “doubling the baptized membership of the Episcopal Church” by the year 2020 can be achieved. The efforts of many dioceses and congregations, renewed focus on congregational life and evangelism by the national church and other institutions, the vitality of many congregations within the church, and the anticipated growth of the American population makes this goal achievable.

The goal of growth in mission is essential to the Episcopal Church as one means of focusing our attention on primary matters of mission. To grow the Episcopal Church during the next two decades will bring energy and commitment to the life of our church. It will bring commonality of purpose and cohesiveness of action to our efforts.

The vision and imperative for growth of the Episcopal Church are not fantasy, but the growth will not happen without focus on critical areas of the church's mission. Work has already begun in various quarters. However, more work and effort are required for the Episcopal Church to be effective in domestic mission and evangelism. We believe that there are four key areas that are essential for the growth and mission of the church:

### **Creative Strategies for Evangelism**

We observe growing interest and effectiveness in evangelism in the Episcopal Church. Congregations are implementing intentional strategies of evangelism and hospitality, inviting people into relationship with God and into the life of the church. Dioceses are setting new goals and providing new resources for evangelism. Seminaries are focusing on ministries of evangelism.

Yet, there is a gap. The Episcopal Church must be much more active and creative in evangelism. We have been reticent to invite people with whom we are less familiar or who do not fit the "typical Episcopalian" profile. Evangelism and welcome for young adults, singles, various minority groups, and youth have been insufficient and at times half-hearted and ineffectual.

The Domestic Mission Imperative calls the Episcopal Church to focus renewed energy on effective strategies for evangelism. It affirms current initiatives in the church, and resources developing in, and being shared among, local faith communities. It calls for greater consistency of development, provision, and distribution of resources.

Each congregation of the church is called to announce the Good News of the love of God and invite people into that love and into the community of faith. This dimension of the imperative calls the local congregation to this primary work. How is invitation and incorporation of people a part of the ministry of the local congregation? How are congregational members being equipped to witness to the gospel in their own everyday settings? Is the gospel proclaimed with vitality and hope in the congregation? How many unchurched/unreached people have been reached? How is the transformation of lives measured?

### **Prayer and Spiritual Development**

We observe real spiritual hunger in our society. We also observe growing spiritual awareness in the life of the Episcopal Church and our people. There is general awareness of the role of the church in human spiritual development. Congregations and institutions are developing models of spiritual practice and enrichment. New forms of prayer are being tried, and ancient forms rediscovered. Several organizations for spiritual renewal and prayer already exist within the Episcopal Church: such as monastic communities, retreat centers, Cursillo, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, Daughters of the King, and the Brotherhood of St. Andrew among them.

Yet, there is a gap. Much prayer and spiritual development is seen as personal and private, isolating people from each other instead of contributing to their relationships with others. We are an action-oriented church where program proliferates in place of spiritual development. We resist new forms of prayer and worship that intersect more directly with the lives and spirits of contemporary people. Much of our worship is historically "culturally specific" with little attention to forms that reach different cultures and honor specific needs and contributions.

The Domestic Mission Imperative affirms the centrality of prayer for the effective mission of the church. It calls for focus on development of spiritual practices and resources in local congregations. The imperative envisions new resources of prayer that reflect the rich multitude of cultures in our church and society. It envisions worship and spiritual development as primary means of evangelism. The imperative for growth in baptized members is at its heart an imperative for growth in prayer and spirit.

The mission of the church is built on the solid foundation of prayer and spiritual life. This dimension of the imperative asks how the local congregation is developing its own climate and practices of worship, prayer, and spiritual life. Is there attention to the vitality of prayer and worship in the congregation, including the use of traditional forms and new forms that speak in new ways about the Spirit of God? Does the congregation encourage members to develop their own practices of prayer and spiritual life? Is there a climate of reverence and spiritual depth that invites members and newcomers into the heart of God? Is more time spent in prayer? How is the prayer life of the congregation measured?

### **Recruiting and Equipping Effective Leaders**

Leadership is essential to the mission and growth of the church. The St. Louis Conference, Zacchaeus Project, and our observations of the present context demonstrate that interest in leadership grows daily in the church. The good news for the Episcopal Church is that outstanding organizations affiliated with the church are focusing on equipping innovative and capable leaders: Indigenous leadership initiatives in Minnesota, The Clergy Leadership Project of Trinity Parish (Wall Street), the Church Pension Fund, The Cornerstone Project, Trustee Leadership Development, the Seabury Institute, the Alban Institute, Province VI Life University for Teenagers, and Acts 29 Leadership Training in Seminaries.

Yet, there is a gap. The vast majority of Episcopal clergy are over 50 years of age, and the number of young people entering ordained leadership is dangerously low. The leadership organizations of the church do not coordinate their resources for effective ministry. Inadequate resources are directed to equipping lay leadership. Seminaries do not have the financial resources to bring their expertise in leadership formation to bear widely in the church.

The Domestic Mission Imperative recognizes that leadership is essential for the church's growth in mission. It calls the church to recruit and equip creative and able leaders and to consolidate resources and organizations for leadership development and education. The imperative requires the church to make leadership education available in dioceses and congregations throughout the Episcopal Church.

Leadership is utterly essential to the effective mission of each congregation. This dimension of the imperative asks how the local congregation is developing and equipping leaders. Are vision and entrepreneurial action encouraged? Is there a plan to develop clergy and vestry leadership? Are there opportunities for congregational members to discover their own gifts for leadership and to develop those gifts? How is transformation of people for leadership accomplished in the congregation? Who in your congregation has been raised up for leadership, lay or ordained?

### **Strengthening Congregational Life**

The “mainline” Christian context is one of congregational focus and awareness. The Episcopal Church is no exception. The Zacchaeus Project reports that Episcopalians generally find energy and hope in their congregational life. In the past decade, several programs for congregational development began within the Episcopal Church: the Congregational Development Institute, The Episcopal Church Building Fund, the Alban Institute, and the Seabury Institute. Several dioceses, especially Alaska, Maryland, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Carolina, Northern Michigan, Texas, Virginia, Washington, D. C., and Western Massachusetts, are developing structures for congregational development. There is focus and vitality for congregations and their ministries.

Yet, there is a gap. Congregational focus can degenerate to suspicion and hostility toward other dimensions of church life. Organizations working in congregational development often do not communicate with each other. Dioceses committed to congregational development are only now beginning to collaborate. Most organizations focusing on congregational development are self-funded, with little assistance from national church structures. The Episcopal Church needs to hasten the transition from “lower unit serving the higher unit” to “higher unit serving the lower unit.”

The Domestic Mission Imperative recognizes the essential and central reality of congregational development and vitality for the life of the Episcopal Church. It calls the church to commit energy and finances to resource local congregations. It calls the church to identify and encourage congregations taking innovative and unique steps for congregational development. The imperative seeks communication and collaboration among dioceses and organizations that are providing resources and learning for congregational development. Vital congregations are fundamental to the goal of growing the church.

Local congregations and their diocesan leaders need to be informed and intentional about their own vitality and development. This dimension of the imperative asks how the congregation focuses on the dynamics and strategies of its own congregational life and ministry. Is it connected with the congregational development resources within the Episcopal Church? Do congregational leaders understand the dynamics of size and life cycle as means of planning the mission of the congregation? Is there an ongoing planning and evaluation process for congregational mission? Does your congregation desire growth and action? Is the congregation working to understand its history, articulate its mission, and review its context? Are you living in the reality of the present while planning for your future?

All four of these areas are essential for the effective mission and growth of the church. We call for structures that provide greater commitment of resources in these areas. We call for communication and collaboration among entities that focus on these areas. Our domestic mission will be realized through our commitment, in faith, to grow. Growth will be supported by effective and creative strategies for evangelism, equipping of leaders, strong congregational life, and deep prayer and spiritual development. The result, within God’s grace and blessing, will be a church that is healthy, dynamic, inviting, and deeply rooted in faith and the gospel.

***The Present Work of the Local Congregation***

The Domestic Mission Imperative raises specific issues for the local congregation in each of the four key areas described in the imperative. The Domestic Mission Imperative is a vision that makes maximum use of national, regional, institutional, and local assets for mission. It has a very real and immediate relationship to the ministry of local congregations and contains important elements for the work of local congregations in the present moment.

In a primary way, it calls upon each local congregation to ask questions about its own vision for the future. Does the congregation image itself engaged in creative, faithful, and effective mission? Is the congregation willing to risk and to grow in the gospel and in mission and ministry? Does the local congregation desire [hope for] a future of growth and action? Is the congregation doing its work of understanding its history, articulating its mission, reviewing its context, and planning for its future? Are diocesan leaders supporting their congregations in these areas?

***A Biblical and Theological Foundation for the Domestic Mission Imperative: "Why?"***

The Mission Imperative emerges from our reading of Scripture, Tradition, and Reason. God's people have been commissioned and must be equipped to undertake a mission of restoration, reconciliation, and renewal. Holy Scripture tells a powerful story of mission as the work of the People of God. The Hebrew Scriptures describe a people who have been created for the Work of God in the world, a people who have been empowered by God's Word and Spirit to be a beacon and light of the purposes of God within the world. The New Testament relates the mission journey of Jesus the Messiah and of the early Christian community. The message is clear and direct. The church has been called to proclaim the gospel—that is, to announce the reign and rule of God coming near in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The church has been equipped through the gift of the Holy Spirit to continue that mission, to proclaim the gospel, and to invite people into the love of God.

The mission of the church has universality, as it is mission to the whole world. Simultaneously our mission has particularity, expressed in local communities of faith, in numerous and varied times and places. In Anglicanism, mission has always been focused on the local as well as the universal. A strong sense of domestic mission emerged early in the Episcopal Church, reflected in the "Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society" as the identity of this church, and in creative domestic mission undertaken by the Episcopal Church in the nineteenth century. The present Domestic Mission Imperative is rooted in the tradition of domestic mission that energized the Episcopal Church throughout our history.

North American Christianity is experiencing renewed theological vitality as well as a practical sense of domestic mission. God calls us to mission: to announce God's Reign and Rule; to invite people to restoration and reconciliation in the love of God; to create lively and devoted communities of faith in the localities and context of North America. The Book of Common Prayer defines our mission in this way: "The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." (BCP, p. 855.) Restoration is the work of the church -- it is its mission and its evangelical task.

The Domestic Mission Imperative is a manifestation of both our tradition and present call to mission and evangelism for the Episcopal Church. Its goals are effective mission



and inspired evangelism. Its primary objective is continued transformation of the church: growth in faith, servanthood, and membership. It contains the vision of creative and faithful local communities of faith joined together and served by other units and entities of the church. The ingredients for effectiveness are found within the tradition of faith and mission through the centuries: inspired proclamation and evangelism, strong congregations, able and dedicated leaders, and vitality in spiritual practice and life. The Domestic Mission Imperative is a visible sign of the call to conversion and renewal of life expressed in our baptism.

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) commands us to “Go,” rather than wait. We are to “make disciples of all nations,” embracing change as we carry the gospel. St. Paul gave us a pattern of incarnating the gospel in particular, concrete communities, no two of them exactly alike, yet tied together by sacrament (“baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”) and word (“teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”)

### **Why Us? Why Now?**

The Decade of Evangelism brought an end to the sharp decline in the Episcopal Church. From a peak of 3.4 million members in 1965, we lost almost a million members by the early nineteen nineties. Between 1993 and 1997 we experienced a 2.4% increase in average Sunday attendance. Now is the time to build on this beginning of a turn around.

Now is the moment for the Episcopal Church to focus on domestic mission and evangelism. As leaders, we have the responsibility to understand present realities, ask hard questions, and prepare an inspired vision for the future. It is the role and responsibility of General Convention to offer leadership to the church for its mission. This is our opportunity to chart a course for the future that will involve growth and effective mission. The General Convention must set priorities, structures, and vision for mission.

It is the belief of the Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism that this is the *kairos*, the essential and vibrant time, for the Episcopal Church to define and embrace an imperative for mission and evangelism. We live in a pluralistic culture which actively questions and challenges structures, ideas, and information. This culture is grounded in change, and actively seeks to be more inclusive. As Anglicans, we have a particular way of incarnating the gospel that speaks clearly to this culture. Our ethos is one of challenge and question, as we move toward the *Via Media*. We hold together a wide variety of piety and belief, a foundational strength in openness to diversity in many forms. Yet our common liturgy has history, beauty, and depth, providing a place of rootedness in the midst of change.

Our report describes the impetus, resources, and interests that coincide at this present moment, calling us to embark on a journey in mission and evangelism. The Episcopal Church possesses the gifts to engage this imperative. Our gifts connect with the necessity and readiness in our culture for our domestic mission. The imperative is rooted in the gospel’s call to mission and to announcement of the gospel. Now is the time for the Episcopal Church to move forward in mission.



***How the Domestic Mission Imperative Can Be Accomplished: “What we can do today.”***

This vision of growth in the Episcopal Church is achievable. Growth is a matter of using the gifts that God has given us for mission. The resources and ingredients for success exist within the church. Some of our gifts are institutional. Some are financial. Some are strategic. All of our gifts flow from the primary gift of the Good News of God’s love given freely and abundantly to humankind.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution A033 “20/20: A Clear Vision”**

- 1           *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 73rd General  
2 Convention adopt the following domestic mission imperative:  
3           Called to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, we  
4 will, with God’s help, double our baptized membership by the year 2020. We will  
5 do this through:
- 6       • Creative strategies for evangelism
  - 7       • Prayer and spiritual development
  - 8       • Recruiting and equipping innovative leaders
  - 9       • Strengthening congregational life
- 10           We invite all members and communities of the Episcopal Church to embrace  
11 this Domestic Mission Imperative. We issue this challenge so that we may be  
12 a healthy, dynamic, inviting church, reflective of the diversity of our society,  
13 deeply rooted in faith and the gospel, so that we live out our baptismal promise  
14 to be disciples who make disciples of Jesus Christ.

**Explanation**

The Domestic Mission Imperative is an invitation to become more fully those who are sent. (Jn 20:21.) All ministers, lay and ordained, are called to “represent Christ and his church,” and to “work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom of God.” (BCP 355-6.) Evangelism, leadership, and congregational development are skills that can be learned and practiced.

**Resolution A034 Rebuilding the Church**

- 1           *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That to achieve the goal of  
2 doubling the baptized membership of the Episcopal Church by the year 2020,  
3 the Executive Council invest in diocesan and congregational mission and evan-  
4 gelism with 10% of the aggregate income of the Domestic and Foreign Mission-  
5 ary Society derived from diocesan support and investment income. Funds will be  
6 dispersed equally to the Provinces. This funding shall be employed by the Synod  
7 of each Province to create a provincial mission and evangelism incubation center  
8 that will provide for initiatives in:
- 9       • Creative strategies for evangelism;
  - 10       • Prayer and spiritual development;
  - 11       • Recruiting and equipping innovative leaders;
  - 12       • Strengthening congregational life.

## DOMESTIC MISSION AND EVANGELISM

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- 13 Priority will be given to proposals that focus on people who were born after  
14 1964 and/or are people of color. The center will also foster networking, com-  
15 munication, and training for evangelism within the Province. The Synod of each  
16 Province will determine its own goals in accordance with the four purposes con-  
17 tained in this resolution. The Executive Council of the Domestic and Foreign  
18 Missionary Society will evaluate each Provincial center in terms of progress  
19 toward the achievement of its goals according to the following questions:
- 20 • Creative strategies for evangelism, to be evaluated by asking, “What is the  
21 rate of growth in membership and average Sunday attendance?”
  - 22 • Prayer and spiritual development, to be evaluated by asking, “Is more time  
23 spent in prayer?”
  - 24 • Recruiting and equipping innovative leaders, to be evaluated by asking,  
25 “Will our leadership ethnically, racially, and in age profile look like the  
26 national population in 2020?”
  - 27 • Strengthening congregational life, to be evaluated by asking, “Is there more  
28 ministry and mission?”
- 29 This evaluation will be the basis for each subsequent triennium’s funding.

### Explanation

In the Parable of the Talents, Jesus taught that accountability is part of Christianity. This resolution makes possible action towards restoring “all people to unity with God and each other in Christ,” (BCP 855) and implements mechanisms for accountability.

### Resolution A035 Recruiting Leadership for the New Church

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Executive Council  
2 assure funding of \$500,000 annually in matching funds to parishes and dioceses  
3 in each year of the 2001-2003 Triennium to be used for:
- 4 • Recruiting, educating, and training evangelists and church planters who  
5 were born after 1964 and/or are people of color;
  - 6 • Training of lay and ordained leaders in second language skills and cross-  
7 cultural sensitivity;
- 8 and be it further
- 9 *Resolved*, That these matching funds be awarded and monitored by a com-  
10 mittee of the provincial field officers and the nine provincial presidents.

### Explanation

By 2020, 70% of present clergy will be eligible for retirement. The average age of graduating seminarians is 45, and these new leaders will be 65 in 2020. Currently there are only 355 clergy under the age of 35 serving in the Episcopal Church. The majority of clergy in the Episcopal Church are non-Hispanic whites. The Census Bureau mid-level forecasts indicate that the non-Hispanic white population will decrease from 72% of the population in 1999, to 53% of the population by 2050. During this same period the Hispanic population will increase from 12% to 24%, the African-American population will increase from 13% to 15%, the Asian and Pacific Islander population will increase from 4% to 9%, and

the foreign-born population will increase from 10% to 13%. This resolution specifically addresses the need for clergy and lay leadership equipped to serve the Episcopal Church in 2020.

**Resolution A036 Creation of New Fund for Ministry and Mission**

1           *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That this 73<sup>rd</sup> General Con-  
2           vention approve creation of “The Alleluia Fund—Build my Church” proposed  
3           by the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development as follows:

4           “*The Alleluia Fund—Build My Church*” is a new initiative in planning,  
5           giving, and spiritual transformation throughout the dioceses of the Episcopal  
6           Church, centered in the Easter season.

7           The national Office of Stewardship will provide leadership for this initia-  
8           tive. By September 1, 2001, the office will provide materials and resources to  
9           each diocese to assist the diocese with the visioning process and with the recep-  
10          tion of the offerings. These materials shall be grounded in the teaching of Chris-  
11          tian stewardship, mission, and in the meaning of the Easter season.

12          Using the materials provided, each diocese will identify mission possibili-  
13          ties that are not presently funded, but which, if funded, would assist with:

- 14          • New church development
- 15          • Revitalization of existing congregations
- 16          • Reaching children and youth
- 17          • Ministering to those in need

18          During the Season of Epiphany 2002, each diocese will announce and pub-  
19          licize the goals that have been identified and commit to complete those goals as  
20          money is provided. At the same time, the diocese will announce the creation of  
21          “*The Alleluia Fund – Build My Church*” to be the recipient of offerings received  
22          during the Great Fifty Days of Easter and presented on the Day of Pentecost  
23          2002. This fund shall continue annually for a period of ten years throughout the  
24          dioceses of this church; and be it further

25          *Resolved*, That \$100,000.00 per year during the next triennium is appropri-  
26          ated through the Office of Stewardship to provide staff leadership and materials  
27          for this fund.

**Explanation**

[See also the report of the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development.]  
The Alleluia Fund is a new stewardship initiative designed to invite Episcopalians to offer special gifts during the Easter season for new mission opportunities envisioned by our dioceses. It is a response to God’s call to build the church: by providing new congregations, the revitalization of existing congregations, reaching children and youth, and ministry with those in need. The Alleluia Fund will be supported by leadership and materials from stewardship and will be administered by each individual diocese.

**Resolution A037 Expand Ministry to Singles**

- 1        *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That \$50,000 per year be  
2 provided for planning, communications, travel, and training for diocesan and  
3 parish personnel in singles ministry and evangelization, to be administered by  
4 the Church Center Evangelism Office; and be it further  
5        *Resolved*, That seed money of \$20,000 be provided in each 2001, 2002,  
6 2003, and 2004 to expand regional conferences for singles such as Solo Flight,  
7 administered by the Church Center Evangelism Office; and be it further  
8        *Resolved*, That \$12,000 per year be provided over the 2001-2003 triennium  
9 to the Church Center Evangelism Office for development, publication, and print  
10 and electronic distribution of a quarterly newsletter addressing needs, goals, and  
11 methods of singles evangelization and ministry.

**Explanation**

Singles in many stages of life—never married, divorced, and widowed—represent 44% of Americans over the age of 18, and 57% of those between the ages of 18 and 35. This resolution plants the seed of a serious effort in the Episcopal Church to engage in intentional ministry with this sizeable segment of the American population. A proven and successful conference model exists in the annual Solo Flight and related diocesan events. Significant expansion of similar programs around the country through start-up funds for each new location and some discretionary funds for scholarships are included in the monetary figures of this resolution. Each site should become financially self-sufficient after two years of conferences.

**Notes:**

The website of the SCDME may be found at <http://members.aol.com/SCDME2020>. The website of the Episcopal Network for Evangelism may be found at <http://members.aol.com/ENE2020>.