

The Executive Council The Environmental Stewardship Team

Created by mandate of the 1991 70th General Convention and appointed by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies acting upon Resolution A195s, the Environmental Stewardship Team consists of the following:

The Rev. Carla Berkedal (Olympia)
Ms. Jamie Boyll (Mississippi)
The Rt. Rev. Frank Cerveny, *Chair* (Florida)
Mr. Tom Chappell (Maine)
The Rev. Dr. Edmundo DeSueza-Fleury (El Salvador)
Ms. Susan Fisher (Newark)
Jaime Hampton, Esq. (Arizona)
Dr. Ginette Olsen (Michigan)
Mr. Frank Potter (Virginia)
The Rev. Fred Quinn (Washington)
Dr. Peggy Welch (West Texas)
The Rev. Roger Wharton (Alaska)
The Rt. Rev. Jerry Winterrowd (Colorado)
The Hon. Greg Watson (Massachusetts), appointed but unable to attend any meetings
Mr. Ethan Flad and the Rev. Brian Grieves, Staff Liaisons
The Rev. Peter R. Holroyd, Program Consultant

What is the Foundation of Our Work?

ONE GOD, ONE FAMILY, ONE EARTH is the theme of this 1994 71st General Convention in Indianapolis. The Environmental Stewardship Team, created by the 1991 70th General Convention in Phoenix, proposed this theme, which was adopted by Executive Council as "By Water and the Holy Spirit—Proclaiming One God, One Family, One Earth." This unifying vision of timeless truths incorporates most of the major concerns before the Church, for it is interrelated with Environmental Stewardship, Stewardship, Peace, Economic Justice, Family, Women, Youth, Children, Biblical Studies, our Partnerships within the Anglican Communion, and more.

First, why is environmental stewardship a religious issue? Why is it a concern for the Church to address? We have a responsibility to care for God's Creation and for one another. The Earth is rapidly losing its sustenance, upon which we can "multiply" and "subdue" and develop. The problem is not only scientific or political or industrial. It is a moral and spiritual problem throughout.

There are many misunderstandings about environmental stewardship that need to be addressed and clarified from a Christian perspective because the very misconceptions foster

inaction and contribute to the vast problems before us. And this issue must be addressed throughout our congregations and dioceses.

Environmental stewardship is about our covenant with the Creator and our mission to heal the broken and defend the oppressed. It is about our personal response to the call to live in relationship not only with God but with all that God has created. It is about finding our voice and communicating our profound concern for the fact that so many scientists have forecast a window of only 30 years for humankind to arrest the interconnected abuses of "this fragile earth, our island home," before damage to climate, atmosphere, soil, water, and our life-support systems, our natural resources, becomes irreversible.

It is about our brothers and sisters in our impoverished and racially discriminated communities, as well as in our neighboring developing nations, who suffer under unbearable burdens of poverty, famine, drought, contamination, toxic dumping, and more.

And it is about the fact that there are no Protestant skies, Catholic waters, or Muslim forests, and that the biosphere recognizes no divisions and separations into boundaries of ownership or restriction. For it is a family of life that acts in ways so subtle and complex that each member of Creation has a role to play in the chain of life that is not separate from us, and the quality of each of our lives impacts and affects others.

That scientists are reaching out to religious leaders is an event without precedent. They call this decade of the 90s the "turning point decade." When 1500 senior scientists from 69 countries, including 100 Nobel Prize winners, issued a "Warning to Humanity" two years ago, this was echoed by thousands of others within the scientific community (Union of Concerned Scientists). Gravely concerned about the fact that 1/4 to 1/3 of all species will become extinct during our lifetime; that the abuse of crucial links between air, water and soil are compromising climate, water and food supply; that diminishing natural resources and the rapidly rising global population are on a collision course, the Joint Appeal by Religion and Science (now called the National Religious Partnership for the Environment) came into being, with Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning and other religious leaders actively involved. Scientists inviting religious leadership is an extraordinary occurrence that reveals the urgency and magnitude of the crisis before us.

There are those who do not believe that confronting environmental concerns should have national focus or the backing of the Church. But we believe this is properly the Church's concern, as "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof" (Psalm 24:1). As reverence for God's Creation and our role in Creation requires spiritual and moral leadership, government leaders and scientists throughout the world have begun to respect this sacred stance. For example, the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders is an international organization with eminent representation in 85 countries that addresses this issue from precisely this standpoint.

The issue of environmental stewardship properly belongs to the Church, as people look to religion for guidance. There are no divisions between science and religion on the issue of environmental stewardship, nor are there divisions between church and state either. Again, there are no Protestant skies, no Catholic waters, no Muslim forests. We have reached a moment in time for the Church to exercise much needed and singularly influential leadership.

When the earth was viewed from space for the first time, we saw that it was truly the "garden" among non-living planets and the nebulae of space, billions of years old and filled

with richness and diversity of life beyond description. The truth of the Creation story in Genesis resonates still today, far greater than any literal interpretation of it. "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till and look after it" (Genesis 2:15). Earth is the *garden* in space, and we are *eating* the garden.

We have to remind ourselves of this story not only because of its stewardship message. The unfortunate translations "dominion over" and "subdue the earth" do not give us license to pollute and destroy God's natural world, but to have stewardship and responsibility for God's Creation. Common sense tells us that God did not mean for us to pollute and destroy his handiwork, as Scripture tells us, "Ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are" (Numbers 35:34). "Can the rushes thrive where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish without water?" (Job 8:11). All of Creation is God's and must be approached with humility and reverence. The idea of humans made in the "image of God" was not God's invitation to act like a dictator or lord over Creation, but rather to represent the caring, compassionate Creator who looks upon Creation with love. How can one dominate the chain of life of which one is part?

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not,
neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon
in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."
(Matthew 6:28-29)

There is another lesson to be learned from the Creation story, which placed Eden between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers because it was the most verdant, fertile, life-producing land in the world of the Bible. It was the "cradle of civilization," truly a paradise. But what is this "Fertile Crescent" now? It is now a desert.

Famine and drought are more often than is realized man-made. They are the consequences of soil depletion and erosion, deforestation, the exploitation of natural resources and destruction of species with no thought of succeeding generations. Warnings about this abound in our sacred scripture: "Six years thou shalt sow the land, and shall gather in the fruits thereof; but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still: that the poor of thy people may eat" (Exodus 23:10-11). "The tree of the field is man's life" (Deuteronomy 20:19).

In ancient Greece, four centuries before the birth of Christ, Plato mourned the loss of forests. Vast areas of the earth have lost their forest cover—a crucial regulator of climate and rainfall and a chain of life we are only beginning to know something about. Centuries of misuse and neglect, with no understanding of environmental stewardship and justice, have wrought havoc in humanity's struggle to stay alive in many parts of the globe. The appalling circumstances in the Sudan, Somalia, and other parts of Africa, where millions struggle against hopeless misery and poverty and civil strife, are compounded by vanishing resources and impossible conditions with which to sustain their lives.

It has been estimated that worldwide there are as many environmental refugees, if not more, than there are political refugees. Even in the United States, people such as the residents of the Love Canal area of New York State and those in parts of Texas and Mississippi have had to leave their homes. Iraq (Mesopotamia), Iran (Persia), Egypt, West Pakistan, Greece, Sicily, the lands bordering the Mediterranean, China, India, Southeast Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe, parts of Africa— all were once the site of rich and

powerful civilizations changed forever by deforestation, depletion of natural resources, desertification (the spread of deserts from deforestation, over-development, grazing, etc.), and extreme cases of deprivation and poverty. Meanwhile, relief efforts for victims of natural catastrophes accelerate, as the catastrophes themselves— mudslides that killed thousands of Kurds after the Persian Gulf War, flood victims in Bangladesh— are the result of environmental destruction.

It is hard for many of us to understand this, as America has taken advantage of its natural resources, having settled its rich land much later than most other countries. America must never forget that this was done at the tragic expense of Native Americans, the original inhabitants of the land upon which our ancestors carved out our destiny and tragically destroyed their own—they who could have taught the rest of us so much about one spirit, one family, one earth. America, who lives so well at their expense, uses 30% of the world's annual energy for only 5% of the world's population after only a few hundred years since the first European settlers arrive on American shores. Also, at the expense of the poorer countries, the affluent nations of the world exploit their resources, leaving them mired in impossible debt.

Raising the status of women through education and equal rights should be a priority in every country, but in most of the world women have few rights, if any. The suffering of 35,000 children who die each day from malnutrition and easily treatable illness could be improved through changes in the treatment of women. Research shows that when infant mortality decreases in developing countries, it is because the level of education of women has been raised. UNICEF has reported that where there are programs for women, there is a corresponding reduction in the staggering number of children's deaths. Poverty and cultural beliefs have made preservation by family expansion a helpless form of gaining co-workers and deriving security. Extremely male-dominated cultures are not only inhumane, but their mindset fosters the dreadful suffering of children, who are not fed or treated for disease adequately on lands that cannot sustain burgeoning life. The relationship between justice and women, children and environmental stewardship must be urgently addressed.

Environmental justice and environmental stewardship issues overlap in an especially insidious way. Minority and disadvantaged groups have been the victims of a special kind of environmental abuse, especially African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans. "The Federal Environmental Protection Agency found evidence that racial and ethnic minorities suffer disproportionate exposure to ... carbon monoxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide and lead, as well as emissions from hazardous waste dumps" (The New York *Times* front page story, "Pollution Weary Minorities," January 11, 1993). Racial minorities in the United States and other parts of the world bear a disproportionate burden of pollution that is directly related to the economic, political and social oppression that they also bear.

This is why the context of environmental stewardship links so many areas of the Church's primary concerns and why a leadership role by the Church in environmental stewardship offers a pivotal opportunity to bridge many gulfs between people and groups— rich and poor, black and white— as well as bringing together the concerns of science and religion and promoting both religious and ethnic tolerance. We are all one family, as we are all God's children created by God on this blessed "fragile earth, our island home."

Of all the areas that overlap when it comes to environmental stewardship, the most fundamental is life and death.

"I summon heaven and earth to witness against you this day:
I offer you the choice of life or death, blessing or curse.
Choose life, that you and your descendants may live."
(Deuteronomy 30:19-20)

Death has become a way of life for so many of our youth, bombarded with murders and killing and brutality in popular culture. Gangs are on the rise, guns have become the accepted way to settle arguments among the young, with innocent children being killed as never before. That is why reaching youth and teaching them about the deep truths of ecology and environmental stewardship is of paramount importance. That life is a miracle filled with mystery and beauty and awe is a perception becoming lost on our young. It is this sense of wonder at the mystery of life that much of the world is losing. Our young are more comfortable with "dead" mechanical devices like headsets and computer games within enclosed spaces than with what is alive and with what it means to be alive. God's natural world becomes more and more meaningless to them, as their everyday life is consumed with videos and television, the greatest polluter and teacher of all. They have been taught to be conversant with what is not alive.

"Speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the
fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee." (Job 12:8)

Educating children and youth about environmental stewardship is critical to foster synthesis, celebration of diversity, and compassion. It is not simply a nice thing to do, but a prerequisite if our descendants are to enjoy the blessings of life that we have. This is an urgent task for us all, as conflicts and problems everywhere are being increasingly resolved by violence and killing. Racism, bigotry, religious intolerance, anti-Semitism, are all on the rise in America and abroad in epic proportions.

Congregations and dioceses can teach that such hideous concepts as "ethnic cleansing" (the battle cry of genocide warfare) is as anti-life as sameness and non-change in nature, for sameness in nature is death. The fact that the health and strength of a given ecosystem is dependent upon the diversity of its species is another way of understanding that the acceptance of differences between people is the basis for the health and well-being of any society or family. God loves variety and created a world filled with diversity, a diversity that we are systematically destroying. "A truly ecological view of the world has religious overtones," said scientist René Dubos. Understanding the meaning of environmental stewardship undergirds an acceptance, if not cherishing, of differences between peoples, and the very survival of the entire family of life on earth.

The old beliefs about "survival of the fittest" and "competition" being the natural way for nature and humankind have been proven to be misconceptions. We now know that *each* member of Creation has a role to play in the fabric of life. Indeed, cooperation is more basic than competition, and interdependence is a fundamental characteristic of Creation. Our bodies are 70% water, just as the earth is 70% water. Energy from the sun, atoms in the air, molecules of plants and animals recirculate continually, and life is one self-sustaining, self-perpetuating, integrated whole. We may learn before it is too late that we are all one family, one earth, and that what affects you also affects me. The well-being of our brothers

and sisters in inner cities, rural areas and of our fellow creatures in the animal and plant kingdom affects each one of us.

How we care for the gifts of God's Creation is basic to our soul's health and basic to the health of the planet and all its family of life. Loving the Lord our God and loving our neighbor as ourself extends to the way we care for God's gifts to us. God has created us each to make a difference in the individual lives we lead and of those around us. We are God's instruments for spreading the Kingdom of God on earth. Whereas ancient pagan faiths invested divinity in nature because of thundering, quaking, flooding, and devouring hardships suffered by humans, our Scripture teaches us that the Creation has a purpose and moves toward a divine objective in which humankind instrumentally participates.

But living Creation is vanishing because we have not comprehended the ideas of oneness, relationship and responsibility for one another, nor have we fully understood that we are part of nature, spawned from the same life-forms, composed of the same carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen as the rest of God's natural world.

The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt. (Isaiah 24:5-6a)

We impact the lives of others when we break the laws of God, for we are indeed all one. As your health adds to mine, mine is dependent upon yours. What diminishes you diminishes me. If only this were truly comprehended by all peoples throughout the world; if only this were taught in schools everywhere as a matter of course: the interdependent fabric of the family of life and what it truly means. The accelerating global environmental crisis provides us with the opportunity to teach truths that are a part of our covenant with our Creator, for these truths have been tested and reveal that we do indeed reap what we sow, and we really are our brother's keeper.

"May they all be one: as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, so also may they be in us....The glory which you gave me I have given to them, that they may be one, as we are one; I in them and you in me, that they may be perfectly one." (John 17:21-23)

The sense of oneness that Christ impresses upon us is the most difficult truth to grasp. Nor will it ever be learned until each individual awakens and becomes transformed in order to see that each and all are part of this unity. Transformation will only occur through the truth of Christ's commandment to love one another and by following his way of healing what is broken and dying around us, from people earmarked to live near hazardous waste to areas of God's natural world earmarked for destruction. For the chain of life is a family of life that involves all who love and all that lives. The vision of "One God, One Family, One Earth" is our moment of truth here and now on the eve of the twenty-first century, when the stakes have never been higher. In this third millennium of the Christian Era comes our crucial opportunity to choose life over death and fulfill our covenant with our Creator.

The work of the Environmental Stewardship Team and the work of our Church has just begun.

What Is Our Theological Commitment?

We believe our response to this crisis of our age to be fundamentally grounded in our Baptismal Covenant, acknowledging that God is Creator and Giver of Life to all that is; that Jesus through the Incarnation is the Christ and Lord of all Creation and the way for us to follow; that the Holy Spirit guides and sustains us in our lives.

We commit ourselves to the theology of the covenant God established with Noah: "This is a sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations" (Genesis 9:12). Only as we renew our faith and our partnership with God in this covenant through our actions will we be able to work toward the fulfillment of God's promise to the community of all life. While the environmental crisis is at heart a crisis of the human spirit, it is rooted in the loss of our connection with all Creation.

We Christians are a people of faith and hope, and we seek to live out our faith and hope in all our decisions and actions related to environmental stewardship. As the pages of the Old Testament offer stories of hope triumphant over despair, the New Testament presents a vision of hope through love that transcends all and the triumph of life over death through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We center our hope and our vision and our faith in the vigorous affirmation of Christ's Resurrection and a deep trust in the grace of God in the midst of seemingly hopeless conditions.

Accordingly, the Environmental Stewardship Team believes the Church to be:

CALLED TO RECONCILIATION: We must, as Christians, transform our relationship to the whole Creation. As Church, we must model to the wider culture new ways of living in relationships that cease to do violence to humans, to God's natural world, and to this planet as part of God's Creation. Therefore, the Environmental Stewardship Team, in the work that we have begun with provinces, dioceses and congregations, is committed to identifying provincial, diocesan and parish models and holding these models up before the rest of the Church.

CALLED TO STUDY AND PRAY: We must, as Christians, reclaim those dimensions of our Scripture and Tradition that inform and enliven our response as Church to the environmental challenge. The Environmental Stewardship Team has begun work in this area on a special project with deans of seminaries and another with liturgical and biblical worship authorities and staff.

CALLED TO INTEGRATION: We must, as Christians, recognize the imperative to integrate environmental concerns with those of racism, peace, and social and economic justice. "Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why then are we faithless to one another...?" (Malachi 2:10). We are "our brother's keeper," for we are to "love your neighbor as yourself." Just as the healthiest ecosystems depend on the diversity of their species, so the healthiest of societies are based on religious and racial tolerance and the celebration of differences between people. "If one part suffers, all suffer together; if one flourishes, all rejoice together" (1 Corinthians 12:26). The Environmental Stewardship Team seeks to help convey that we are all related and interconnected as a family of humanity.

CALLED TO LIFESTYLE CHANGE: We, as Christians, especially encourage all faithful people to reflect on their personal and corporate habits. Sound ecological living is a spiritual discipline and a Christian vocation. The Environmental Stewardship Team seeks to furnish information to dioceses and parishes concerning such lifestyle changes, particularly communicating exemplary lifestyles evident within our Church.

CALLED TO CONVERSION: We, as Christians, strive to foster in all people "inquiring and discerning hearts" to respond with a "gift of joy and wonder in all your works" (BCP, p.308). Nothing less than a new heart will change people and change the way people relate to the earth and to one another. A new heart cannot emerge without being awakened. And one cannot be awakened when in the dark. The Environmental Stewardship Team is committed to educating the Church at large through a curriculum and through projects in various stages of completion in vital areas of environmental stewardship for the young, for indigenous peoples, for women, addressing justice and many other areas of concern.

The earth is given to us in trust. We members of the Environmental Stewardship Team of the Episcopal Church commit ourselves to confront the environmental challenge with imagination and persistence, in the confident hope of the Holy Spirit's presence and action in our lives, joining hands with the joy and love at the heart of Creation.

What Have We Accomplished?

EDUCATION:

(A). We have commissioned and produced a six-session curriculum dealing with Christian spirituality of the earth, *One God, One Family, One Earth: Responding to the Gift of God's Creation*, for every parish and diocese in the country, for adult education classes, youth groups, "creation seasons" programs, and Lenten series, etc.. The curriculum was pilot-tested in four parishes throughout the country before its final draft.

(B). We have invited the deans of the seminaries of the Episcopal Church to prepare for General Convention 1997 a position document exploring the relationship of theology to the environmental crisis as seen from the perspective of the Episcopal Church.

(C). We have supported a colloquium on "Liturgy and Ecology," organized by Earth Ministry of Seattle and held at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific, involving lay and ordained persons within the Church. The goal of the colloquium is to produce for distribution at all levels of the Church's life a short document presenting the fundamental theological issues and suggestions for the practical implementation of these concerns in the context of the liturgical life of the Church.

(D). We have prepared a Global Education for Mission Packet (G.E.M.), which offers to environmental stewardship commissions and other groups a wide sampling of articles and information on various issues related to the environmental crisis and environmental church activities.

(E). We have commissioned a video resource catalogue, *Ecology and Spirituality: a Catalogue of Video Resources*, for parishes and dioceses.

(F). We have prepared for distribution throughout the Episcopal Church a brochure that summarizes the work done by the Environmental Stewardship Team to confront the environmental crisis from a Christian perspective, as well as listing the resources available at the parish or diocesan level and how they may be obtained.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

(G). We have compiled a listing of representative models of notable environmental stewardship programs that have been or are currently being presented throughout the Church. The Team is acutely aware of the pioneering work these represent and how they might in turn serve to inspire or assist parishes or dioceses interested in developing programs of their own. Examples include liturgies for St. Francis Day or Rogationtide, innovative programs for a "creation season" or for giving the Prayers of the People a greater environmental focus, Vacation Bible School ideas, and general information to help dioceses become more environmentally aware.

NETWORK BUILDING:

Among initial questions asked by the Team were: What persons and groups in the Church are concerned about environmental stewardship? Are they known to one another? How are they supported within the Church? To answer these questions after preliminary inquiries, the Team began to build a series of networks.

(A). *Primary Contacts and Diocesan Liaison Persons.* The Team is seeking to identify within each diocese a primary person responsible for environmental concerns. In some cases these persons are appointed by the bishop; in others, they are volunteers known to the bishop; and in a few cases, they are the bishop her/himself. As of January 1994 there are 8 dioceses that have not responded. It is the role of the primary contact people to communicate information from the Episcopal Church throughout the dioceses and to communicate word of diocesan work to the larger Church so that it may be shared with others. This diocesan network has coordinated diocesan and provincial environmental stewardship consultations. During this triennium Team presentations on environmental stewardship have been made at every provincial synod.

In recognition and support of their environmental stewardship ministries, several dioceses and provinces have received grants to continue and nurture their work. Included are the Dioceses of Connecticut, Georgia, North Carolina, Olympia (Earth Ministry Program), and the Diocese of Washington; Provinces I, V, VII, VIII, and IX. In turn, these dioceses and provinces have provided information to the Team about model programs and environmental resolutions in their areas.

(B). *The Episcopal Church Environmental Network.* As a result of work by Team members and others, there is at the Church headquarters a mailing list of over 1000 persons who receive general information about environmental programs.

(C). *Youth Environmental Network.* As a result of Team participation at the Episcopal Youth Event in the summer of 1993, a network of environmentally concerned Episcopal youth has been started. The purpose of this network is to provide for the Team and for the wider Church, an opportunity to hear directly the voice of the younger generation.

(D). *Public Policy Network (P.P.N.).* The P.P.N. of the national Church has identified as priorities six issue areas for commitment to action as public policy by Episcopalians. One of these areas is environmental stewardship. The Team has helped to strengthen this issue area by helping more people to become involved.

COLLABORATION:

While the Team has met five times as a whole (New York City twice; Evergreen, Colorado; San Antonio, Texas; Live Oak, Florida), individual members have also conducted work on behalf of the environmental stewardship mandate of the Team.

The Team has worked closely with other departments, commissions, committees and organizations within the Episcopal Church as well as with inter-faith groups. The text of the Team's formal proposal for "One Spirit, One Family, One Earth" was submitted to the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, and was adopted by the Executive Council and incorporated into the final theme of the 1994 71st General Convention: "By Water and the Holy Spirit— Proclaiming One God, One Family, One Earth." In an effort to explore ways in which to join with other groups in programs for action, Team members have initiated collaborations and are participating in ongoing discussions with the Stewardship and Development Commission, the Adult Education office, the Joint Working Group of Committees/Commissions on Racism, Economic Justice, Small Communities, and Metropolitan Areas. Assisting in the design of a calendar on "Women and the Environment" which will be for sale at the Triennial Meeting, Team representatives have collaborated with the Women in Mission and Ministry office. The chair of the Stewardship and Development Commission was a participant/observer at the Team meeting in San Antonio. Other clergy and lay people, some of whom are Deputies to Convention as well as members of environmental stewardship commissions in their parishes and dioceses, have also been participant/observers at Team meetings. A member of the Environmental Stewardship Team made a presentation at the Episcopal Council of Indian Ministries "Paths Crossing" conference, and the Team was represented at the "Economic Justice and the Episcopal Church" Conference in October 1993.

WITHIN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

(A). *General Convention Office.* Along with ideas to help make it work, the Team submitted a proposal that the 1994 71st General Convention in every way model environmental practices and responsibility. As part of this proposal, the Team has worked to identify local sources of environmentally sensitive materials and equipment in the Indianapolis area. This information has been passed on to the General Convention office for consideration and action as appropriate.

(B). *Youth Ministries.* Team representatives took part in the Episcopal Youth Event held at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in the summer of 1993. Workshops were held on environmental concerns and also provided information on the work of the Team. From this participation the Youth Environmental Network emerged.

(C). *Program/SRI Committee.* The Team responded to a request from this Committee to support a recommendation for a further response to the CERES Principles by Episcopal Church investment sources.

(D). *"Caring for Creation" Conference, Diocese of Kansas, April 1994.* The Team made a recommendation for financial support for this first Episcopal conference on environmental stewardship. There has also been Team representation on the planning committee, and Team members were among the presenters.

(E). *Episcopal Environmental Coalition.* The Coalition is part of a growing movement throughout the Episcopal Church that believes the Church should exercise leadership in the issues of worldwide environmental concerns just as it has in peace and justice issues. The Team has worked closely with Coalition representatives to gather and share information and to help assemble a nationwide network of environmental contacts. A Team recommendation for a grant enabled the Coalition to hold the first two national meetings of

its members and to help the Coalition's co-sponsorship of the "Caring for Creation" Conference in Kansas City. Team members also participated in these meetings.

OUTSIDE THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH:

There has been Team participation in the activities of the following organizations: International Coordinating Committee for Religion and the Earth (I.C.C.R.E.), a unique consultative body of representatives from the world's religions whose purpose is to foster the relationship between spirituality and ecology; the National Council of Churches Economic and Environmental Justice/Hunger Concerns Working Group; the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (formerly the Joint Appeal by Religion and Science for the Environment); the René Dubos Center for Human Environments, an education and research organization that works closely with the United Nations and focuses on the social and humanistic aspects of environmental problems; the Southern Organizing Committee for Social and Economic Justice; and the National Audubon Society.

What Do We Seek to Accomplish in the Next Triennium?

The Environmental Stewardship Team, considering the urgency of environmental peril and the critical need to address this issue from a Christian perspective, asks General Convention to extend its mandate through the next triennium so that it may complete the important unfinished projects that will "educate, motivate and facilitate congregations, dioceses and provinces toward local and regional plans, advocacy and action" to make manifest God's love on the earth, and to:

(A). Expand the networks the Team has begun to develop within parishes, dioceses, and provinces, and to share the important work already being accomplished in small communities. To leave this work at the time of its inception would be tragic, as it requires continuing sponsorship to nurture it and make a complex task simpler by focusing on specific environmental stewardship dimensions from a Christian perspective.

(B). Complete a set of environmental stewardship ministry guidelines to help the development and work of parish committees, diocesan commissions and provincial meetings.

(C). Develop the Team's adult environmental education curriculum, *One God, One Family, One Earth: Responding to the Gift of God's Creation*, into a youth curriculum.

(D). Provide opportunities for Christian business people to validate the role of the business person as steward of God's Creation by exploring the connection between business policies and stewardship of the earth. Subsequently, to develop guidelines for environmental ethics in business.

(E). Continue the resource "Models of Environmental Stewardship" produced by the Team in order to incorporate the many outstanding programs, especially those involving community actions that are taking place in the Church at large.

(F). Produce a much-needed resource on Native Americans and environmental stewardship, with special emphasis on Native American Episcopal clergy.

(G). Commit to working with other indigenous peoples and ethnic groups to explore further shared environmental issues and concerns.

THE BLUE BOOK

(H). Initiate further work on environmental justice issues by seeking to collaborate with the NAACP, the Congress of Racial Equality, and other agencies, as well as continuing to explore specific community problems in poor, rural and urban areas.

(I). Collaborate with Episcopal Church Women by developing further projects on the relationship between women and environmental stewardship.

(J). Devise a Global Education for Mission packet, available through Parish Services, on environmental justice along with guidelines for environmental/social justice and community advocacy actions.

(K). Promote through the Team's networks and contacts the emerging children's curriculums and resources on environmental stewardship.

(L). Continue to work with the deans of Episcopal seminaries in the consultation on "Environmental Stewardship and the Episcopal Church" initiated by the Team and planned for completion by the 72nd General Convention.

(M). Continue the work of the colloquium on "Liturgy and Ecology" held at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in March 1994 to expand the available liturgies and rituals for the celebration of God's Creation.

(N). Prepare materials for parishes to observe and celebrate Earth Day, Rogation Sunday, and the United Nations Environmental Sabbath.

(O). Continue to collaborate in the development of an Episcopal Youth Network to provide for the Team and the wider Church an opportunity to hear youth concerns and environmental "success" stories, and also to assist in their involvement in environmental stewardship issues within the Church.

(P). Work with Episcopal news media to expand coverage of environmental stewardship issues and ministries within the Church.

(Q). Produce for use at clergy conferences, and regional clergy gatherings a resource of environmental stewardship speakers, workshop topics, etc.

(R). Support the Presiding Bishop in his work with the National Religious Partnership for the Environment.

RESOLUTIONS

As a result of its work during the past triennium and to further its mission: "to empower individuals, parishes, dioceses, and provinces of the Episcopal Church for an active role in rediscovering our relationship with God, ourselves, our neighbor, and all Creation," the Environmental Stewardship Team submits the following Resolutions:

Resolution #A041

Reenactment

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That the 71st General Convention of the**
- 2 **Episcopal Church continue the mandate of the Environmental Stewardship Team "to**
- 3 **educate, motivate, and facilitate congregations, dioceses, and provinces toward local**
- 4 **and regional plans, advocacy and action," by directing that the first priority of any**
- 5 **funding in the budget for environmental work be allocated for the continuation of its**
- 6 **educational programs, working with provincial, diocesan and congregational bodies;**
- 7 and be it further

- 1 *Resolved, That the responsibility for directing this program be assigned to the*
2 **Environmental Stewardship Team, or appropriate body, who will report to Executive**
3 **Council.**

EXPLANATION

Resolution A195s, passed at the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 1991, mandated the following: "The mission of the Environmental Stewardship Team is to educate, motivate, and facilitate congregations, dioceses, and provinces toward local and regional plans, advocacy and action." It is also noted that the Team must be one part of an overall effort to "call upon the Church at large to engage the theological questions attending the environment and integrate those learnings into the work we choose to do." In the past triennium, the Environmental Stewardship Team has taken great strides forward in this work. New resources on environmental stewardship have been prepared, networks have been initiated, and theological and liturgical explorations have been started. But this effort has been small in view of the urgency and scope of these issues. Extending the ministry of the Team for an additional triennium will help the Church reach these imperative objectives.

Resolution #A042

Hazardous Waste

- 1 *Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 71st General Convention of the*
2 **Episcopal Church reaffirm its commitment to justice for all people inside and outside**
3 **the United States, including those who, because of their race, poverty, and**
4 **powerlessness, bear the brunt of hazardous waste disposal which endangers their**
5 **health and safety; and be it further**
6 *Resolved, That investors—dioceses, congregations, Church institutions, and*
7 **individuals—be encouraged to influence corporations through shareholder resolutions**
8 **and proxy voting to find alternatives to the manufacture, use, and disposal of**
9 **hazardous chemicals; and be it further**
10 *Resolved, That the Executive Council through its Social Responsibility in Investments*
11 **Committee be directed to screen its investment portfolios for environmentally**
12 **responsible corporate behavior inside and outside the United States, and to pursue**
13 **corporate dialogue and shareholder resolutions with those companies wherever they**
14 **are located to assure compliance with environmentally sound practices.**

EXPLANATION

This resolution lifts up two concerns surrounding the issue of hazardous waste. First, the need to monitor its disposal and to end its production. The Executive Council, through the CERES Principles, already screens its investment portfolios for corporate environmental accountability in the United States. This resolution gives more specific focus to the problem of hazardous waste, and it calls on other structures of the Church besides the Executive Council to exert pressure on companies.

Hazardous waste disposal and the use of hazardous chemicals have been shown to cause health problems in the areas where they are located. Particularly affected have been people of color, the poor, and the powerless. "Toxic Waste and Race," a report issued in

1987 by the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ, uncovered a close connection between the siting of hazardous waste treatment facilities, hazardous waste disposal sites, and communities of color in the United States. This was a landmark report in the environmental justice movement which made clear the meaning of the term "environmental racism." Ms. Carol Browner, head of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency, corroborated the direct link between race and toxic waste in 1993.

Throughout the United States there are regions where the manufacture, use, disposal and incineration of toxic waste have been directly linked to health problems, such as forms of cancer, lupus, respiratory problems, skin rashes, and degenerative childhood diseases. Examples are Warren County, North Carolina; Sumter County, Alabama; and American Indian reservations. In each of these cases there has been overwhelming evidence that communities of color have been disproportionately affected.

Second, this resolution provides a call to exert pressure on companies operating in countries where environmental standards are inadequate or unenforced. The General Convention already opposes waste dumping in foreign countries. This resolution asks the Executive Council to use its corporate shareholder efforts to implement the Church's concerns.

The Maquiladoras region of Mexico is one example of this situation. "Maquiladoras" are manufacturing plants built by U.S. companies throughout Mexico, primarily located near the American-Mexican border, that reap the economic benefits of low worker wages, less stringent environmental regulation, longer work days, and weak child labor and worker safety laws. The health effects alone have been horrifying. There have been 386 anencephalic births (babies born without a brain) in Tamaulipas, Mexico, and 47 cases in Cameron County, Texas. There have also been increased levels of lupus, leukemia, and cancer in Nogales, Arizona, as well as other such travesties throughout the region.

These environmental and working standards are in profound violation of humanity and of the Church's call for stewardship of the Creation and justice for the poor and powerless.

Resolution #A043

The Church Called to Live in Harmony with the Earth

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That the 71st General Convention call upon**
- 2 **the Episcopal Church at all levels to live in such harmony with the earth that all**
- 3 **peoples and species may depend upon it to sustain life for future generations; and be it**
- 4 **further**
- 5 *Resolved*, **That each diocese through its environmental stewardship committee or**
- 6 **appropriate body assist congregations to learn more about the environmental issues**
- 7 **facing us, particularly those most critical in their own communities, in order for them**
- 8 **to undertake an active program of environmental stewardship to protect and, where**
- 9 **necessary, to restore the health and integrity of the land, waters, and air of that**
- 10 **diocese, reporting their progress to the Environmental Stewardship Team or**
- 11 **appropriate national body; and be it further**
- 12 *Resolved*, **That it is most appropriate for the Presiding Bishop, the President of the**
- 13 **House of Deputies, the Environmental Stewardship Team or appropriate national**
- 14 **body and corresponding diocesan bodies to bring the Church's teachings on good**
- 15 **stewardship into the arena of public debate on environment and economic policies so**

1 **that love for neighbor and the values of sufficiency and sustainability may stand**
2 **against the false values of unnecessary consumption and exploitation.**

EXPLANATION

Only by living in harmony with the earth will we be able to sustain and preserve life for future generations. Environmental stewardship must be centered in our communities in order for us actively to protect and restore the health and integrity of our natural resources. It is imperative for the Church to take a leadership role, especially in the debate on environmental and economic policies and practices. The issue at heart is a spiritual issue. It has to do with the ways that human beings relate to God, to each other, and to God's Creation. The Church must assume leadership through prayer, reflection, and action.

Resolution #A044

Environmental Guidelines for the National Church

1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, **That the Episcopal Church adopt practical,**
2 **environmentally sound and energy-efficient lifestyle behaviors that discourage**
3 **wasteful consumption and encourage the recycling of material resources; and be it**
4 **further**

5 *Resolved*, **That all future General Conventions of the Episcopal Church be models of**
6 **the stewardship of God's Creation, and that the General Convention Office and the**
7 **Planning and Arrangements Committee be directed to implement the following**
8 **actions:**

9 **1. Provide recycling centers for newspapers, office paper, computer paper,**
10 **aluminum cans, glass and plastics;**

11 **2. Use recycled paper for the printing of resolutions, for computers and for**
12 **publications (e.g., *The Convention Daily*);**

13 **3. Use pottery or glassware instead of Styrofoam or paper cups;**

14 **4. Photocopy both sides of papers distributed to deputies, when possible;**

15 **5. Use only white paper for printing; and be it further**

16 *Resolved*, **That, if necessary, registration fees be increased to cover any additional cost**
17 **incurred to implement these changes; and be it further**

18 *Resolved*, **That the Executive Council implement these changes and other**
19 **environmentally responsible actions at the Episcopal Church Center and any**
20 **conference it sponsors to reflect (and model) a commitment and desire to restore**
21 **God's Creation to wholeness; and be it further**

22 *Resolved*, **That all dioceses and provinces be strongly urged to take corresponding**
23 **actions.**

EXPLANATION

These guidelines speak to practical ways which model sound environmental stewardship. These guidelines were approved by the House of Bishops in the 1991 70th General Convention but were never acted upon by the House of Deputies.