

STANDING COMMISSION ON STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT

MEMBERSHIP

Mrs. Angela M. Daniel, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Upper South Carolina IV, 2009
The Rev. Dr. W. Richard Hamlin, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Michigan V, 2006
Ms. Susan T. Erdey, <i>Secretary</i>	New York II, 2006
The Rt. Rev. Gordon P. Scruton, <i>Co-Facilitator</i>	Western Massachusetts I, 2006
Mrs. Pamela S. Wesley Gomez, <i>Co-Facilitator</i>	Connecticut I, 2009
The Rev. John Fritschner, <i>Chaplain</i>	Alabama IV, 2009
Ms. Patricia Abrams	Chicago V, 2009
Canon Sharon L. Davenport	Northwestern Pennsylvania III, 2006
Ms. Kelsey Kemp	Northwest Texas VII, 2009
Mrs. Joan O. Kline	Southwest Florida IV, 2006
Ms. Blanca Rivera	Milwaukee V, 2006
Mr. Thomas R. Gossen, <i>Executive Council Liaison</i>	
Ms. Terry Parsons, <i>Staff Liaison</i>	

Meetings

The Commission met four times in the triennium: January 21-24, 2004, July 13-16, 2004, January 9-12, 2005, and July 20-23, 2005.

CHARGE

The Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development (SCSD) mandate is “to hold up before the Church the responsibility of faithful stewardship of time, talent and treasure in grateful thanksgiving for God’s gifts. It shall recommend strategies for stewardship education throughout the Church with special sensitivity to the cultural and linguistic diversity of our Church. It shall recommend programs for long-range planning and development, ensuring that other Church bodies, including the Executive Council, are part of the process. It shall assure that there is an official, periodic gathering, interpretation, evaluation and reporting of stewardship from through the Church. It shall help coordinate all church-wide fund-raising activities.” [Title I, Canon 1.2(n)(9)]

SUMMARY OF WORK

The Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development (SCSD) is a diverse group of individuals who share a deep commitment to the formation of Christians who are called to be stewards of the Gospel, stewards of God’s gifts, and stewards of creation. The “theology of stewardship,” as articulated in the Commission’s Report to the 74th General Convention (2003 Blue Book p. 268-274) informed our discussions regarding our work for the triennium, as did the process of articulating the Commission’s Stewardship Statement.

Our increasing experience is that there is a disconnect between faith, values and money. The relentless pace and complexity of our lives has brought with it an increasing disconnect between faith, values, and money. Resources, mentors, coaches, and models are needed that can offer simple, strategic and systemic models to help individuals align their lives with their faith. SCSD addressed such issues as mission funding for the church, including guidelines for a campaign for the entire church; online donations and the need for a debt education program; the need for a ministry to the wealthy; seminary preparation on stewardship for clergy; the withholding debate; and the importance of coordinating efforts with other Committees and Standing Commissions.

Mission Funding

As the result of General Convention Resolution 2003–A140 and the urging of SCSD, a Task Force was established to develop short and long-term mission funding to articulate specific entrepreneurial initiatives in a strategic plan. The Mission Funding Task Force was constituted and presented a report on its findings to SCSD. As per its

canonical charge, SCSD endorsed the recommendation that, with the other issues this triennium, the best course of action would be to encourage the new Presiding Bishop to move forward with mission funding.

In a letter to the members of the Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of a Presiding Bishop, the SCSD expressed its belief that the new Presiding Bishop should have the “ability to discern and to clearly articulate vision; the ability to articulate and to live into a strong theology of stewardship; the experience and the confidence to facilitate a major capital campaign and to personally solicit major gifts.”

Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development Stewardship Statement

The Commission’s work was informed by the prayerful creation of a statement proclaiming its beliefs and commitment to stewardship. SCSD recommends that all vestries, parishes and dioceses formulate their own statements. Terry Parsons, the Church Center’s Missioner for Stewardship, facilitated the process and the final version was adopted for publication in July 2005 with members signing the document.

WE BELIEVE in a generous, loving, and self-giving God.

WE BELIEVE THAT:

- All that we are and all that we have comes from God.
- God has been generous to us so that we can be generous to others.
- That we are a society that is challenged by an addictive, self-destructive relationship with money and possessions.
- Christ longs to set us free from this bondage and restore us to life-giving relationships with God, each other, and all creation.

WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

- Staying close to Jesus who is the one who revitalizes and transforms us.
- Discerning God’s will for our lives through the holy habits of daily prayer, study, weekly worship, Sabbath, tithing, and other intentional spiritual practices.
- Living enthusiastically, sharing ourselves (all that we are) and our gifts from God (all that we have) to be instruments of God’s reconciling love in the world.
- Giving to God the *first* portion of our time, talent, money and all our resources – not merely the leftovers.

WE PLEDGE OURSELVES to dare to imagine, initiate, and create personal and corporate ministries that can be outward and visible signs of God’s kingdom on earth.

WE INVITE individuals, congregations, and dioceses to join us in this lifelong, joyful, transforming, and liberating response to God’s call to us. This includes the General Convention mandates for 0.7% giving to meet the Millennium Development Goals, the 1% giving to seminaries, 50/50 giving, and Christian witness at life’s end through planned giving. And, we encourage them to develop their own stewardship statements that can be catalysts for living Christ’s gospel in fresh ways in this generation.

Debt Education

The Commission discussed the church as a source of debt education. The church must become a safe place to talk about money, financial planning, and debt including the conversation about the relationship between the debt culture and the online culture. Parishes are encouraged to parallel the acceptance of online donations with debt education, and to explore accepting debit, rather than credit, online.

Questionnaire for Seminaries

SCSD continued the work of the previous triennium by holding a meeting at a seminary and drafting a questionnaire for seminaries and seminarians to identify and foster stewardship education in seminary education. This work was completed under the guidance of The Rev. Dr. Richard Hamlin and will need to be completed in the next triennium.

Approval of Executive Council Plans

Meeting January 11, 2005 in San Antonio, Texas, the SCSD, according to its canonical responsibilities, approved a plan for a limited solicitation of funds for the renovation of the Chapel of Christ the Lord at the Episcopal Church Center. At that same meeting, the SCSD discussed possible sources of funding from various foundations to support extra-budgetary mission opportunities may become available to DFMS. The SCSD recommended that

the Executive Council adopt a policy to “further the mission and ministry of the Church, including seeking funding through foundation grants” with the necessary mechanism needed for implementation.

2003 General Convention Resolutions

The Commission only dealt with the two resolutions referred to all CCABs. In response to *GC Resolution 2003–A010*, all but two of our members received anti-racism training and those who have not are planning to participate in training. The Commission has not produced any materials that would require adding “Anglican Communion” to a publication as per *GC Resolution 2003–D011*.

Office of Stewardship and TENS

The SCSD continues to be thankful for the work of the Office of Stewardship and The Episcopal Network for Stewardship (TENS) in promoting responsible stewardship and stewardship formation in the Episcopal Church. We commend to the church their websites, particularly for their lists or resources and materials: www.tens.org and www.episcopalchurch.org.

Recommendations for the Next Three Years and Beyond

During the next triennium, the Commission shall:

- Connect with seminaries, seminarians, local bishops, and diocesan stewardship leaders at meetings.
- Continue the dialogue about online giving and monitor developments in that area, with special consideration to generational differences and to issues of consumer debt.
- Continue to look at the stewardship formation of clergy and of early enquiry on stewardship theology and practice of those seeking ordination.
- Consider issues related to environmental stewardship, sustainable development, implementation of millennium development goals, and the possibilities for individual, congregational, and diocesan investments in community development banks.

75TH GENERAL CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

Resolution A099 Stewardship and Ordination

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 75th General Convention direct that bishops and/or
- 2 Commissions on Ministry include on written applications for postulancy a question about the applicant’s
- 3 theology and practice of stewardship.

EXPLANATION

Since clergy have a primary responsibility for stewardship formation, it is crucial that conversation about the theology and practice of stewardship be part of the discernment process and continuing formation of clergy.

Resolution A100 Christian Formation

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 75th General Convention direct all Commissions, Committees,
- 2 Agencies, and Boards (CCABs) to respond to the crisis in Christian formation in the Episcopal Church by
- 3 including in their deliberations and work during the next triennium the task of nurturing the selfless, responsible,
- 4 and faithful use of resources for the growth, health, and mission of the church and report on their work to
- 5 the 76th General Convention; and be it further
- 6 *Resolved*, That the following CCABs give special focus to this work: the Standing Commission on Liturgy and
- 7 Music, to provide collects and special forms of prayers of the people and other resources to emphasize
- 8 formation; the Standing Commission on Domestic Mission and Evangelism to design strategies for incorporating
- 9 formation into all areas of parish life; and be it further
- 10 *Resolved*, That program areas, particularly Ministries with Young People, Congregational Development, and
- 11 Ethnic Congregational Development, report their work in formation to the Executive Council for inclusion
- 12 in its report to the 76th General Convention; and be it further
- 13 *Resolved*, That the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church provide a comprehensive report
- 14 on formation (as defined in this resolution) throughout the Episcopal Church and present its report to the
- 15 76th General Convention.

EXPLANATION

The SCSD has determined that there is a formation crisis in the church. The selfless, responsible, and faithful use of resources is a hallmark of the Christian way of life and essential for the growth, health, and mission of the church. The SCSD recognizes the influence of legislative bodies (CCABs) and program groups in the life and work of the church, and seeks their active involvement in the forming of stewards of all ages.

Resolution A101 Stewardship of Relationships

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That as our Baptismal Covenant calls us “to seek and serve Christ in
- 2 all persons, loving [our] neighbors as [ourselves],” that members of the 75th General Convention offer themselves
- 3 to an individual from whom they have become separated, asking Christ’s forgiveness from that person before
- 4 the close of this Convention; and be it further
- 5 *Resolved*, That members of the 75th Convention, upon returning to their worshipping communities, invite their
- 6 church to participate in a similar act of reconciliation.

EXPLANATION

God gives us to each other as gifts and we are called to be good stewards of these relationships. Something of God resides in each of us, and we confirm that each time our bodies absorb the body and blood of Christ. This resolution models a way of looking beyond ourselves to see Christ in the face of our neighbor.

Resolution A102 Culture of Debt

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 75th General Convention direct each diocese, over the
- 2 course of the next triennium, to offer training, education, and resources that promote the healthy role of
- 3 money in our lives, biblical teachings about financial matters, and the faithful habits of budgeting, sharing,
- 4 saving, responsible handling of debt, and life and estate planning. The Office of Stewardship is directed to
- 5 train a team of trainers capable of leading these diocesan events; and be it further
- 6 *Resolved*, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance
- 7 to consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

EXPLANATION

The average American family carries over \$9,000 in consumer debt, while the average after-tax savings rate has plummeted to 0.2%. Young adults (25 and under) are the fastest growing segment of the population filing personal bankruptcies. In addition to the cost to personal and family spiritual life, personal debt poses a profound threat to the spiritual, emotional, and financial health of congregations. Debt has the capacity to cripple our future.

Building on Resolution 2003–D033 (Encourage basic financial teaching) passed by the 74th General Convention, the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development urges the Episcopal Church to commit to the well-being of others, society, and the world by taking a leadership role in making the church a safe, skilled place in which to help people address the serious issues of debt, greed, hyper-consumerism, and cultural pressures that encourage people to spend beyond their means.

Resolution A103 Worship Resources

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That during the first year of the 2007–2009 triennium, the chairs
- 2 of the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development and the Standing Commission on Liturgy and
- 3 Music, in consultation with the Office of Stewardship and the Liturgical Officer, appoint an ad-hoc committee
- 4 of not more than eight persons, including two members of the Standing Commission on Stewardship and
- 5 Development and two members of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, to collect and develop
- 6 intergenerational worship resources with stewardship themes for presentation to the 76th General Convention;
- 7 and be it further
- 8 *Resolved*, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance
- 9 to consider a budget allocation of \$20,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

EXPLANATION

We understand the call to Christian stewardship to be a call to live more fully into our baptismal promises. Furthermore, it involves every aspect of our lives. These propositions were detailed more fully in the Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development's report to the 74th General Convention, particularly in the section presenting a theology of stewardship and advocating a personal discipline of holy habits. (2003 Blue Book, p. 268ff)

For many in our church, Sunday worship is the only venue for Christian formation. Sunday worship is a crucial time for forming and reinforcing our understandings of Christian living. Consequently, it is essential that our resources for worship include a wide variety of materials which reflect broad and pervasive understandings of stewardship. There is also a need for the collection and creation of additional worship resources to including collects, forms of the Prayers of the People and Post-communion prayers to strengthen and broaden the ways these messages can be delivered in worship.

Such resources could take a variety of forms. At the very least, there is a need for a variety of collects rooted in the baptismal vows and the practice of holy habits which could be used to conclude the Prayers of the People; for a post-communion prayer that more explicitly links the Eucharist with our stewardship of the Gospel, of our lives, and of our world; for patterns of developing offertory sentences which link the mission of the church with invitation to gratitude and generosity. There are undoubtedly many other needs and possibilities, as well.

What is needed is collaboration between gifted and creative liturgists and committed and innovative thinkers about stewardship. Such collaboration could produce much needed resources to enrich our worship and thereby greatly enhance faithful stewardship in our members.

BUDGET APPROPRIATION

Through December of 2005, the Commission spent \$23,794 on meetings and other expenses. The Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development will hold four meetings in the next triennium for a cost of \$50,000.

SUMMARY

The Standing Commission on Stewardship and Development faithfully submits this report to the 75th General Convention with the hope that, above and beyond the many issues facing The Episcopal Church and the world, our gratitude and our belief that "all that we are and all that we have comes from God" make us good stewards of God's gifts. In the words of the Commission's Stewardship Statement: "We invite individuals, congregations, and dioceses to join us in this lifelong, joyful, transforming, and liberating response to God's call to us."