

STANDING COMMISSION ON THE MISSION AND EVANGELISM OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Membership

The Rev. Deborah Royals, *Chair*, 2015
Mrs. Mary B. Stevenson, *Vice Chair*, 2015
Ms. Kaileen Alston, *Secretary*, 2012
Ms. Megan Anderson, 2015
The Rev. Canon Dennis Blauser, 2015
The Rev. Canon Virginia Doctor, 2015
Mr. Sam Dorr
The Rt. Rev. Julio Holguin, 2015
The Rt. Rev. Jeffrey Lee, 2015
Mr. Jim Naughton, 2015
Ms. Rebecca Roberts, 2015
The Rt. Rev. Dabney Smith, 2015
The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, *Ex Officio*
The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, *Ex Officio*
The Rev. Susan Brown Snook, *Executive Council Liaison*
The Rev. Daniel Velez-Rivera, *Liaison to the President of the House of Deputies*
The Rev. Thomas Brackett, *Staff*

Changes in Membership

There were three changes in the membership of the Commission this triennium: Ms. Megan Anderson, having been appointed as a lay member of the SCME, was ordained in 2013, making her appointment invalid; she was not replaced. Mr. Jim Naughton resigned, and Mr. Sam Dorr resigned the commission for personal reasons; neither was replaced.

Representation at General Convention

Deputy Molly Stevenson and Bishop Dabney Smith are authorized to receive non-substantive amendments to this report at General Convention.

Summary of Work

Mandate: To identify, study, and consider policies, priorities, and concerns as to the effectiveness of The Episcopal Church in advancing, within this Church's jurisdictions, God's mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, including patterns and directions for evangelism, Church planting, leadership development, and ministries that engage the diversity of the Church's membership and the communities it serves; and to make recommendations to General Convention.

Given this charge, and guided by the Church's stated focus on the Five Marks of Mission — to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom; to teach, baptize and nurture new believers; to respond to human need by loving service; to seek to transform unjust structures of society; to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation; and to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth — the Standing Commission on Mission & Evangelism concentrated its work on our Church's approach to mission and evangelism.

Meetings

St. Louis, Missouri; November 12-15, 2012

Members of the Commission gathered for the first time and reviewed the work of the previous triennium and the resolutions referred to the SCME, and established a budget for the triennial work.

The Commission considered resolutions that had been referred to it by General Convention. These include Resolution A010, which calls upon the Standing Commission to help develop parameters for the parochial report that would include the full scope of mission and ministry expressed in The Episcopal Church; and A076, a resolution on strengthening small congregations.

Essential to our work are the definitions of “mission” and “evangelism” — both of which were defined in our previous triennial work. This body adopted them as our understanding going forward.

- Mission: “The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ” (Book of Common Prayer, 855). “Mission is our response to God, stretching our personal and community boundaries to participate in God’s purpose to restore and heal all of creation” (2009 *Blue Book* report).
- Evangelism: “To share by word and example the Good News of God in Christ” (Book of Common Prayer, 306). Evangelism is sharing the love of Christ and the good news of God’s actions in our lives — the good news of the kingdom coming to life among us — in the language of the people, so that people can become disciples of Jesus Christ (2009 *Blue Book* report).

We broke into working groups, each of which expressed the best use of its gifts to do research, craft strategy, and building relationships around three specific priority areas: *Mission, diversity and identity*, and *leadership and proclamation*. The Commission framed its work in terms of the three “Ls”: Look (at what is working); Lead (by analyzing leadership curricula, developing a new one, and initiating trainings); and Live (as in getting on with the work among God’s diverse people.)

Over the next several months, the Commission experienced three changes that greatly impacted its ability to move forward until these changes were addressed. The first was the notification that our Secretary was not able to continue due to a conflict of interest. The second was the notification that the \$41,350 budget requested had been reduced to \$16,000 and that the Commission was being encouraged to do all of its work via Adobe Connect and at one face-to-face meeting. The third action taken related to the notice that Ms. Megan Anderson, Co-Chair, would no longer be eligible to serve as appointed due to her ordination.

Adobe Connect meeting June 18, 2013

The Commission reconvened in order to elect a new Secretary and to revise the work of the Commission to meet the budget allowed for the triennial work. The subgroups revised their work, given the budget constraints, and will seek to collaborate with Executive Council’s Committee on Local Mission and Ministry, the Standing Commission on the State of the Church, and TEC staff officers in order to realize triennial goals.

Adobe Connect meeting July 16, 2013

The Rev. Susan Snook led the SCME in addressing the budget-visioning questions provided by the Executive Council’s Joint Standing Committee on Finances for Mission.

Adobe Connect meeting February 6, 2014

A joint meeting with Executive Council’s Joint Standing Committee on Local Mission and Ministry reflected the call to collaborate with other committees, commissions, and staff in order to realize the triennial goals. Minutes for this meeting were documented by LM&M and after review of A073 continuity in our work was identified. LM&M shared the applications of the funded ministries with the SCME.

Adobe Connect meeting March 17, 2014

Three goals for the remainder of the triennium were identified. Through the Mission Enterprise Zone-funded ministry, the SCME would be able to reflect back to the Church key factors for identifying and preparing leaders for the Church, while holding up the diversity of faith communities as expressions of our Church's identity and growth, and supporting their full inclusion into the life of the Church. Our success in doing this would be dependent on collaborating with our staff liaison, The Rev. Tom Brackett, and on collaboration with the Standing Commission on State of the Church.

Adobe Connect meeting May 9, 2014

The date, time, and place were established for the SCME face-to-face meeting, and the agenda for the meeting evolved to include an invitation for three to five Mission Enterprise Zone-funded ministries that would come and present their successes, challenges, and reflections on the process. A subcommittee was established to narrow down the selection process for the invitations, while every member was encouraged to read through the funded applications.

Additionally, it was established that although there had been many changes and setbacks for the Standing Commission on the State of the Church, an open line of communication had been established regarding Resolution A010 and the revision of the parochial report. A conversation with the Standing Commission on the Structure of the Church had also revealed an interest in pursuing support to revise the Parochial Report. However, it was also established that the timeline for creating revisions differed from the standard triennial work of the standing commissions. The Standing Commission on the State of the Church will make recommendations for the succeeding body to pursue this work, and the SCME proposes the following resolution to be considered at the 78th General Convention in 2015.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

A084: MODIFY PAROCHIAL REPORT

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the Parochial Report be modified to include reporting of congregational activity in all five Marks of Mission; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese be encouraged to include in its canons a category for associated worshipping communities, which may or may not pay diocesan assessment according to rules established by the diocese, and which should include new church plants, worshipping communities whose design broadens the Church's perspective and reach into mission, and Mission Enterprise Zone initiatives; and be it further

Resolved, That such associated worshipping communities file a parochial report each year reporting their membership, ministries, attendance, and financial data; and be it further

Resolved, That the main measure of weekly attendance at Episcopal congregations, including associated worshipping communities, shall be Average Weekly Attendance, defined as the sum of Average Sunday Attendance and Average Distinct Attendance, as defined below; and be it further

Resolved, That the Parochial Report be modified to include a category to report Average Distinct Attendance, defined as average per-week attendance at non-Sunday worship services, most of whose participants do not attend regular Sunday services, e.g., Episcopal school worship, worship services at retirement centers, house churches, and other such non-Sunday worship congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Parochial Report be modified to report the names of lay leaders who are licensed under Title III, Canon 4.1.a, or who are otherwise recognized by the ecclesiastical authority, who have primary leadership responsibility for worshipping communities.

EXPLANATION

The proposed changes expand the Parochial Report to more completely reflect the extension of mission and ministry in our congregations, including many worshipping communities that have previously not been reported within the Parochial Report.

Adobe Connect meeting July 1, 2014

Five ministries funded in part by the Mission Enterprise Zone funding were identified and would be invited to present to the SCME in person at the upcoming meeting in New Mexico. The chair of LM&M updated the SCME on its recommendation to Executive Council to ensure future funding of the Mission Enterprise Zones in the new budget. They were also looking forward to the web platform that would highlight these ministries for the Church. Approval to fund this project was successful and would be coordinated by The Rev. Tom Brackett's office in collaboration with Communications. Bi-monthly forums in which to share best practices and establish a support network for ministry developers had been established and are being hosted by The Rev. Tom Brackett.

The SCME identified a key challenge for the Church as it reflects on how it lives out God's mission and ministry in the world. The system supports a budget-driven process that not only limits, but also eliminates growth through new expressions of faith communities. A key example of this process is found in the limitations created in preventing standing commissions from meeting face-to-face throughout the triennium. While technology has created new opportunities for communication, it is not the opinion of this Standing Commission that it was intended to replace all other forms of communication.

Bosque Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico, September 29 – October 2, 2014

Our time together was framed in Gospel Based Discipleship and began with a review of our triennial work. The Rev. Tom Brackett (staff liaison) and Anne Watkins (chair of LM&M) joined us by conference call and shared their own summary of the triennial work as well as the challenges of a system attempting to transition toward being more mission-minded.

A framework for each of the Mission Enterprise Zone ministry developer's time with the SCME was established and served as a tool for setting the goals for this report. The four ministries reporting include a fair cross-section of the ministries funded. One new bi-cultural church plant, one new church plant, one Native American ministry and one new expression of an ecclesial community were represented. Each of four ministries shared a description of the ministry, their challenges and hopes for the ministry, a very frank reflection of the funding process, their diocesan support, and the online forums. Common themes from these reports include:

- There is a continued need for funding.
- It is refreshing that TEC recognizes ministry in the margins of the Church.
- Recognition that the level of diocesan involvement in these ministries varies greatly, as does their understanding of how funding is accounted.
- Communication from TEC to the Church and from the Church to TEC is often insufficient, ineffective, and cumbersome.
- Clarity of process (application and reporting) would be more helpful.
- Collegial and peer support of ministry developers is difficult to establish and maintain, let alone to develop best practices as a way to encourage future growth in mission-minded ministries.
- Quarterly reports could be more relevant to ministry.

There was a clear sense of the incarnational ministry in all the ministries presented. It was also clear that the Mission Enterprise Zone (A073) funding has been a first step in the Church's goal to be more mission-minded and mission-driven. Given what we have learned about the importance of funding mission in a very intentional way, and about the contribution that it can make toward the structure of the Church's reflecting a more mission-driven attitude, we commend the following resolution.

A085: CONTINUE MARK 1 FUNDING (MISSION ENTERPRISE ZONES)

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That each Diocese be encouraged to identify Mission Enterprise Zones, defined as a geographic area, as a group of congregations, or as an entire diocese committed to creating worshipping communities of people who are historically underrepresented and underserved in The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That each Diocese also be encouraged to identify opportunities for evangelistic mission within the diocese, including areas where new churches could be planted to reach new people with the gospel of Christ; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention continue to fund the First Mark of Mission initiatives, including church planting and Mission Enterprise Zones; and be it further

Resolved, That the First Mark of Mission grants shall be administered by a grants committee established for that purpose by Executive Council; and be it further

Resolved, That Dioceses are encouraged to apply for one or more First Mark of Mission matching grants to facilitate the development and support of new church plants or Mission Enterprise Zones, with exceptions to the requirement for diocesan matching funds in cases of diocesan financial limitations; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies appoint a Task Force on Mission and Evangelism to share resources and best practices for church planting and Mission Enterprise Zones with the wider Church to create and oversee a process for accountability for such grants, including discussion with the grants committee, and communication with dioceses about the availability of grants and the process for receiving them; and be it further

Resolved, That the Communications Office, in collaboration with the Task Force on Mission and Evangelism, create and maintain a website with video and other resources to share the stories and ideas of Mission Enterprise Zones and church plants with the wider Church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force on Mission and Evangelism bring together mission developers of Mission Enterprise Zones and church plants that receive funding under this resolution once each triennium for a face-to-face gathering for sharing of best practices, upholding ministry leader wellness; mutual guidance and support; and sharing of stories, resources, and prayer; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses be encouraged to officially recognize and incorporate new church plants and Mission Enterprise Zones into the full life of the diocese, including voice and vote at diocesan conventions, convocations, or councils; and be it further

Resolved, That together, diocesan leaders and ministry developers report to the Task Force on Mission and Evangelism the results of their development of church plants and Mission Enterprise Zones annually, according to a process developed by the Task Force; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$5 million to implement this resolution during the 2016-2018 triennium.

EXPLANATION

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” – Matthew 28:18-20

Mission Enterprise Zone and church plant funding was created by the 77th General Convention and has resulted in 40 projects across the Church, receiving a total of \$2 million of funding. The availability of this funding has encouraged and enabled the development of many new and creative forms of worshipping communities across the Church. The development of new churches and new forms of worshipping communities needs to continue in the next triennium in order to reach new people, including those who are historically underrepresented in The Episcopal Church. The funding in this resolution will continue to encourage and enable the development of such new communities.

With the growth of the Latino population in the United States, it is also imperative that our Church plan proactively in response to the growth. Pew Research provides the compelling statistics¹ supporting this need as does current census data.² We are called to be the Word of God in the world, responding contextually as our baptismal vows lead us to respect the dignity of every human being, and responding as a community of faith rather than a system of programs. We commend to General Convention this resolution in response to the need.

A086: CREATE TASK FORCE FOR LATINO-HISPANIC CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 78th General Convention affirm the work that the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries has done to identify congregations located in areas with high Latino/Hispanic populations and to provide them with detailed demographic reports, leadership training, training in cross-cultural awareness and marketing and advertising resources to help these congregations and other resources; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies, with the advice of the Missioner for Latino/Hispanic Ministries, create a Task Force on Latino/Hispanic Congregational Ministry Development to provide consultants who will work with congregations, lay leaders, clergy, and diocesan staff to implement the provisions of this resolution; and be it further

¹ <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2008/02/11/us-population-projections-2005-2050/>

² <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-02.pdf>

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries, in collaboration with the Task Force on Latino/Hispanic Congregational Ministry Development, to continue creating formation and leadership development resources and programs to meet the needs of clergy and lay leaders currently serving in Latino/Hispanic ministries, including the programs with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and other ecumenical partners focused on the continuing education and leadership development of clergy and lay leaders; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries, in collaboration with Task Force on Latino/Hispanic Congregational Ministry Development, create mechanisms for mentoring and coaching of clergy currently working in Latino/Hispanic ministries; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries, in collaboration with the Task Force on Latino/Hispanic Congregational Ministry Development, create resources for congregational development and redevelopment intended for diocesan staff, clergy, and lay leaders who are exploring establishing Latino/Hispanic bilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural worship ministries in their communities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries, in collaboration with the Task Force on Latino/Hispanic Congregational Ministry Development, create an intensive cultural-competency training program for diocesan staff members, seminarians, clergy, and lay leaders to gain language and cultural skills for ministry in bilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural Latino/Hispanic communities, including collaborations with Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seminaries and other ecumenical partners; and provide educational and media resources that will be easily accessible; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force on Latino/Hispanic Congregational Ministry Development conduct an annual evaluation of programs and review of the use of resources based on a survey of those being served; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$1,500,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

EXPLANATION

This resolution is intended to create a Task Force to oversee a team of professional consultants in collaboration with the Office for Latino/Hispanic Ministries to provide best practices and professional development (coaching) for lay leaders, seminarians, clergy, and diocesan staff in dioceses with existing Hispanic/Latino congregations.

This resolution is also intended to have the Task Force oversee a team of professional consultants in collaboration with the Office for Latino/Hispanic Ministries to provide cultural competency resources for lay leaders, seminarians, clergy, and diocesan staff in dioceses that want to explore Latino/Hispanic Ministries in the Episcopal Church.

Throughout the triennium, the SCME has experienced the true call to reflect God's presence by becoming God's hands, feet, voice, ears, and eyes in the world. This is the call of every person, in every place, and with all they have to offer, because these are the gifts God has provided for us to do God's work in the world.

With the focus of the Church shifting to a more grassroots reflection of this work, we are all being asked to evaluate our effectiveness and efficiency as stewards of the resources we share. The SCME has been most effective when it has been actively engaged in ministry in the Church, as was reflected by the previous triennium and the establishment of Mission Enterprise Zones. We have now reached another level of understanding for next steps, and it is our recommendation that General Convention consider the following resolution.

A087: CREATE TASK FORCE ON EVANGELISM

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 78th General Convention direct the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to create a Task Force on Evangelism to design and develop an Evangelism Resource to support dioceses, local congregations, Mission Enterprise Zone initiatives, and wider church needs as they participate in evangelism; and be it further

Resolved, That evangelism resources that have already been developed be collected by the Task Force for Evangelism for possible inclusion in the resource; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses be encouraged to utilize the Evangelism Resource to identify, train, equip, and license lay evangelists in accordance with Canon III.4.9; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force for Evangelism develop a survey instrument to evaluate each diocese's efforts and results annually during the triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$100,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

EXPLANATION

Evangelism is very important for the work of spreading the gospel of Christ. This resolution allows dioceses and congregations to share resources so that all can benefit from each other's work.

Budget

The Commission was budgeted \$16,000 for the 2013-2015 triennium. At the time of this report, the Committee had spent \$8,181.12 (\$247.92 Adobe Connect license in 2013 and \$425.00 Adobe license in 2014) with only \$7,508.20 spent for a face-to-face meeting in October 2014.

The emphasis on only meeting face-to-face once during the triennium greatly impacted our ability to form relationships and be productive. By planning to meet in the southwest, the SCME not only experienced a generous hospitality from the Diocese of the Rio Grande, but we also essentially spent only half of what we would have due to our careful stewardship of the resources entrusted to us.

We suggest that the SCME would have benefited from at least one other face-to-face meeting in 2013, particularly considering the scope of the work that had been accomplished in the previous triennium as it led the Church into a more mission-driven view of itself. As the Church considers funding for Task Force work and for the Commission in the future, we would hope that it would take into account the impact of its funding priorities.