

STANDING COMMISSION ON LITURGY AND MUSIC SUB-COMMITTEE ON CONGREGATIONAL SONG

Membership

Ms. Jessica Nelson Co-Chair	Mississippi, IV	2018
Mrs. Ellen Johnston	Virginia, III	2018
The Rev. Devon Anderson, <i>Ex Officio</i>	Minnesota, VI	2018

Mandate

Resolution 2015-A060 Develop a Variety of Musical Resources for Congregational Song

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention empower the Congregational Song Task Force of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to further the mission of The Episcopal Church by enlivening and invigorating congregational song through the development of a variety of musical resources; and be it further

Resolved, That the Congregational Song Task Force of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music develop and expand the work begun in the World Music Project; 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 \$72,600 for the implementation of this resolution.

Resolution 2015-D060 Prepare a Plan for Revising the Hymnal

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) to prepare a plan for the comprehensive revision of the Hymnal 1982; and be it further

Resolved, That the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation \$25,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Summary of Work

2015-A060

In response to Resolution A060, the Congregational Song Task Force is specifically addressing the call to “enliven and invigorate congregational song through the development of a variety of resources” by developing a project in which information will be collected from a sample of participants in each province to discern which hymns and songs are being sung in parishes in the Episcopal Church. This is a necessary preliminary step in developing further resources for congregational song and seeks to specify what types of resources are needed. The task force plans to convene a symposium by the end of the 2018-2021 triennium to bring together at least one participant from each province to discuss the functions of the hymns and songs they use, as well as identify new sources for hymnody. Though passed, A060 was not funded by General Convention, so the task force applied for a Constable Grant in the amount of \$28,050 in November 2017 to fund this project. Pursuing this and other outside funding sources allows us to proceed with planning without being hindered by lack of financial resources.

2015-D060

In response to Resolution 2015-D060, directing the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to devise a process for the revision of the hymnal, the SCLM declined to act. Our research determined no historical precedent in the Episcopal Church for a hymnal to be revised prior to the *Book of Common Prayer*. The SCLM would like General Convention to make decisions regarding whether or not to revise the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* before any further decisions are made regarding revision of the *Hymnal 1982*.

In addition, after reviewing *The Hymnal Revision Feasibility Study* produced by the Church Pension Group we discerned no widespread interest in revision.

[This document is available in the Research Reports section of the Research and Data section of the Church Pension Group website at <https://www.cpg.org/linkservid/57003D75-DA12-05B2-F4FFD5819BE00E5A/showMeta/0/?label=Hymnal%20Revision%20Feasibility%20Study>]

The conclusion of the study reads in part, “That 13,000 people took the time to complete a lengthy survey on the question of hymnal revision shows how central *The Hymnal 1982* is to the life of The Episcopal Church. This should give us pause. A rush to revise the Hymnal could seriously undermine and weaken the Church, alienating those who have remained with The Episcopal Church through difficult times. Nevertheless, to do nothing threatens the long-term viability of the denomination. And so while we do not see this report as giving a green light to hymnal revision, nor do we believe it is a red light. Rather, it is a signal to proceed with caution before a decision is taken to go full speed ahead.” CPG arrived at this conclusion after assembling both quantitative and qualitative data from a substantial online survey as well as a series of in-person interviews. CPG collected information from a

geographically and demographically diverse cross-section of the Episcopal Church that included clergy, lay-people and professional church musicians actively working in parishes of the Episcopal Church.

Finally, though General Convention passed this resolution, it was unfunded.

Supplemental Material

THE ONCE AND FUTURE HYMNAL:

Developments in Culture, Language, Theology, Technology, and Musical Style

On October 23-24, sixty-five clergy and musicians from around the country gathered at Virginia Theological Seminary for a consultation centered around The Hymnal 1982 and its supplements. The premise of the gathering was to hear from experts as to what had been happening in culture, language, theology, technology, and musical style since the approval of the hymnal in 1982. The organizers of the consultation, Ellen Johnston, Director, Center for Liturgy and Music, and the Rev. Dr. William Bradley Roberts, Professor of Church Music, also hoped to inform the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music in their deliberations regarding hymnal revision.

Dr. James Litton, who had served on the committee to revise the hymnal gave the keynote address and described the process, surprising many with the observation that conversations about a “new” hymnal had begun as early as the 1960s. The Achievements of the Hymnal 82 and its Supplements (Marilyn Haskel and the Rev. Dr. William Bradley Roberts), the Developments in Culture in 1982 (the Rev. Dr. Frank Wade) and the Developments in Theology (the Rev. Dr. Katherine Grieb, Professor of New Testament at VTS) comprised the remainder of the plenary addresses. Recordings of these addresses can be found at www.liturgyandmusic.com.

The rest of the conference included panel discussions about developments in language (Dr. Mary Louise Bringle, Susan Palo Cherwien, the Rev. Carl Daw), developments in musical style (Dr. Michael Hawn, Carl MaultsBy, Andrew Sheranian, Keith Tan), and developments in technology (Nancy Bryan, David Eicher, Marilyn Haskel, the Rev. Martin Seltz).

In addition, conferees heard from ecumenical partners, the Rev. Martin Seltz from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and David Eicher from the Presbyterian Church USA about the recent revisions of the hymnals in those denominations.

Participants at the conference contributed to the discussion with their thoughts about the achievements of the hymnal and its supplements and new categories of hymnody needed. They also spoke to the need for more hymns for Advent and Lent as well as hymns speaking to the stewardship of creation and social justice.