

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2022-D027  
**Title:** Encouraging Utilization of Virtual Governance Options for Creation Care  
**Proposer:** Deputy Nathan Brown  
**Topic:** Environment

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### **Directly Related:** (Attached)

2018-A014 Create a Pilot Carbon Offset Program  
2018-C008 Encourage Sustainable Choices to Combat Climate Change  
1994-A044 Adopt Environmentally Sound Practices at Church Meetings

### **Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2018-A018 Adopt Bishops' Pastoral Teaching and Commit to Paris Climate Accord  
2012-D055 Advocate for Reducing Climate-Changing Emissions  
2006-C018 Recognize Global Warming and Reaffirm Church's Environmental Responsibility  
1991-D041 Implement 1988 Lambeth Resolution No.040 on the Environment

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.*

# D027 - Encouraging Utilization of Virtual Governance Options for Creation Care

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Deputy Nathan Brown

**Endorsed by:** Mr. Richard Pryor, The Rev. David C Wacaster

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** No

**Has Budget Implications:** No

**Cost:**

**HiA:** HB

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** 20 - Environmental Stewardship & Care of Creation

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** Yes

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## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That this 80th General Convention encourages greater utilization of virtual meetings in lieu of in person meetings for the Executive Council, Interim Bodies, and any other organization within the Governance of the Episcopal Church at any level of the Church when either 1: A flight or other extensive travel generating a significant carbon footprint is required and/or 2: The costs of virtual meeting(s) represents a significant savings for the Church; and be it further

*Resolved*, that this Convention recognizes that we are inheritors of God's charge in Genesis 2:15 to "till and keep" the land, and that it is our responsibility to be good stewards of God's creation and preserve this fragile Earth, our island home; and be it further

*Resolved*, that this Convention encourages the Church, across all levels of governance, to consider, explore, and continuously implement new and innovative ideas to promote new ways to better learn about and interact with our colleagues throughout the Church and throughout the world, promoting strengthening our Church and community through virtual settings; and be it further

*Resolved*, that this Convention expresses its sense that, moving forward, Governance meetings and other administrative gatherings of the Church should be held virtually if

substantial travel is required, unless there is good cause to hold such meetings or gatherings in person.

## **Explanation**

Each year, the Episcopal Church spends a significant amount of money on travel, lodgings, and other fees associated with in-person gatherings, which also contributes to increasing our carbon footprint. As a result of the pandemic, the Church and the wider world has gained a greater competency in the use of virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom, Teams, WebEx, etc.

The Church has continually long affirmed the importance of Creation Care and being good stewards of our planet, as recognized by 1991-D041 affirming Resolution #040 of Lambeth 1988. Given the skills we have developed, it is time for the Church to normalize the use of virtual meetings for various organizations, moving away from the model of holding meetings and other gatherings throughout North America that would normally result in having to travel great distances, at great costs, and at great carbon generation in order to meet.

This resolution encourages all levels of the Church to embrace the idea of a “default” mentality of having such meetings virtually when such extended travel is required, which will not only save our Church money that we can use to fund other pressing commitments, but will also help ensure we lower our carbon footprint.

The greater use of virtual meetings will also provide greater opportunities for individuals who can not take extended time to travel (ie, because of work, accessibility, caretaking, etc.) to become involved in our Governance process, as the time needed to dedicate to a virtual meeting may be significantly less than the added time associated for travel and other logistics involved with in-person gatherings.



**Resolution Number:** 2018-A014  
**Title:** Create a Pilot Carbon Offset Program  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention recognizes the reality of human-caused climate change through continued reliance on fossil fuel-based transportation; and be it further*

*Resolved, That because travel done on behalf of The Jesus Movement contributes to this problem, we recognize the need to develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce, and ultimately eliminate this carbon footprint; and be it further*

*Resolved, That, as a first step in the process, by offsetting the impact of the travel done on behalf of The Jesus Movement, the Church witnesses to its care for God's creation; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the General Convention direct the Executive Council to draft a policy in 2018 requiring the use of socially responsible Carbon Offsets with particular attention to the social, political, economic, and ecological implications of carbon-credit generating programs by the Episcopal Church Center, and that such a program be tested and piloted as during the triennium for the work of The Episcopal Church including the travel of its staff, standing commissions and interim bodies; and be it further*

*Resolved, That a plan for a broader offset program for all church travel be presented for consideration at the 80th General Convention; and be it further*

*Resolved, That \$25,000 be allocated for the pilot carbon offset program.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 1109-1110.



**Resolution Number:** 2018-C008  
**Title:** Encourage Sustainable Choices to Combat Climate Change  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention in keeping with the House of Bishops' 2011 commitment to combat climate change urge that the members of The Episcopal Church strive to transform our individual and communal lives towards sustainability; and be it further*  
*Resolved, That Episcopalians be encouraged to use a web-based tool to support healthy, sustainable choices; and be it further*  
*Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate \$30,000 to be devoted over the triennium 2019-2021 to make a web-based carbon tracking tool such as "Sustaining Earth, Our Island Home" available to all Episcopalians.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 404-405.



**Resolution Number:** 1994-A044  
**Title:** Adopt Environmentally Sound Practices at Church Meetings  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred As Amended  
**Final Text:**

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

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

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

**Use pottery or glassware instead of plastic or paper cups when possible;**

**Photocopy both sides of papers distributed to deputies;**

**Use recycled papers, non-toxic dyes and/or appropriate technologies for printing;**

*and be it further*

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

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

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

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), pp. 352-53.