

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2022-D064
Title: Endorse and Encourage Green Deal Legislation
Proposer: Mr. Richard Pryor
Topic: Environment

Directly Related: (Attached)

2018-A014 Create a Pilot Carbon Offset Program
2018-A018 Adopt Bishops' Pastoral Teaching and Commit to Paris Climate Accord
2018-A020 Divest From Fossil Fuel Companies and Reinvest in Clean Energy
2018-A213 Collect Data on Parish Energy Usage
2018-C020 Urge Support for Carbon Accounting Policies for Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
2018-D053 Call for Model Policies for Sustainable Church Land Use
2015-A030 Support Ecologically Responsible Stewardship of Church Property
2015-A171 Give Thanks for the Papal Encyclical on Climate Change
2012-D055 Advocate for Reducing Climate-Changing Emissions
2009-C011 Directs Advocacy on Renewable Energy and Environmental Stewardship
2009-D031 Urge Commitment to Lower Carbon Output
1991-A195 Affirm Environmental Responsibility and an Environmental Stewardship Team

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

2018-A010 Encourage Planting of Paris Groves To Give Thanks for Creation

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.

D064 - Endorse and Encourage Green Deal Legislation

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Mr. Richard Pryor

Endorsed by: Deputy Nathan Brown, The Rev. Jordan Trumble

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: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church acknowledges our planet's continued descent into climate chaos, including our projected arrival to 1.5 degrees celsius of warming above pre-industrial levels, the target limit set out in the Paris Climate Accords within the next few decades; and be it further

Resolved, that the Episcopal Church recognizes that our projected arrival at 1.5 degrees may lead to a 2 degree warming beyond pre-industrialized levels which would cause mass migration, a loss of coral reefs, increased exposure to deadly heat stress, and significant damage to public infrastructure; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention direct the Office of Government Relations and urge all Episcopalians to advocate for our governments to address environmental and ecological issues, not least the Green New Deal and other associated "Green Deals," to be defined as "broad and ambitious packages of new policies and investments in communities, infrastructure, and technology to help communities, regions, and nations achieve environmental sustainability and economic stability"; and be it further

Resolved, that the Episcopal Church call on all elected and appointed officials to advocate for policies to combat climate change, not least the Green New Deal and other associated "Green Deals" in states and local areas; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention charges the dioceses and parishes of the Episcopal Church with advocating for those same policies in their communities and states; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention direct the Office of Government Relations and urge all Episcopalians to support regulation of major polluting industries, including cryptocurrencies, industry, and agriculture, as well as transitioning to a green economy; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention charge the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church to add a question to the Parochial Report regarding how each parish is reducing their carbon footprint and to share those results as a whole with the Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention charges the dioceses and parishes of the Episcopal Church with taking concrete actions to reduce the effects of climate change; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention directs the Executive Council and the Standing Committee on Structure, Governance, Constitution, and Canons to study and consider the possibility of adding portions relating to environmental stewardship in the Canons of the Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, that this Convention transmit a message to each diocese of the Episcopal Church with a copy of this resolution before each Diocesan Convention following the 80th General Convention.

Explanation

After Pope Francis published his 2015 encyclical *Laudato si'*, where he noted that “the climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life,” Archbishop Joseph Kurtz of Louisville, then-president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, described the document as “our marching orders for advocacy.”s

That same year, Archbishop Justin Welby and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew wrote in a joint article in *The New York Times* that “all of us must act with generosity and compassion towards our fellow human beings by acting on climate change now. This is a shared moral responsibility and urgent requirement. Civil society, governmental authorities and religious leaders have an opportunity to make a difference in a way that bridges our diverse opinions and nationalities.” Then-Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori said that “Scientists can offer clarity and detail about what’s happening now, and projections about how this planetary ecosystem is likely to change. People of faith can offer hope for change in the minds, hearts, and actions of many who are concerned about the poor and vulnerable. Together, we can shift the dialogue, and the trajectory. There are abundant bridges to be built if we seek the full flourishing of this island home. We’re ready – and looking for partners.”

The Church can no longer wait for partners. We must be on the frontlines of fighting against climate change because the situation has never been more dire than it is right now. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s “Climate Change 2022” report ends with this

sobering thought - “The cumulative scientific evidence is unequivocal: Climate change is a threat to human well-being and planetary health. Any further delay in concerted anticipatory global action on adaptation and mitigation will miss a brief and rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all.” As a major contributor to carbon emissions through our countless buildings and frequent travel, the Episcopal Church can make a statement through supporting and leading climate action.

The Green New Deal is a text inspired by *Laudato si'* and other statements by religious leaders. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Senator Ed Markey of Massachusetts, in the act of introducing the Green New Deal resolution in 2019, showed the world the fruits of their Roman Catholic faith in seeking to replicate the radical love and compassion of Jesus Christ for this world, including our planet. Ocasio-Cortez has written in *America* magazine that we are called to share “a radical kind of love” inspired by Christ and shown first to the “least among us” and Markey states that his “basic text” for everything is the Sermon on the Mount.

Additionally, it is important to recognize that those leading the fight against climate change are the youngest among us, including the teenage activist Greta Thunberg; Varshini Prakash, founder of the Sunrise Movement; and the aforementioned Representative Ocasio-Cortez. As Prakash has asked, “Are we going to take action over the next 10 years to ensure our generation has a livable future, or are we going to continue to kick the can down the road and resign ourselves to live a life filled with chaos, violence, and uncertainty?” Because of that commitment, this resolution is proposed and endorsed by Deputies who are young adults.



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-A018
Title: Adopt Bishops' Pastoral Teaching and Commit to Paris Climate Accord
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention recognize that there is an important shift toward renewable energy which will help protect God's good creation. Supporting this shift is part of the Church's call to being part of the Jesus Movement in the world; and be it further
Resolved, That climate change be recognized as a human-made threat to all God's people, creatures and the entire created order, while particularly placing unjust and inequitable burdens and stresses on native peoples, those displaced by environmental change, poor communities and people of color; and be it further
Resolved, That the 79th General Convention adopt the House of Bishops' 2011 Pastoral Teaching on the Environment commitment as the official position of the church; and be it further
Resolved, That through our ongoing role as observers at the United Nations, we will continue to fully and completely "advocate for a fair, ambitious, and binding climate treaty," and participate in future meetings of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as an active, faithful and engaged voice for all of God's good earth; and be it further
Resolved, That as individuals and communities of faith, The Episcopal Church set an example, in the spirit of the Paris Climate Accord, by making intentional decisions about living lightly and gently on God's good earth, for example, through energy conservation, renewable energy, sustainable food practices and gardening; and be it further
Resolved, That dioceses, communities of faith and individuals committing to the Paris Climate Accord consider reporting on their commitments, actions and successes to the Executive Council.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 406.



Resolution Number: 2018-A020
Title: Divest From Fossil Fuel Companies and Reinvest in Clean Energy
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention call upon the Investment Committee of the Executive Council to report to Executive Council all steps taken in the past triennium to divest from fossil fuel companies and reinvest in clean renewable energy in a fiscally responsible manner in accordance with General Convention resolution 2015-C045; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention reaffirm the language of resolution GC2015-C045 urging all institutions, dioceses, and congregations of the Episcopal Church to engage the topic of divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in clean energy and encourage them to share progress toward this goal with the Executive Council and the Advisory Council on the Stewardship of Creation; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention commend the Church Pension Fund for its passion in responding to climate change and for its statement “This does not mean that we would never divest; to do so, however, we would have to believe that divesting would not negatively impact the financial performance of our portfolio” (CPF Report to the House of Deputies, November 2, 2017, page 6); and be it further

Resolved, That in light of this statement, that the General Convention urge CPF to be mindful of the Church’s desire to become increasingly invested in renewable and clean energy; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Church Pension Fund provide a report that includes a sustainability plan to the 80th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 1095-1096.



Resolution Number: 2018-A213
Title: Collect Data on Parish Energy Usage
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention direct the Executive Council to create a mechanism to acquire data on energy and water sources, usage and efficiency from all church properties; and be it further

Resolved, That such data be used to create educational resources that will assist faith communities and other Episcopal institutions to reduce their environmental impact; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program Budget and Finance allocate \$30,000 for acquisition and dissemination of this information.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 688.



Resolution Number: 2018-C020
Title: Urge Support for Carbon Accounting Policies for Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church shall work with people of good will to materially reduce emissions of greenhouse gases in order to stabilize our climate; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church support public policy which may include Carbon Fee and Dividend model or other means accounting for greenhouse gas emissions from carbon based fuels to mitigate further irreversible climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That in implementing any such policies, the church will advocate for appropriate measures to reduce the economic impacts on poor people and people of modest income, which means might include use of a trust fund paid for with carbon fees and distributed to the poorest people first.

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



Resolution Number: 2018-D053
Title: Call for Model Policies for Sustainable Church Land Use
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention recommends that all dioceses, faith communities and institutions create partnerships enabling the use of church-owned land for regenerative agriculture and biodiversity conservation projects in order to sequester carbon and to mitigate climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct the Executive Council to appoint a body to gather information from the Church Pension Group, dioceses and other sources in order to create an inventory of all church-owned properties; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention requests that each Diocese consider the potential for utilization of church-owned property for new ministries integrating the care of Creation, particularly in situations where properties are no longer regularly utilized; and be it further

Resolved, That the body appointed by Executive Council develop model processes by which dioceses, faith communities and institutions may collaborate with partner agencies to care for creation and sequester carbon through regenerative agriculture, biodiversity conservation, green burial, and habitat restoration; and be it further

Resolved, That the appointed body report back to the 80th General Convention.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 686-687.



Resolution Number: 2015-A030
Title: Support Ecologically Responsible Stewardship of Church Property
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society is directed to implement a program to develop parish and diocesan resources designed to support local ecologically responsible stewardship of church-related properties and buildings. The program shall be implemented in cooperation with an Advisory Council on the Stewardship of Creation composed of one person from each province by April 1, 2016. Each province member of the Advisory Council shall convene, in their respective provinces, Regional Consultive Groups ("RCG's") on the Stewardship of Creation. Each RCG shall be comprised of no fewer than five experts in areas of environmental sustainability appropriate to the demographic, ecological, cultural and geographic specifics of each region. These should include, but not be limited to, consultants in food and water security, property development, alternative energy, and engineering. Each RCG will also include theologians, educators and liturgists to provide resources in education and formation. These RCGs shall:

1. Compile and develop theological and formational material for teaching the theology of stewardship of creation;
2. Create networks designed to share ideas and information for practical application among the regions, such as sustainable development and green conversions of church-related properties, including without limitation, energy audits, solar conversions and other alternative energy, community gardens, and development of fallow property;
3. Be available for consultation to the Dioceses and Parishes.

The Advisory Council on the Stewardship of Creation shall create a structure for allocation of money to fund RCG initiatives at Parish and Diocesan levels within a year of the 78th General Convention, and serve as the granting body; and be it further

Resolved, That \$700,000 be allocated for this purpose, which includes the \$500,000 already allocated to the Fifth Mark of Mission, so that \$100,000 will be available for the support of the RCGs themselves, and \$600,000 be available to provide direct grants to Dioceses and Parishes in the implementation of these programs and support of measurable pilot projects. Of the \$100,000 funding the RCGs, \$40,500 is to be allocated for the Task Force meetings. Recognizing that this is new work, and a newly formed taskforce, they shall convene in person for their initial meeting, and thereafter determine their needs for future meetings, with funding available for them to meet once yearly. The remaining \$59,500 is to be used for regional meetings of the RCGs according to regional needs; and be it further

Resolved, That the Advisory Council shall report back to the 79th General Convention on the progress and ongoing results at the local and provincial levels.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 882-883.



Resolution Number: 2015-A171
Title: Give Thanks for the Papal Encyclical on Climate Change
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention welcomes the release of the Papal Encyclical Letter Laudato Si' of Pope Francis, a landmark encyclical focusing on the reality of climate change and the interrelated nature of our world; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage the Presiding Bishop to write a Pastoral Letter to the Church on climate change before the United Nations Climate Change Summit in Paris in late 2015.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 909.



Resolution Number: 2012-D055
Title: Advocate for Reducing Climate-Changing Emissions
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church urge the United States government to enact stricter controls on the use of carbon-based fuels, and create incentives for our nation's transitions from dependence upon fossil fuels to safe, clean, renewable energy and thereby curb emissions of heat-trapping gasses into the atmosphere; and be it further Resolved, That this Convention encourage every member of The Episcopal Church to urge his/her members of Congress to enact such legislation.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 299.



Resolution Number: 2009-C011
Title: Directs Advocacy on Renewable Energy and Environmental Stewardship
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the General Convention of The Episcopal Church urges the U.S. Government to legislate equitable subsidies for renewable energy (such as solar and wind turbine power, and research into new technologies), along with balancing its current subsidies for non-renewable energy sources (oil, gas, coal); and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention supports adoption of a federal renewable energy standard which would specify that electricity suppliers obtain twenty percent of their electricity from renewable energy, with that amount to be increased over time; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention supports U.S. government programs worldwide which practice sound environmental stewardship, for example by building or converting public buildings to solar or other renewable energy and conservation practices, and utilizing renewable, clean energy to operate public transportation, and by saving water through water conservation, efficiency and reuse, thereby reducing the demand for energy-consuming processing facilities; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention directs the Washington Office of Government Relations of The Episcopal Church to promote these goals in their work, and to report regularly on this work through appropriate communication channels.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 372-373.



Resolution Number: 2009-D031
Title: Urge Commitment to Lower Carbon Output
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention urge President Obama and Congressional leaders to commit the United States to a course of action, in collaboration with the other nations of the world, to lower the output of atmospheric carbon (measured as CO2) by 25% by 2020 and by 80% by 2050; and be it further

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention direct the Washington Office of Government Relations of The Episcopal Church to actively promote such action by the United States government.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 358-359.



Resolution Number: 1991-A195
Title: Affirm Environmental Responsibility and an Environmental Stewardship Team
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Substituted and Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, affirming our responsibility for the earth in trust for this and future generations:

Declares that Christian Stewardship of God's created environment, in harmony with our respect for human dignity, requires response from the Church of the highest urgency;

Calls on all citizens of the world, and Episcopalians in particular, to live their lives as good stewards with responsible concern for the sustainability of the environment and with appreciation for the global interdependence of human life and the natural worlds; and

Urges all Episcopalians to reflect on their personal and corporate habits in the use of God's creation; to share with one another ideas for new responses; and to act as individuals, congregations, dioceses, and provinces of the Episcopal Church in ways that protect and heal all interdependent parts of creation. Such action should include prayerful theological discernment and factual knowledge. It should also consider global and local links and the balance of environmental integrity with economic sufficiency for human living;

and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church, acknowledging the sovereignty of God and God's call to us in the servanthood of Christ, continue to engage environmental issues, passionately caring for the earth and striving to live into the promises and mandates which are ours as stewards of creation; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention calls upon the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to appoint an interdisciplinary, multicultural Environmental Stewardship Team, 14 members, representing each Province and a broad spectrum of Church membership, whose gifts and expertise are suitable to the task. 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. The Team will work with other environmental groups of common interest; and be it further

Resolved, That the 70th General Convention includes in the Program Budget an appropriation of \$100,000 per year during the 1992-1994 triennium to carry out the work of the Team; and be it further

Resolved, That the Environmental Stewardship Team report regularly to Executive Council during the triennium and to the 71st General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the 70th General Convention requests the Presiding Bishop to communicate immediately and directly to all Episcopalians, the scope and urgency of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 317.