

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A020
Title: Establish a Standing Commission on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism
Proposer: Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism
Topic: Environment, Racism, Structure

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A086 Continue the Work of the Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism
2022-A087 Commit to Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030
2022-A088 Re-Commit to Addressing Global Climate Change and Environmental Justice
2022-C015 Create a Churchwide Internal Carbon Offset Program
2018-A011 Affirm Commitment to Address Environmental Racism
2018-A013 Create a Task Force and Staff Position for Care of Creation
2018-A014 Create a Pilot Carbon Offset Program
2015-C013 Oppose Environmental Racism
2012-B023 Seek Environmental Justice
2000-D005 Oppose Environmental Racism

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

2018-A017 On the Topic of Incorporating Care of Creation Into Sacramental Liturgies (Rejected)
2018-C008 Encourage Sustainable Choices to Combat Climate Change
2015-C053 Support Subsistence Rights of Indigenous Cultures
2012-C079 On the Topic of Fracking (Rejected)
2009-C064 Endorse the *Earth Charter*

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, 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](#).

A020 - Establish a Standing Commission on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Task Force on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$1,412,500.00

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: Yes

Requests New Interim Body: Yes

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

Directs Dioceses: No

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention amend Canon I.1.2.n by adding a new subsection 6 thereto, to read as follows:

I.1.2.n

6. A Standing Commission on Care of Creation and Environmental Racism shall be created to continue the work of the Advisory Council (GC 2015), Task Force (GC 2018), and Task Force (GC 2022). Establishment of this Standing Commission will be an important step in acknowledging that care of creation and response to environmental injustices is an integral and ongoing work of God's people and church.

It shall be the duty of the Commission to:

- i. Support programs that respond to eco-justice concerns, address systemic environmental racism, and work to alleviate environmental burdens on indigenous communities and actively respond to the call for environmental reparations.*

ii. Continue to lead the church in responding to the moral and ethical implications of climate change, biodiversity loss and local environmental degradation.

iii. Expand, support and promote the Creation Care Covenant recognizing that this work seeks to align with the loving, liberating and life giving work of evangelism and beloved community.

iv. Provide expertise on programs that respond to the climate crisis and eco-justice including a carbon offset program, efforts for just transition, land based carbon capture initiatives, increase and utilize the capabilities of the Episcopal Asset Map.

v. Continue the creation care and ecojustice grants program and ecojustice fellows program to accomplish the above objectives.

vi. Develop theological materials and liturgical resources to support church wide creation efforts.

v. Recommend strategies to Executive Council and DFMS for the development and support of networks concerning eco-justice and care of creation.

vii. As requested, provide policy support to Executive Council and the Office of Governmental Relations on environmental and eco-justice matters.

And be it further

Resolved, that General Convention approve a budget of \$1, 412, 500 to complete the tasks noted above.



Resolution Number: 2022-A086
Title: Continue the Work of the Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the General Convention affirm the Presiding Bishop's and the President of the House of Deputies' continued call to the Church to recognize Care of Creation and Environmental Justice as integral and ongoing parts of the Church's loving, liberating, and life-giving work; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention commend the good work done by the Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism in the triennium following the 2018 General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention authorize a Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism to continue this work on behalf of the Episcopal Church in the next triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That this Task Force of up to 20 persons be appointed jointly by the President of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop, with members to include a geographically diverse representation from the Church mindful to include younger generations, persons of color and Native persons who are and will be disproportionately affected by climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That this Task Force submit a report to the 81st General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct this Task Force to make as a priority the development and support of programs that respond to eco-justice concerns, address systemic environmental racism, and work to alleviate environmental burdens on indigenous communities. Ensure that programs can be modeled across the provinces of the Episcopal Church; and to provide training and financial and other resources to facilitate these projects; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention directs the Task Force to further expand, support and promote the Creation Care Covenant recognizing that this work seeks to align with the loving, liberating and life giving work of evangelism and beloved community; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct the Task Force to continue its work on developing theological resources and materials on a range of environmental topics including but not limited to the sin of environmental racism, an exploration of environmental reparations and the ethical and moral implications of responding to climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention direct this Task Force to continue the work of the previous Advisory Council (GC 2015) and Task Force (GC 2018) to implement the carbon offset program, support the efforts for just transition, increase and utilize the capabilities of the Episcopal Asset Map to support and respond to environmental injustices and to establish the network of asset-based programs; to continue to work within the partnerships established in the previous triennium with environmental justice organizations nationwide; and to continue the grants program in order to accomplish the above objectives; 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 \$850,000 during the triennium for the work outlined above.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 841-842.



Resolution Number: 2022-A087
Title: Commit to Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church commit to a goal of net carbon neutrality in its operations and the work of staff, standing commissions, interim bodies, and General Convention by 2030, through a combination of reducing emissions from travel, reducing energy use, increasing energy efficiency in buildings, and purchasing offsets from duly investigated, responsible, and ethical partners; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage the Presiding Bishop's staff to take concrete actions to reduce fossil fuel emissions from travel by said groups, such as through online meetings or regional gatherings; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage the Presiding Bishop's staff to draft a policy to offset one hundred percent of fossil fuel emissions from unavoidable travel by said groups, either through an internal offset program or through purchase from duly investigated, responsible, and ethical partners, with appropriate accountability and oversight; 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 \$70,000 per year for the implementation of this resolution, taken from existing travel budgets, in order to offset approximately 3500 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (the average annual travel emissions of said groups from previous years) at a rate of \$20 per ton; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage the Presiding Bishop's staff to establish an internal offset program including such activities as carbon forestry and regenerative agriculture, with appropriate oversight to ensure that the program meet the five commonly accepted traits of responsible offset programs: real, permanent, verifiable, additional, and enforceable; 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 \$25,000 to establish this internal offset program, comprising \$15,000 to cover wages and benefits for a part-time Offset Specialist and \$10,000 for implementation and promotion of the program; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage parishes, dioceses, schools, camps, and other Episcopal institutions to pursue their own goal of net carbon neutrality by 2030 through a combination of reducing emissions from travel, reducing energy use, increasing energy efficiency in buildings, and purchasing offsets from duly investigated, responsible, and ethical partners; and be it further

Resolved, that the General Convention request the diocesan bishops of every diocese to begin to build networks of landowners and creation trustees in each diocese who will devote portions of their land to reforestation, prairie restoration, wetland and coastland preservation; adopt and share regenerative agricultural and ranching practices; collaborate with neighboring dioceses for best water practices to protect our watersheds; collaborate on creative means of distributing food; and pray for future generations dependent on the land and water we steward; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church support and advocate for the subsistence rights of Indigenous people and policies that protect and preserve land and resources solely for subsistence use; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention encourage the Presiding Bishop's staff to develop and share resources for parishes and dioceses to commit to and work toward this goal, such as the online carbon tracker already created by the Diocese of California, as well as other online and print resources; 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 \$50,000 to fund the development and promotion of these resources.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 545-546.



Resolution Number: 2022-A088
Title: Re-Commit to Addressing Global Climate Change and Environmental Justice
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention recognize as the Episcopal Church's position that global climate change is not only a scientific concern or environmental issue, but what the United Nations calls "the defining issue of our time... at a defining moment" (UN Secretary General, September 10, 2018), an all-encompassing social crisis and moral emergency that impacts and interconnects every aspect of pastoral concern including health, poverty, employment, racism, social justice, and family life and that can only be addressed by a Great Work involving every sector of society, including the Church; and affirm the commitment of the 79th General Convention to the House of Bishops' 2011 Pastoral Teaching on the Environment as an official position of the church; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church recommit to the work done by previous General Conventions of The Episcopal Church on the pressing moral dimensions of global climate change and environmental justice, including resolutions 2000-D005, 2012-B023, 2015-C013, 2015-C045, 2018-A011, 2018-A018, 2018-A020, 2018-B027, 2018-C020, 2018-C021, and 2018-C064; and that General Convention reaffirm that the Episcopal Church shall support and advocate for policies, programs, pastoral responses, and theologies that work to ensure no community - especially financially impoverished communities, frontline residents, migrants, and BIPOC communities (Black, indigenous, and people of color) - shall bear a disproportionate impact of the environmental, health, and economic threats of climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention affirm the decision of the United States federal government to rejoin the Paris Climate Accord, while recognizing that the goals set forth in the Paris Accord are only a first step, insufficient in and of themselves to fully contain rising global temperatures and their impacts; and that General Convention encourage the Presiding Bishop's staff to continue, through our ongoing role as observers at the United Nations, to participate in all meetings of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change during the next triennium via delegations selected from an applicant pool and made up primarily of Episcopalians from financially impoverished communities, frontline locations, and BIPOC communities; 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 \$30,000 per triennium to support costs associated with travel to the COP conferences by delegation members who are not members of the Presiding Bishop's staff; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church direct the Office of Government Relations and the Episcopal Public Policy Network to advocate for legislation and other public policies that directly address the impact of climate change among marginalized, indigenous, and frontline communities and that tangibly and financially assist those communities with the costs of both climate change and mitigation, and policies that prohibit the authorization and construction of new fossil fuel infrastructure including but not limited to coal, oil, or gas leases on public lands, all forms of mountaintop removal mining, and tar sands pipelines such as Keystone XL, Enbridge Line #3, and the Dakota Access Pipeline; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention encourage all Church communities, especially parishes, dioceses, camps, conference centers, schools, and chaplaincies, to learn more about the pressing moral implications of climate change in their regions and existing local organizing efforts, then advocate for policies and solutions to address those local needs utilizing and adapting advocacy resources from General Convention and the Presiding Bishop's staff including the Episcopal Public Policy Network, asset map, carbon tracker, liturgical resources, and advocating at the local and state level, and incorporating local nature, environmental justice, and advocacy for creation care into all aspects of community life and Christian education.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 546-547.



Resolution Number: 2022-C015
Title: Create a Churchwide Internal Carbon Offset Program
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church affirms General Convention resolution 2018-A014 as well as Executive Council resolutions 2021-MB 024 and 2021-MW 042; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention direct the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church’s Economic Justice Loan Committee, in consultation with the Task Force on Care of Creation & Environmental Racism, to evaluate, create, and implement a positive investment strategy that will fund methods of capturing and storing greenhouse gases through sustainable nature-based, land management solutions such as afforestation and regenerative agricultural practices; and be it further

Resolved, That the dioceses of the Episcopal Church pledge to support the Communion Forest initiative, to be launched at the Lambeth Conference 2022, to plant trees, practice reforestation and regenerative agriculture, protect forests and other plant communities across the Communion; and be it further

Resolved, That this environmental stewardship response will create a pilot churchwide carbon offset policy with duly investigated, responsible, and ethical partners.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 548.



Resolution Number: 2018-A011
Title: Affirm Commitment to Address Environmental Racism
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention affirm the need for governments, private industry and all people to act to protect the health of all persons from unsafe and unhealthy exposures to air and water pollution, toxic substances, or radiation in their food, water supply, living quarters, and work places; and be it further

Resolved, That the Church recommit to the excellent work done by previous General Conventions of The Episcopal Church, specifically resolutions 2000-D005, 2012-B023, 2012-C079, and 2015-C013 and that General Convention affirm that no community, especially poor communities, those who live closest to the land in subsistence cultures, and members of marginalized ethnic groups, should bear a disproportionate risk of environmental pollution or degradation; and advocate for and support policies that protect these populations and the sanctity of communities and the livelihood of future generations from the disparate impact of climate change and environmental degradation; and be it further

Resolved, That General Convention direct the formation of a Task Force, not to exceed twelve people, including attorneys, health professionals, environmental professionals, and bishops and other clergy to study and report specific recommendations for appropriate changes in federal, state, or local law so that effective judicial remedies, based on a showing of disproportionate health or environmental impact on those living closest to the land in subsistence cultures, ethnic minorities or poor communities, can be obtained to address unwise governmental decisions with respect to land use, industrial, energy and transportation development, and application of environmental standards; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force will report to Executive Council by the end of 2019; and be it further

Resolved, That Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the work of the Task Force for the Triennium.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 372-373.



Resolution Number: 2018-A013
Title: Create a Task Force and Staff Position for Care of Creation
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention affirm the President of the House Deputies' and the Presiding Bishop's call to the Church to recognize Care of Creation as an integral part of The Jesus Movement; and be it further

Resolved, That, as disciples of Jesus Christ, we recognize that the Earth is the Lord's (Psalm 24), has been made in and through Christ (John 1) and we are placed in it as a garden planet (Genesis 2); and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention urge the establishment of an additional senior staff position for the Care of Creation as a member of the Episcopal Church Center staff; and be it further

Resolved, That this staff person shall serve as a resource for the Church, a liaison between Episcopal faith communities and institutions with their many creation care initiatives, network developer for sharing best practices, contact person for the denomination, partners and faith communities, ambassador between evangelism, racial justice and care of creation, and advocate for funding, visibility and action; and be it further

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention authorize a Task Force for the Care of Creation to develop this aspect of the ongoing mission and ministry of The Episcopal Church; and be it further

Resolved, That this Task Force of up to 20 persons be appointed jointly by the President of the House of Deputies and the Presiding Bishop, with members to include a geographically diverse representation from the Church mindful to include younger generations, people of color and native persons who are and will be disproportionately affected by climate change; and be it further

Resolved, That this Task Force work during the period of 2018-2021 and submit a report to the 80th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force shall develop and refine the small grants program begun by the 2015-2018 Advisory Council for Stewardship of Creation to support local and regional eco-ministry efforts; engage eco-justice site projects, and further develop creation care networks based on bioregions (a region defined by characteristics of the natural environment rather than by human-made divisions) and/or areas of affinity, (e.g. renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, liturgy, Christian formation); and be it further

Resolved, That the staff person for the Care of Creation shall liaise with and support the work of the Task Force for the Care of Creation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Task Force shall receive and help disseminate case studies and best practices in keeping with the spirit of the Paris Climate Accord, that is, supporting humanity's transition from industrial life to sustainable life; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention recommend to the President of the House Deputies and the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the Task Force to establish and to appoint persons to a Theology of Creation Working Group tasked with facilitating innovative educational offerings in environmental ethics and theology for the formation of clergy and laity; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance allocate \$1.1 million for the implementation of this resolution and staff support and leadership from The Episcopal Church.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 375.



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: 2015-C013
Title: Oppose Environmental Racism
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recommit to oppose environmental racism, expressed in such ways as the locating of extraction, production, and disposal industries where they disproportionately harm neighborhoods inhabited by people of color and low income communities.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 731-732.



Resolution Number: 2012-B023
Title: Seek Environmental Justice
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention of The Episcopal Church stands in solidarity with those communities who bear the greatest burdens of global climate change: indigenous peoples, subsistence communities, communities of color, and persons living in deprivation around the world; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church to support policies that provide tangible benefits to overburdened “frontline” communities (those already experiencing the impacts of climate change) and “fence-line” communities (those suffering in body and spirit for their proximity to the extraction and processing of fossil fuels); and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church, to work for the just transformation of the world’s energy beyond and away from fossil fuels (including all forms of oil, coal, and natural gas) and toward safe, sustainable, renewable, community controlled energy, and that fossil fuel workers and their families be supported during the transition to a “post-carbon” society; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses, and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church to resist the development and expansion of ever more unconventional, dangerous, and environmentally destructive sources of fossil fuel and move toward conversion to more sustainable sources; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church to support the self-determined aspirations of communities around the world, who, like the Iñupiaq Community of Kivalina, Alaska, having emitted minimal amounts of carbon and having received negligible material benefit from fossil fuel consumption, nevertheless bear the brunt of climate-change impacts; and be it further

Resolved, That the 77th General Convention calls on congregations, institutions, dioceses and the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of The Episcopal Church, including Episcopal Relief and Development, to support the implementation of grassroots, community-based solutions to climate change, including, but not limited to, adaptations to improve local resilience, to build local food sovereignty, to support ecological restoration and economic re-localization.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 2012* (New York: General Convention, 2012), p. 324.



Resolution Number: 2000-D005
Title: Oppose Environmental Racism
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention of the Episcopal Church call on those present at this Convention to seek every opportunity to oppose environmental racism; and be it further Resolved, That the Washington office track legislation seeking to eliminate the practice of locating polluting industries disproportionately near neighborhoods inhabited by people of color or the poor; and be it further

Resolved, That the Washington office monitor and issue policy alerts regarding the practice of mountain top removal and valley fill mining and other large scale mining operations that threaten the ecology and low income communities; and be it further

Resolved, That the Committee on Social Responsibilities in Investments review the environmental racism issue.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 677f.