

## General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

**Resolution No.:** 2024-B002  
**Title:** Build Eco-Region Creation Networks for Crucial Impact  
**Proposer:** Bascom, The Rt. Rev. Cathleen C.  
**Topic:** Environment

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### Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A087      Commit to Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030  
2022-C015      Create a Churchwide Internal Carbon Offset Program  
2018-A013      Create a Task Force and Staff Position for Care of Creation  
2018-A018      Adopt Bishops' Pastoral Teaching and Commit to Paris Climate Accord  
2018-C008      Encourage Sustainable Choices to Combat Climate Change  
2018-C063      Advocate for Ocean Health  
2018-D053      Call for Model Policies for Sustainable Church Land Use  
2015-A030      Support Ecologically Responsible Stewardship of Church Property

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

None

*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](#).*

# B002 - Build Eco-Region Creation Networks for Crucial Impact

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**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Bascom, The Rt. Rev. Cathleen C.

**Endorsed by:** Andrus, The Rt. Rev. Marc, Fisher, The Rt. Rev. Douglas, Stebbins, The Rt. Rev. Martha E., Cowell, The Rt. Rev. Mark

**Has Budget Implications:** Yes

**Cost:** \$150,000.00

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

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib:** No

**Directs Dfms Staff:** Yes

**Directs Dioceses:** No

**Directs Executive Council:** No

**HiA:** HB

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** 15 - Environmental Stewardship & Care of Creation

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

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## Resolution Text

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

That the 81st General Convention urge and equip bishops and dioceses to form strategic Eco-Region Creation Networks of incarnational impact for the healing of the world God loves in this time of climate crisis; and be it further

*Resolved*, that bishops and dioceses work together to form regional networks, to be called “Eco-Region Creation Networks”, based on shared ecosystems or watersheds. These Eco-Region Creation Networks link people, projects and properties dedicated to nature-based solutions to slow climate change through preserving and restoring plant communities appropriate to their bioregion; modeling transformative agriculture and food systems; and tackling issues of water quality and supply; and be it further

*Resolved*, that in this triennium up to five pilot Eco-Region Creation Networks be formed, to include the Episcopal Grasslands Network (which includes the dioceses of Kansas, Western Kansas, Nebraska, Northwest Texas, South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado,

Wyoming, Idaho and Montana) and one Eco-Region Creation Network centered outside the continental U.S; and be it further

Resolved, that new Eco-Region Creation Networks, up to five, can be established through a letter to the Presiding Bishop's office, copied to provincial Presidents, from three bishops of contiguous dioceses describing their particular eco-region, current sites, and creation actions planned, and be it further

*Resolved*, that each network engage a Creation Fellow and/or Consultant whose task is to tend the network: produce communications that inform and celebrate efforts across the network; collect data about the participating members, projects and properties; plan and implement an annual meeting and other gatherings; write grant proposals as needed; and use the Episcopal Asset Map, Restor, or other mapping tools to track progress on carbon sequestration, increased biodiversity, water quality and scarcity and agricultural transformation; and be it further

*Resolved*, that each network identify a diocese within the network to serve as the administrative center to disburse funds and manage the network; and be it further

*Resolved*, that the Presiding Bishop's Creation Care staff and the Good News Gardens partner with these networks and support the work of the Creation Care Fellows and Consultants; and be it further

*Resolved* that General Convention allocate an additional \$150,000 to the proposed triennial Creation Networks and Resources budget (line 168), to be assigned specifically to support Eco-Region Creation Networks. (\$50,000 to be disbursed three times over the course of the triennium divided equally between any, up to five, networks that have been duly organized and named networks by the Presiding Bishop.)

## **Explanation**

This resolution offers concrete next steps to fulfill:

2022-A087 -- Commit to Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030

***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***

2018-D053 -- Call for Model Policies for Sustainable Church Land Use

***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;**

This resolution responds to the call of experts at COP28 who demonstrated that there is “no pathway to safeguarding and restoring ecosystems, staying within +1.5 and safe-guarding biodiversity, as well as feeding 10 billion people by 2050, without transforming the ways we produce, distribute and consume food and inhabit our land and in-land waters.” The resolution continues partnership with the Anglican Communion Forest and aligns with the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework.

The faith of the Church informs and underpins this resolution. First, we understand and embrace the truth that Christ has made us one body, bound together in the overflowing love of God. This way of understanding the world, which the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr expressed as “the interrelated structure of reality,” can also be called “the Body of Christ” or “the Beloved Community.” Ecological Regions help us understand through experience that we have a true home in God. When the Origin Story in Genesis says that God set a dome in the heavens, it is a way of expressing the wholeness of Creation. Our responsibility is to serve and tend towards this integrity of Creation. A significant step towards a healthy stewarding of Creation is the discernment of eco-regions. Humans attending to our ecosystems, nurturing the existing interconnections between species or “tending the wild” as Indigenous People have done for millennia, is part of God’s design. By relating to existing ecosystems, we trend towards understanding the Earth as whole.



**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-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-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-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-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:** 2018-C063  
**Title:** Advocate for Ocean Health  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention affirm any and all work and projects being carried out across the Church to protect and restore the Global Ocean to ecological health and to advocate for ocean health through the adoption of appropriate public policies, including, without limitation, projects, programs, and public policies and advocacy designed: (1) to establish and protect areas of the ocean from human interference or to limit human interference through the establishment of marine sanctuaries, reserves, and similar protected areas; (2) to protect, preserve, and restore all species that live in ocean habitats; (3) to prevent and remediate ocean pollution from all sources and of all kinds, including plastics, petroleum products and wastes, fertilizers, and hazardous substances, hazardous wastes, solid wastes, and toxic materials as defined in environmental laws; (4) to mitigate ocean acidification and to assist with adaptation to ocean acidification; (5) to mitigate ocean warming and sea level rise and to assist with adaptation to ocean warming and sea level rise; (6) to prevent or limit adverse effects to species and ecosystems from offshore oil, gas, and mineral exploration, drilling, and extraction; (7) to support sustainable fisheries and to prevent illegal fishing, over-fishing, and by-catch; (8) to prevent migration of invasive species through ocean-going vessels and, where invasive species have taken hold, to restore native ecosystems to health; and (9) to minister to people and human populations adversely affected by declines and secondary impacts from declines in ocean health, especially those whose livelihoods are lost or put at risk and those who are forced to migrate due to sea level rise (“Ocean Health Work”); and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention authorize on the Office of Government Relations to advocate for public policies that support and advance Ocean Health Work nationally and internationally; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention call on dioceses, congregations, and all the baptized to deepen our understanding of and commitment to Ocean Health Work as Christian communities through prayer and study and to then act to support and advance Ocean Health Work including, when appropriate, in partnership with ecumenical, interfaith, and non-governmental organizations; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention call on dioceses, congregations, and all the baptized to respond to the needs, safety and well-being of environmentally displaced peoples in our own communities who have had to leave their homes due to sea level rise, pollution of Global Ocean and coastal areas, and other ocean health concerns; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention call on the dioceses of The Episcopal Church to partner with extra-provincial maritime diocese already impacted by climate change e.g. those located in the Pacific Ocean or on the Pacific Rim and the Caribbean together for oceanic health; and be it further*

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention embody the teachings of Jesus to welcome the stranger and love your neighbor, and to particularly embody these teachings in the acceptance and welcome of those environmentally displaced from all over the world.*

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 684-685.



**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.