

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-B005
Title: Bold Churchwide Action toward Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030
Proposer: Rice, The Rt. Rev. David
Topic: Environment

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A087 Commit to Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030
2015-C045 Call for Investing in Clean and Renewable Energy
2012-B023 Seek Environmental Justice
2012-D055 Advocate for Reducing Climate-Changing Emissions

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

2022-A088 Re-Commit to Addressing Global Climate Change and Environmental Justice
2022-A089 Divest from Fossil Fuel Companies and Invest in Renewable Energy
2018-A020 Divest From Fossil Fuel Companies and Reinvest in Clean Energy

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](#).

B005 - Bold Churchwide Action toward Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Rice, The Rt. Rev. David

Endorsed by: Johnson, The Rt. Rev. Deon, Lattime, The Rt. Rev. Mark

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$240,000.00

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: Yes

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: Yes

Directs Dioceses: Yes

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 enable concrete implementation of the bold charge laid out in GC80 Resolution A087 “Net Carbon Neutrality by 2030,” which encouraged Episcopal congregations, dioceses, schools, camps, and other Episcopal institutions to pursue ambitious goals for reducing the church’s carbon footprint, mitigating climate change, and living more sustainably and gently on God’s good earth; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention charge and fund the creation or advancement of four strategic, churchwide networks, in order to promote carbon-reduction interventions in areas where there is a) demonstrated passion and leadership and b) potential for dramatic, collective action and impact; and be it further

Resolved, That one such network connect and resource dioceses, faith communities, projects and leaders dedicated to nature-based solutions that slow climate change through preserving and restoring ecosystems. This nature-based solutions network would enhance and extend the work of the existing Episcopal Grasslands Network, which currently includes the Episcopal dioceses of Kansas, Western Kansas, Nebraska, Northwest Texas, South Dakota, North Dakota, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho and Montana; and be it further

Resolved, That one such network connect and resource dioceses, faith communities, projects and leaders dedicated to reducing carbon by accelerating renewable energy use, including but not limited to solar energy. This renewable energy network would build on the church's existing partnership with the Episcopal Renewable Energy Non-profit, established by the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin; and be it further

Resolved, That one such network connect and resource dioceses, faith communities, projects and leaders dedicated to promoting agrarian, food justice and outdoor ministries and encouraging sustainable, transformed relationship to land, to food and to the Holy. This network would extend existing Good News Gardens and Episcopal Agrarian Ministry networks; and be it further

Resolved, That the interim body tasked with creation care and environmental justice collaborate with the creation care staff team to identify an additional network focus area, using the criteria above (carbon-reduction interventions where the church has demonstrated passion and leadership and where there is potential for dramatic, collective action and impact); and be it further

Resolved, That these networks share the following marks: host online and in-person gatherings to exchange best practices, share encouragement, maintain accountability and learn from experts; consciously incorporate the presence, concerns and experience of non-U.S. Episcopal communities; coordinate access to critical resources, including the Episcopal Asset Map, Restor, or other mapping tools to track progress on emission-reduction, carbon sequestration, increased biodiversity, water quality and scarcity, agricultural transformation, etc.; share, when appropriate, financial and tangible resources; pray regularly for one another and the specific areas of creation care and justice to which they are called; and support one another if extreme climate events occur; and be it further

Resolved, That each network identify a diocese to serve as the administrative center and disburse funds, if no such diocesan center already exists; and be it further

Resolved, That each network engage a Creation Justice Fellow and/or Consultant who partners with Episcopal Church Creation Care staff to support the network in the following ways: produce communications that inform and celebrate efforts across the network; collect data about the participating members, projects and properties; plan and implement gatherings; write grant proposals and provide other administrative support as needed; and be it further

Resolved, That every diocese in The Episcopal Church be encouraged to establish a Creation Care Commission, if no such diocesan commission already exists, to work in consultation with the aforementioned networks to pursue locally discerned goals for advancing toward net carbon neutrality by 2030; and be it further,

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention allocate an additional \$240,000 to the proposed triennial Creation Networks and Resources budget (line 168), increasing the budget to \$330,000, such that \$60,000 a year may be assigned to support the three nature-based, agrarian and yet-to-be-determined networks; and \$50,000 a year may be assigned

to support the renewable energy network and the church's existing partnership with the Episcopal Renewable Energy Non-profit (EREN).

Explanation

This is a bold and bodacious statement of commitment to caring for God's good creation that encourages, empowers, and funds the ongoing work of creation care networks at a point in time that requires our immediate attention to the climate crisis before us. This resolution also provides a roadmap for congregations, dioceses, provinces, and institutions to engage with The Episcopal Church and aforementioned creation care networks for meaningful and thoughtful responses to the call to be stewards of "this fragile Earth, our island home". It is the hope that this resolution leads the Church a step closer to being Net Carbon Neutral by 2030. And finally, this resolution calls General Convention to give considerable financial attention and support to this pillar of mission priorities in similar ways that it has supported Evangelism and Anti-Racism.



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: 2015-C045
Title: Call for Investing in Clean and Renewable Energy
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church welcomes the release of the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed carbon rule for existing power plants; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention calls upon the Investment Committee of the Executive Council, the Episcopal Church Endowment Fund, and the Episcopal Church Foundation to divest from fossil fuel companies and reinvest in clean renewable energy in a fiscally responsible manner; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention calls on the Investment Committee of the Executive Council, the Episcopal Church Endowment Fund, and the Episcopal Church Foundation to refrain from purchasing any new holdings of public equities and corporate bonds of fossil fuel companies; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention urges all dioceses and parishes of the Episcopal Church to engage the topic of divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in clean energy within the coming year.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), pp. 879-880.



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: 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.