

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-D030
Title: Create a Task Force in Imagining a Church Grounded in Creation Healing as Christian Ministry
Proposer: Merrick, The Rev. Barbara
Topic: Racism, Reconciliation, Structure

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A052 Revise Mandate for Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation
2022-A086 Continue the Work of the Task Force for Care of Creation and Environmental Racism
2022-A125 Establish the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice
2018-A013 Create a Task Force and Staff Position for Care of Creation

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](#).

D030 - Create a Task Force in Imagining a Church Grounded in Creation Healing as Christian Ministry

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Merrick, The Rev. Barbara

Endorsed by: Norman, Ms. Camille, Shafer, The Rev. Dr. Lee

Has Budget Implications: Yes

Cost: \$60,000.00

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: Yes

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: No

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: Yes

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention affirm:

1. That the work of creation healing is a primary ministry of the Church; it is our corporate, public witness to the Mission of God in Christ “to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.” [Colossians 1:20];
2. That creation healing is about right relationships among and between all people and all creation, centering the voice and experience of the marginalized in both human society and all creation, and these are relationships that have been, and continue to be, harmed by systemic marginalization, unbounded pursuit of wealth, and unfounded claims of privilege;
3. That creation healing ministry includes acts of repentance and renewal of heart and mind, but must also include dismantling institutions, structures, and policies that

cause harm and divide us from life on earth; and include repairing the breach by rebuilding systems of justice, restoration, and hospitality (Isaiah 58);

4. Over the past 300 years, continued ecological degradation, mass extinction and escalation of the climate crisis, as well as the spiritual weakness and institutional failures that these realities expose, demand we understand this to be a revolutionary moment of accountability, repentance, and renewed commitment to the mission of God. We are called to account for our failures to live into the whole gospel of God's New Creation. We acknowledge that historical practices, policies, and structures of the institutional church have played a role in the persistence of environmental exploitation and call out for out for immediate, urgent and enduring redress;

And be it further

Resolved, That all dioceses and congregations be called upon to ground every planning or business meeting or convention with prayers inviting an examination of conscience regarding the specific impact of the decisions of such meetings upon our kindred creatures who are dispossessed, deprived, and disregarded, and to provide and model forms for such examination of conscience; and be it further

Resolved, That all dioceses be called upon to offer, at least once a year, a diocesan-wide event or program and liturgy to engage our congregations and members in listening to and understanding God's love for all creation and our complicity in its wounding, with attention to our local opportunities for repentance and healing; and be it further

Resolved, That this General Convention direct the creation of a Task Force on Imagining a Church Grounded in Creation Healing as Christian Ministry be formed as a diverse group to include 2 bishops, 2 priests, 2 deacons, and 10 laypersons, in order to a) consider what the church must look like if we put our vocation to love all our neighbors and to be repairers of the breach at the center of our work; b) to reach out to local and diocesan groups that are doing ecojustice and creation reconciliation work focused on systemic change, in order to understand what resources and gifts we already have in this work and where the gaps are; c) to liaise with the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music and the Standing Commission on Governance, Structure, Constitution and Canons, and other relevant interim bodies on consideration of these questions and how to address the institutional barriers to change in the church; and d) be charged with making recommendations to the 82nd General Convention for institutional change to support creation healing as Christian ministry in the areas of governance and structure, prayer and liturgy, catechesis and lifelong formation for discipleship, especially with laypeople and consistent with ecojustice and right relationship to all creation; 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 \$60,000 for the implementation of this resolution.



Resolution Number: 2022-A052
Title: Revise Mandate for Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism and Reconciliation
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the mandate for the Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation is hereby clarified as follows:

“This Committee is charged with supporting and monitoring the Church’s work in response to General Convention resolutions directed at dismantling racism and promoting racial healing, justice, and reconciliation in the Church by:

- a) helping the church recognize and develop its work of racial healing, justice, and reconciliation as a fundamental and requisite part of Christian formation;
- b) supporting the work of Becoming Beloved Community: The Episcopal Church’s Long-Term Commitment to Racial Healing, Justice, and Reconciliation and other such initiatives the Presiding Officers, Executive Council, or Interim Bodies develop, and also the work of the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice;
- c) recommending, in collaboration with staff and other church organizations, resources and best practices for dismantling racism and for promoting racial healing, justice, and reconciliation that can be adapted to different contexts;
- d) collecting information from dioceses and provinces about their successes and challenges in complying with the canonical requirements and with General Convention Resolution 2018-A045 for providing anti-racism training;
- e) and sharing their findings with Executive Council on an annual basis.

Membership of the Executive Council Committee on Anti-Racism & Reconciliation shall be composed of:

one person named by the governing body of each province of this Church who has been trained in doing the work of dismantling racism and seeking to foster racial healing, justice, and reconciliation, has demonstrated experience in anti-racism/racial reconciliation work, has demonstrated the ability to make connections with people in their geographic area who do this work, and has demonstrated a commitment to make connections with people in the provinces who do this work;

one member of the Executive Council as appointed by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council;

one Bishop as appointed by the Presiding Officers;

members named who are from the racial or ethnic groups of black, Latino/a, Asian, Native American/Indigenous, and non-Hispanic white to ensure representation of diverse racial and ethnic voices on this Committee - if there are none, then the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council shall appoint a member at large from each unrepresented racial or ethnic group;

a member named who is under 40, to ensure representation of multiple generations - if there are no members then the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council shall appoint a member at large from each unrepresented generational group.

Members shall serve terms as follows:

Each Committee member shall serve one triennium beginning January 1 in the year following each General Convention until the December 31 following the next General Convention. Members may be named to serve consecutive terms by their provinces.

In the event that a province fails to name a person to serve on the Committee by [sic] January 1, when each term begins, the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council shall appoint a qualified person from that province to serve on the Committee.

Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original members were named. Vacancies in excess of 30 days shall be filled by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Executive Council, and in the case of a Bishop vacancy, by the Chair of Executive Council.”

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 837-838.



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-A125
Title: Establish the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of the Episcopal Church affirms that striving to become the Beloved Community of Jesus is central to our baptismal vocation in God's mission, and every Episcopalian is called to a lifelong vocation of racial justice and equity and the dismantling of white supremacy; and be it further

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention establish the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice as a voluntary association of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals dedicated to the work of becoming the Beloved Community; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice be charged with facilitating, coordinating, encouraging, supporting, and networking efforts of Episcopal dioceses, parishes, organizations, and individuals for racial justice and equity, and the dismantling of white supremacy, in collaboration with the work of the Executive Council and staff of the Episcopal Church Center; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and President of the House of Deputies appoint a Constituting Group for the development, implementation, and creation of the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equity and Justice, whose work includes determining and proposing all necessary organizational, canonical, legal, and other actions necessary to constitute formally and oversee said Coalition; and be it further

Resolved, That once the Coalition is constituted, it shall be funded with an annual draw on one-tenth of the trusts and endowment funds available for general use in the Episcopal Church's budget, the income of which is currently found on Line 5 of the Episcopal Church budget; and be it further

Resolved, That the draw percentage applied to fund the Coalition be the same percentage as that applied to fund the Episcopal Church's budget; and be it further

Resolved, That to support the development of the Episcopal Coalition for Racial Equality and Justice, the Constituting Group be funded during the biennial 2023-2024 at the level of \$200,000 a year.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 768-769.



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.