

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND FAITH

MEMBERSHIP

James A. Jordan, Jr., Ph.D., <i>Chair</i>	Northern California, VIII, 2009
The Rev. David B. Bailey, Ph.D., <i>Vice Chair</i> (<i>Resigned December 2007</i>)	Southern Ohio, V
The Rev. Deacon Josephine Borgeson, <i>Secretary</i>	Northern California, VIII, 2009
The Rev. Sally Bingham	California, VIII, 2009
Barbara Elliott, Ph.D.	Minnesota, VI, 2009
Neil James, Ph.D.	Florida, IV, 2009
The Rev. Deacon Thomas Lindell, Ph.D., S.O.Sc.	Arizona, VIII, 2009
Sandra Michael, Ph.D.	Central New York, II, 2009
Richard Schori, Ph.D.	Nevada, VIII, 2009
Paul Shepard, Ph.D.	Pittsburgh, III, 2009
The Rev. Alistair So	Maryland, III, 2009
Stephen Stray, Ph.D.	Mississippi, IV, 2009
The Rev. Canon Ed Rodman, <i>Executive Council Liaison</i>	Massachusetts, I
Canon Robert Williams, <i>Staff Consultant</i> (<i>Resigned August 2008</i>)	Los Angeles, VIII

SUMMARY OF WORK

The charge to the Committee on Science, Technology and Faith (STF) is to provide advice and education for the Executive Council and The Episcopal Church on issues relating to science and technology as they interact with ethics, theology and the Christian faith.

In this triennium, in accordance with direction from the Executive Council, the Committee has placed special emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals, especially, Goal #7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability. The Committee expects to complete by July, 2009, materials on the theological, scientific and technological issues of water availability and quality and of global warming. Water is the subject of a Resolution the Committee offers for the 2009 General Convention. Work related to the ability of the oceans to sustain life will continue in the next triennium.

As a participant in the April, 2008 Convocation of the Standing Commission on Health, the Committee committed to provide consultation on stem cell research, on end of life issues and on climate change as it relates to world health issues.

The Committee considers the underlying theology of scientific or technological issues. In the prior triennium the Committee completed a major teaching document, *A Catechism of Creation: An Episcopal Understanding*. Part III of the Catechism, "Care of Creation," provides the theological justification for MDG #7. The Committee is working to refine and expand Part III. Also, the Committee is considering ethical frameworks for application by dioceses and congregations to situations with significant scientific and technological content. The Committee supports the Diocese of Southeast Florida's Resolution endorsing the Clergy Letter Project as an extension of Resolution 2006-A129 (Affirm Evolution and Science Education) regarding the compatibility of Christian theology with modern science.

The Committee has begun developing a resource library for distribution via the World Wide Web or on a CD or DVD.

Because of the Committee's focus on MDG #7, ST&F has participated in discussions on the church's need for a coordinating responsibility regarding environmental issues. The church has many resources devoted to the interactions between the church and the environment. This powerful set of resources is not as effective as it could be were there better coordination. Additional resources could augment and extend those now available.

No Resolutions were referred specifically to ST&F by the 75th General Convention. Pursuant to GC Resolution 2006–A112, the Committee responded on August 12, 2008, to the Standing Commission on Structure. Pursuant to GC Resolution 2006–A051, ST&F routinely conducts its business via electronic communication. Pursuant to GC Resolution 2006–A159, ST&F maintains professional relationships throughout the Anglican Communion. Pursuant to GC Resolution 2006–D031, ST&F has focused its work on the science, technology, ethics and theology issues attendant to the Millennium Development Goals.

ST&F is comprised of 12 members. The entire Committee meets once a year in April to coincide with the Ecumenical Roundtable on Science, Technology and the Church. Additional small working group meetings are desirable. The Committee also requires funds for the preparation and distribution of resource materials. In sum, the Committee requires \$76,500 for the 2010-2012 triennium.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION A156 SACRED ACTS FOR SACRED WATER

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirms
- 2 Resolutions 1979-D029 (Give Priority to Educating Congregations on Energy and the Environment), 1988-D126
- 3 (Request a Statement of Policy and a Plan for Environmental Stewardship), 1991 D041 (Implement 1988
- 4 Lambeth Resolution No. 40 on the Environment), and 2003-D046 (Urge Stewardship of Water Resources), and
- 5 2003-D070 (Work for a Clean Water Policy); and be it further
- 6
- 7 *Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention encourages national Episcopal Church organizations, dioceses,
- 8 congregations, and individual Episcopalians to study the theology of Creation and the place of water in Creation,
- 9 including the entire cycle of water sourcing, storage and transport, use and wastewater treatment and disposal, and
- 10 to study the ethical issues associated with individual, local, regional, national and international water-related
- 11 decisions; and be it further
- 12
- 13 *Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention request designation and funding of a half-time position (\$60,000,
- 14 including salary, benefits and modest travel) within the existing Episcopal Church Center’s Advocacy Center,
- 15 supported by the Executive Council Committee on Science, Technology and Faith, and by the Episcopal
- 16 Ecological Network, to encourage the sharing of tools that dioceses, congregations and individual Episcopalians
- 17 have already developed, and the development of new tools for use when making or helping make water-related
- 18 decisions.

EXPLANATION

Scripture teaches us that God made the waters as part of Creation. Throughout Scripture and in liturgical practice, water has had deeply understood sacramental roles culminating with the water of baptism. Science and everyday experience confirm the description in the Scriptures of water as life-giving for all Creation. Millennium Development Goal #7 seeks to provide adequate supplies of life-giving water for all people.

Within Creation water undergoes a cycle. Water flows from sources, is contained, distributed, sometimes purified, used and then collected and distributed for further purification before rejoining the flow. In our reality the water of Creation is the result of complicated combinations of the natural processes set in place by the evolution of Creation and by many human interventions.

As the World’s population grows, global and regional climates change, and the world society’s increase in technological complexities and dependencies accelerates, water availability is changing and more sources of pollution are making water unfit for sustaining Creation, for liturgical purposes or for human consumption.

Individuals, congregations, communities, regions and nations are being called upon to make difficult decisions related to interventions in the water cycle. Often the decisions are made without explicit reference to Creation or to theological or ethical considerations.

This Resolution asks that The Episcopal Church share the theologically sound tools already developed in diocesan programs and develop and share new tools that individual Episcopalians and congregations can use to help evaluate proposed interventions.

RESOLUTION A157 CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th General Convention of The Episcopal Church reaffirms
- 2 Resolutions 2006-B002 (Acknowledge and Reduce Global Warming) and 2006-D022 (Establish the Millennium
- 3 Development Goals); and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That the 76th General Convention acknowledges the effects that climate change can have on the
- 5 achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and encourages all Episcopal Church organizations
- 6 to consider the hardships induced by climate change for all projects that they undertake in meeting the MDGs,
- 7 including plans that would ameliorate the hardships.

EXPLANATION

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) encapsulate many of The Episcopal Church's ministries to those in poverty. Achievement of the MDGs is threatened by climate change. Drought and flooding both can adversely affect crop yields. Changes in climate may include increased temperatures and rainfall that would yield faster spread of diseases. The changes may also include droughts yielding inadequate supplies of water and reduced water quality. Population dislocations caused by drought, floods, storms or changes in sea level would disrupt education and would affect child mortality, maternal health and the increase and spread of communicable diseases.

MDG project planning should recognize the potential local and regional effects of climate change so that plans include contingency planning with provisions to help the affected population adapt.