

FINAL

Task Force for Creation Care and Environmental Racism
11/12/2018 Morning Session

Chair - Rev. Stephanie Johnson

Present: Stephanie Johnson, Andrew Thompson, Nathan Empsall, Perry Hodgkins Jones, Tyler Kerr, Brian Sellers-Petersen, Cathleen Bascom, Delia Heck, Weston Mathews, Richard Acosta, Dimas Muñoz, Bernadette Demientieff, Sarah Nolan, Lewis Powell, Hershey Mallette Stephens, Melanie Mullen, Stephanie Spellers, Claudia Azar (Interpreter).

Excused: David Rice, Robert Fitzpatrick, P. Joshua Griffin, A. Robert Hirschfeld, Mark Lattime, Lester Mackenzie, W. Mark Richardson.

General Convention Office Presentation

- Minutes required for every meeting
- Within TWO WEEKS of meeting, post on Extranet
- Send minutes to gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org
- Pre-submitted agenda is not required but helpful.

Group Webpage!

<https://generalconvention.org>

- Click on interim bodies
- Will find policies and forms in this tab
- Click on Task Force of General Convention
- This webpage is temporary. After GC it will go away.

Blue Book Reports

- Reports to the 80th General Convention
- Due Dec 1st 2020, 2 years
- Create reports using the application
- If want to include supplemental materials, you can attach to the report. Must provide PDF of Spanish and English materials
- Questions - Twila Rios trios@episcopalchurch.org

Writing resolutions

- Make sure they are written in proper format and are stand-alone documents.
- Resolutions read on virtual binder.

Task Force group Norms

- Use the W.A.I.T. (Why Am I Talking) method to decide if one should speak.
- Minutes will be shared on Episcopal Climate News & Episcopal Food Movement
- Social Media and Websites operating in the group
 - www.ourarticrofuge.org (Bernadette Demiatieff)
 - [Gwich'in Steering Committee](#) (Facebook group)

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- [Episcopal Ecological Network](#) (Facebook group)
- [Episcopal Climate News](#) (Nathan Empsall)
- [Episcopal Food Movement](#) (Brian Sellers-Peterson)
- [Center for Religion and Environment](#), twitter handle: cre_sewanee, www.sewanees.edu/resources/cre (Andrew Thompson)
- www.greenstuff_bascom.com (Catleen Bascom)
- Inter-Faith Alliance for Climate Justice www.iacjva.org (Weston Matthews)
- [Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology](#) (suggestion from Nathan Empsall)
- Dialogue vs. Debate, lean into dialogue
- Decisions sometimes call for a vote, consensus first
 - Prayer in the midst of non-consensus, "Where is God in this?"
 - MIT Shortguide to Consensus building = http://web.mit.edu/publicdisputes/practice/cbh_ch1.html (lots of words)
 - 5 Steps to Reaching Consensus = <https://hrdevelopmentinfo.com/five-steps-to-reaching-consensus/> (video)
 - WikiHow = <https://www.wikihow.com/Reach-a-Consensus> (pictures!)
- Make laughter and joy apart of our work
- Share our grief about climate change
- Go outside
- Take care for yourself - feel free to take a break, step out for your meetings

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- Shared about items brought in from outside during lunch break

GCO Presentation on Extranet

- gcoffice@episcopalchurch.org is our one stop shop.

Decided by unanimous consent that Tyler Kerr will be secretary for the Task Force,
Decided on group norms by unanimous consent. Andrew Thompson will be leader in consensus-making

Canon Stephanie Spellers, presentation on TEC Creation Care Strategy

Safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

- Loving
 - StorySharing
 - Allowing ourselves and others to grieve the climate
- Liberating
 - Eco-justice
 - Opposing environmental racism
 - Advocating for OGR, EPPN, UN
 - Inhibit exploitative extraction practices
- Live-giving
 - Educate people on climate change
 - How do we take up practices in our own lives that commit to the flourishing of life?
 - Carbon footprint
 - Living humbly and gently on the earth
 - Use of carbon tracker (www.sustainislandhome.org), carbon tax, carbon offsets
 - We want to meet those who care about the environment but won't change their way of living.

Possibility of making public statements as a task force?

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- Office of government relations
- Check with TEC Staff, exercise caution, but work with office of communications
- We have authority to make public statements especially about things that directly pertain to the mandates.

Working Groups Discussion

- A brief history of this group
 - Advisory council on science, technology, and the environment (2012)
 - Advisory council on care of creation (2015)
 - Task force on care of creation and environmental racism (2018)
- Environmental racism (A011) and care of creation (A013) combined for logistical reasons, includes liberating from Canon Spellers's presentation.
- Environmental racism resolution has been around for 2 general conventions.
- Budget lines for A011 and A013 have been combined and approved by Executive Council
 - Although they are together in money, how do we bring them together in the work?
- Mandates talk about governmental law and judicial remedies, but they say nothing about canon law. Maybe it would be beneficial for us to really assess ourselves and walk the walk before we talk the talk.
- The task force should model care of creation in our work by considering carbon offsets for our meetings.
 - TELL THE STORIES. What are we doing, why are we doing it, where is our heart in it, and how can that lead us to Jesus?
 - Episcopal News Service is primed to talk about the environment.
 - Different from press releases!
- We are responsible for coming up with criteria for distributing small grants for eco-justice sites and other grants (Lines 165 and 166 in budget adopted 10/2018)
- Collaboration with OGR?
- Specific Subgroups:
 - ~~Report on environmental racism (ends Dec. 2019)~~
 - ~~Small grants program~~
 - ~~EcoJustice Sites~~
 - ~~Networking~~
 - ~~Theology of creation care working group~~
 - ~~Carbon pledge (www.sustainislandhome.org)~~

Strikethrough because this model has been modified (TK 11/20/2018)

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Reflections from yesterday

- Thanksgivings:
 - Stephanie and other previous members of IBs for institutional memory and shepherding the group
 - Breaking down the work into the three categories of Loving, Liberating, and Life-Giving
 - Energy and approach of the group
 - Debate vs. discussion sheet
 - Diversity of gifts within the group
 - For organization and having these meetings very well-run
 - For all of our points of view and the interpreters (THANK YOU CLAUDIA AND ROSA)
 - Thankful for Alice, who reminds us of the future
- Bumps in the road:
 - Discerning which subcommittee to join
 - Understanding the challenges of being an international church but dealing with international borders.
 - Having fun getting to know each other, and keeping our meetings from becoming boring business meetings
- Update from Rev. Powell on fire in Paradise, CA
 - Church building was spared, but most structures around the church building were destroyed.
 - All people from the church are accounted for and safe.

GCO Presentation on policies and procedures for travel reimbursement, consultations, translation services

Video from TEC on creation care (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/stewardship-creation>)

Moving towards task assignments

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- Environmental racism is tied to racial reconciliation. There is a broad spectrum in how it is applied which lead to a discussion and reflection on several points as noted below..
 - For example: Standing Rock. People of Bismark, ND opposed the building of the pipeline by their city because of the potential pollution. Being mostly white, the pipeline was moved to a longer route on the border of the Standing Rock Reservation. The environmental movement changed it from, “don’t pollute our environment” to “no fossil fuels ever” when many of the people worked in the fossil fuel industry.
 - There are environmentalists that have a settler mentality that don’t take indigenous peoples’ opinions into account. Historically the Environmental justice movement is mainly white and highly educated. “Settler environmentalism” is a work of white supremacy rather than taking into account the views of the people who live there.
 - As a Task Force we should take a look at where we are meeting, and who owns the land.

Watched video from TEC Advisory Council on the Care of Creation

Examples of projects and ideas around the church

- 10 kW solar farm in village in Haiti
- Women’s empowerment in Haiti, selling animals to women at wholesale prices to turn around and sell at market prices keeping the difference.
- Solar Energy Academies
 - Training solar entrepreneurs
 - Employ local people
- Cultivate (Episcopal Food Movement)
 - Creation of network to foster food, faith, farming
 - Many people in agrarian ministries feel isolated and have to reinvent the wheel every time.
 - Growing food for food pantries, rain gardens, *formation*.
 - “Harvesting Abundance, Local Initiatives of Food and Faith” – Brian Sellers-Petersen
- StorySharing
 - Telling stories is a much more powerful method of getting to know people because you can’t discount someone’s story. Allows people to share about faith and difference and opportunities for the disenfranchised.
- Theology of the relationship between the land, food, and faith has been mainly dictated by white male landowners.

- Discussion of tasks relating to grants
 - Creation care is so important that we need to incorporate networks with the small grants system. We can not only provide money, but we can provide support for those who receive the grants.

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- Perhaps fund new projects that are not yet in development rather than just supporting existing programs
- Organizations need support to be sustainable rather than just one-time funds. “Capacity-building.” Paying for the “boring stuff” that is required to successfully run an organization.

Consider combining small grants subgroup and networks subgroup

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Introduction video from David Rice
Introduction video from Mark Richardson

Background information

AME church changed canons regarding environmental issues and education of seminarians on environmental ethics. The Way of Love has not been translated into language of creation care.

NEW GROUPS by unanimous consent of those present:

- Loving
 - Including
 - Small Grants
 - Networks
 - Assigned:
 - Cathleen
 - Perry
 - Sarah
 - Brian
- Liberating
 - Including:
 - Report on Environmental Racism
 - EcoJustice Sites
 - Assigned:
 - David
 - Lewis
 - Hershey
 - Delia
 - Weston
 - Bernadette

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- Life-Giving
 - Including
 - Theology Workshop
 - Carbon Pledge
 - Assigned:
 - Andy
 - Richard
 - Tyler
 - Nathan
 - Dimas
 - Stephanie
- Unassigned:
 - Lester Mackenzie
 - Joshua Griffin
 - Mark Richardson
 - Mark Lattime
 - Robert Fitzpatrick
 - Robert Hirschfeld

Breakout into working groups

Working group meeting recap

- Loving
 - Discussions about who to best focus on and who to invest in.
 - Trying to wrap minds around the concept of the “network”
 - How can we work better with Province IX?
 - Do we have the authority to award grants, or do we need approval from Executive Council?
- Liberating
 - Educate and empower people of faith as well as those who have no faith
 - Choose EcoJustice sites that are already established? Choose those who can tell their stories to educate about environmental racism and use those in a way that they are sustainable for the church.
 - We are/have been an imperial church. We have an obligation to pick a few domestic sites and to choose some international sites. Report on environmental racism through not only writing, but also film. Tell stories, provide money. EcoJustice award rather than site to engage those sites who have already done such good work.
 - How do we choose our sites to engage with?

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Continuation of working group meeting recap

- Life-Giving
 - Who are we targeting with our theology?
 - Talked about Creation Care Pledge (To be published by TEC)
 - Stressed importance of education
 - We need to benefit from work that has already been done in parishes, dioceses, by eco-ministers, biblical scholars and theologians etc.
 - Catechism of Creation
 - Bringing in IPCC report?

Video on kWh Kinship with Haiti (www.kinshipwithhaiti.org)

Cathleen proposal for grants:

- What is the purpose of these grants?
- Long term/short term goals
- Proposal for 4 networks among the church based on experiencing similar environmental issues
- Think regionally, but not exclusively
- Affirmative action for the dispersion of these grants?
- Money can be shifted around slightly with permission from Executive Council

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Summary of decisions made:

- Group will strive for consensus (unanimous consent)
- Andrew Thompson will be leader in consensus-making (unanimous consent)
- Tyler Kerr will be secretary of committee (unanimous consent)
- Group will be divided into three working groups (unanimous consent):
 - Loving (includes Small Grants and Networks)
 - Members (4): Cathleen Bascom, Perry Hodgkins Jones, Sarah Nolan, Brian Sellers-Petersen
 - Liberating (Includes Report on Enviromental Racism and EcoJustice Sites)
 - Members (7): David Rice, Lewis Powell, Hershey Mallette Stephens, Delia Heck, Weston Mathews, Bernadette Demientieff, Sarah Nolan
 - Life-giving (Includes Theology and Carbon Pledge)
 - Members (6): Andrew Thompson, Richard Acosta, Tyler Kerr, Nathan Empsall, Dimas Muñoz, Stephanie Johnson
 - Unassigned Members (6):
 - Lester Mackenzie
 - P. Joshua Griffin
 - Mark Richardson
 - Mark Lattime
 - Robert Fitzpatrick
 - Robert Hirschfeld

Faithfully,

Tyler Kerr