

# The Standing Commission on Human Affairs

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## **A. MEMBERSHIP**

The Rt. Rev. George N. Hunt, *Chair*, Diocese of Rhode Island (1991)  
The Rt. Rev. Frederick H. Borsch, Diocese of Los Angeles (1994)  
The Rev. Dr. David A. Scott, *Vice-Chair*, Diocese of Virginia (1991)  
The Rev. Dr. Martin R. Tilson, Diocese of Alabama (1991)  
Dr. Howard R. Anderson, *Secretary*, Diocese of Minnesota (1994)  
Joyce Phillips Austin, Esq., Diocese of New York (1991)  
Mrs. Scott T. Evans, Diocese of North Carolina (1991)  
Ms. Lydia Lopez, Diocese of Los Angeles (1991)  
Mr. Mel Matteson, Diocese of Olympia (1994)

During the triennium the commission profited greatly from meeting for extended periods with a number of consultants. Those persons who assisted the commission in its work on human sexuality are listed in that section of this report.

In the environmental area, the commission is indebted to the Very Rev. James Parks Morton and the staff of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, who worked closely with us in the development of that section of our report.

In addition, Howard R. Anderson served as our liaison with the Executive Council, and Ms. Diane Porter was our liaison with the staff of the Church Center. The Rev. Brian Grieves of the Church Center Staff also assisted the commission in its work with the matters of environmental concern.

## THE BLUE BOOK

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### B. SUMMARY OF THE COMMISSION'S WORK

The commission met seven times during the triennium: once in St. Louis, once in Malibu, California, four times in Alexandria, Virginia, and once in Delray Beach, Florida. In addition, the commission sponsored regional "open hearings" in San Francisco, California, Estes Park, Colorado, and Washington, D.C., to facilitate the conversations in the church regarding human sexuality.

During the triennium, the Commission on Human Affairs received the following resolutions from the 69th General Convention: B035, D027, D089s, D102a, D105, D120s, D123, and D174. All of these resolutions have been studied and/or implemented by the commission, and the results of those studies are reflected in this report.

The commission proposes ten (10) resolutions for Convention action based on this report.

### C. FINANCIAL REPORT

<i>Income</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>1991</i>
Appropriated by Convention	\$16,000	\$24,210	\$ 7,000
Special Grant from Trinity Church Foundation		1,500	
Totals	\$16,000	\$25,710	\$ 7,000
<i>Expenses</i>			
Commission meetings	\$13,335	\$13,834	\$ 5,247
Open hearings	2,331	1,338	
Consultant expenses	815	2,138	
Totals	\$16,481	\$17,310	\$ 5,247

### D. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION WITH RESOLUTIONS

#### 1. HUMAN SEXUALITY

##### Summary of Diocesan Studies

At the 69th General Convention, Resolution D120 strongly urged that each congregation and diocese in the Episcopal Church engage in open dialogue on human sexuality. The resolution further called for each diocese to report its findings to the Standing Commission on Human Affairs so that the commission could prepare a "composite report" for the 70th General Convention.

Twenty-eight of 99 dioceses submitted reports to the commission. Those submitting reports as of January 1, 1991, are the Dioceses of California, Central Pennsylvania, Central New York, East Tennessee, Eau Claire, El Camino Real, Indianapolis, Iowa, Los Angeles, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Hampshire, New York, Newark, Northern Indiana, Northwest Texas, Pennsylvania, Rio Grande, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Western Louisiana, and Western Massachusetts. Nineteen additional dioceses reported studies currently underway or planned. These are the Dioceses of Arizona, Atlanta, Central Florida, Chicago, Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Milwaukee, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, Southeast Florida, Southern Virginia, Southern Ohio, Southwestern Virginia, Spokane, Upper South Carolina, and Western North Carolina. The commission is grateful for this response from over a third of the dioceses of the Church. However, we are disappointed with the level

of response. The indication that over half the dioceses have not taken seriously the recommendations of General Convention in Resolution D120s cannot be overlooked. We have had to ask why. We call on those dioceses not yet having done so to initiate such studies in the triennium ahead so that all our people may have an opportunity to participate in this important process.

Each diocese received a questionnaire which asked three questions: (1) In the dialogues in your diocese, what are the areas of agreement? (2) What are the areas of substantial disagreement? and (3) What are the areas of disagreement? Most respondents did not use the questionnaire or even address the questions posed in it. Nonetheless, it is possible to glean some information regarding areas of agreement and disagreement within the Church on human sexuality.

### AREAS OF AGREEMENT

One immediate finding was that much of the Church is reluctant to engage in open dialogue on human sexuality. Yet we should point out that a number of dioceses reported the dialogue process had been a very good and fruitful experience. Half of the responding dioceses articulated positive results from engaging in dialogue.

Regarding specific issues, no strong national consensus emerged from the diocesan reports. A significant number of dioceses, though, did agree on some points. Over one-third of the reporting dioceses agreed that the Episcopal Church needs to educate its members on sexual issues and generally exert more leadership in this area.

Many dioceses emphasized that sexuality is God's good gift and pointed to the importance of that gift and the responsibility which it brings. A number of respondents took pains to indicate their agreement that genital sexual expression is only appropriate in the context of heterosexual marriage and should be maintained as the standard for all Christians.

### AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT

Ten of the respondents indicated strong disagreement within their dioceses concerning the origin, nature, and health of homosexuality. There was also theological disagreement about whether or not homosexuality contradicts God's plan for humanity, whether it is appropriate to bless same-sex covenants, or even to have different opinions in the Church on this matter. There is also significant disagreement over the Church's authority in sexual matters, as well as the nature of biblical authority. When disagreement was expressed, though, it almost always had to do with understanding the nature of homosexuality. The commission wishes to affirm the fact of wide disagreement within the Church around very important issues such as these. We would respond that it is "normal" for a vital and vibrant community to express disagreement around issues which deeply touch each of our lives.

### DISCOVERIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When sexuality issues become "personalized," the tenor of the dialogue changes dramatically. As one diocese reported, the level of compassion rises considerably when people can put a human face on the issues.

The Church should provide assistance in the form of skilled facilitators to help parishes discuss sexuality constructively. Without such help, such discussion can be very difficult if not impossible.

### CONCLUSION

A tremendous diversity of opinion regarding human sexuality exists within both the Church as a whole and also within individual dioceses and parishes. Also, we must be aware of the significant ambivalence in the Church about even discussing sexuality. Thus, one of the questions which this commission faces along with the whole Episcopal Church is, "Can we move forward on issues of sexuality, even as we affirm the diversity which we experience?"

More work clearly needs to be done in understanding homosexuality. The Church must draw information not only from the traditional theological sources, but also from medical science, psychology, anthropology, and the other fields of knowledge which can shed light on this complex issue. Before the Church can appropriately address the theological issues, we must understand the phenomenon of homosexuality as fully as we can. Studies such as these which have and are taking place in the various dioceses must continue, lest the Church be guilty of not helping support its membership in a period of enormous societal transition.

Finally, though homosexuality dominated the discussion in most of the diocesan reports, there are other sexuality issues that are vital and that need to be addressed as well. The following questions appeared in various reports: What does the Church have to say about the family in a time when the traditional family is undergoing major change? How are we as a church going to address teenage sexuality? Is it morally acceptable for adults of advanced years to live together without being married? These questions, and many others, make it clear that the Church has much work to do yet in the area of human sexuality.

#### Summary of the Commission's Own Studies

##### I. Testimony Received by This Commission

During the triennium the commission met with Ms. Starla Allen, Vice-President of EXODUS International, an umbrella organization for ministries concerned with "assisting gays and lesbians in changing their orientation"; with David McWhirter, M.D., Medical Director of Mental Health Services for the County of San Diego, California and co-author of *The Male Couple*; with Dr. Elizabeth Moberly, Director of Psychosexual Education and Therapy, BCM International, a consulting therapist and author of several books and articles in her field; with Harold I. Lief, M.D., Professor Emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania and now in private psychiatric practice; and with Alan P. Medinger, Director of Regeneration, Baltimore, Maryland, a ministry "assisting men and women who wish to come out of homosexuality." In addition, the open hearings afforded us the opportunity to hear from approximately 75 persons, most of whom were gay or lesbian. Dr. Bonita Ann Palmer, TSSF, family physician and counselor and Co-Chair of The Parsonage, a diocesan pastoral and advocacy ministry, and the Rev. Paul Woodrum, sometime Executive Administrator of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Fund for Human Dignity and, since 1983, a national officer and director of Integrity, Inc., also served as ad-hoc consultants to the commission and attended its October, 1990, meeting.

We have made an effort to hear all voices in this Church and to take their concerns seriously. In the process, we have heard about a lot of pain in the Church, the pain that comes from being within the Church and treated as if one were in fact outside. We have heard from gay and lesbian clergy and lay persons who affirm their sexual orientation and experience and call upon the Church to acknowledge their presence, to repent of its exclusion of them from full participation, and who call upon the Church to affirm

their sexual orientation as God-given and their experience in relationships with one another as holy, life-giving, and grace-filled. We have also taken care to listen to representatives of the smaller number of persons within the Church who claim that God has cured them of a homosexual orientation and delivered them from a homosexual lifestyle.

We recognize that speaking in terms of causation may seem unnecessary to those who see the biblical witness as they understand it, or the experience of their sexual orientation as they perceive it, as a gift of God, as the only relevant factors to consider. Nonetheless, we believe that cause must be considered because responsible ethical decision-making requires that we consider evidence that bears on intentionality. Researchers in a number of fields have proposed theories, but there seems to be no consensus in the scientific community about the cause or causes of homosexuality. Apparently, sexual orientation is a complex phenomenon in which a variety of social, cultural, biological, and psychological factors play roles in causation. Thus John Money of Johns Hopkins University wrote that "the status of sexual orientation in adulthood cannot be attributed to any variable that is either exclusively nature or exclusively nurture" (*American Psychologist*, April 1987: 397). Expert opinion is largely agreed, however, that a sexual orientation is not, in the vast majority of cases, voluntary in the sense of a self-conscious choice.

There is also broad agreement among all who have testified to us that changing homosexual orientation is difficult. Many in the scientific community and in the gay and lesbian community, including some who have attempted to change, claim that homosexual orientation cannot be changed. The question here is not whether persons with a homosexual orientation can have sexual relations exclusively with persons of the opposite sex. Unquestionably, many can. The question is whether lesbian and gay people can ever alter their sexual identity at deep levels of sexual fantasy and response, so that heterosexual relations provide a truly satisfactory expression of their sexuality. We have heard from a very few persons who claim to have changed at such levels, but even they allow that such a change is difficult.

## II. Theological Considerations

As Anglicans we understand God's self-revelation to be witnessed to by Holy Scripture and especially mediated by Jesus Christ. Together with tradition and reason this provides guidance in matters of faith and morals. We say this recognizing that we do not sufficiently respect scripture by examining passages in isolation, but by examining every passage of scripture in the context of the whole scriptural witness. Whatever else we may say about that witness, the Bible, like modern psychology, testifies that how we live our sexuality is integral to who we are as human beings. Faithful Christian living is all of a piece; God does not deal with us as disembodied spirits for whom physical and social relationships are matters of moral indifference. This is implicit in Jesus' discussion of sexuality in Matthew 5:27-32 and Paul's in 1 Corinthians 6-7. Our Anglican heritage also leads us to claim that the Bible can only be usefully interpreted for moral guidance in questions of human sexuality in light of the Church's tradition and the understanding we reach with the aid of the natural and social sciences.

Biblical authors clearly knew of and condemned some forms of what we call homosexual behavior. The principal biblical texts dealing with what we call such behavior may be listed briefly. In the Old Testament Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 forbid men to lie with other men "as with women" and in Genesis 19 the men of Sodom confirm God's sentence of judgment on them by attempting the homosexual rape of angels sent by God in the appearance of men. The one clear reference to genital homosexual behavior in the New

Testament is Romans 1:26-27, which reads, “For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error” (RSV). Here Paul instances male homosexual behavior, and perhaps female as well, as evidence of the moral depravity that has befallen the Gentiles as an appropriate punishment for their idolatry. It also appears that at least some kinds of male homosexual behavior are condemned in 1 Corinthians 6:9 and 1 Timothy 1:10.

It is important to recognize, however, that each of these passages also raises interpretive questions and issues. The Leviticus passages, for instance, are part of a larger context of concern with avoiding certain practices, many of which are considered to emanate from cultural attitudes not significant for faithful living today. Others do not present genital homosexual practice as their major focus. Yet more important for interpretation and use of these passages today is the awareness that many aspects of homosexual orientation as understood today could not have been so understood in biblical times. The Bible passages, for example, may assume that people with attraction to members of the opposite sex are willfully choosing a different practice. It may be argued that, since biblical authors did not understand sexual relations between members of the same sex as expressions of a sexual orientation not intentionally chosen, these biblical references to homosexual behavior do not decide the issue today.

These questions concerning the best interpretation and usage of these passages makes it imperative to relate them to the biblical message as a whole. In this connection, we note that Jesus reached out particularly to persons whom many at the time regarded as outside the community of God’s invitation and favor: lepers, the lame, the blind, Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:2), Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10). Such behavior left him open to the charge of being “the friend of tax collectors and sinners” (e.g., Luke 7:34). Jesus also included in his “family” of those in God’s service “whoever does the will of God” (Mark 3:35). If we ask how Jesus understood that “will of God” for human behavior, it seems to be best summed up in the Beatitudes and in the love commandment of John 15:9-12, namely, that we follow his example of self-giving love. In addition, we note that Jesus’ most pointed words and stories were directed at those who would exclude others from the invitation to live in the community of those under the reign of God: the Pharisee in the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14), the ninety-nine sheep in the story of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7), the elder brother in the story of the father and his two sons (Luke 15:25-31), the all-day workers in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16), and the religious leaders who shut the kingdom of heaven to others (Matthew 23:13, Luke 11:52).

We recognize that work remains to be done if we are to be guided by scripture, tradition, and reason concerning human sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. We note that no passages in the Bible condone homosexual behavior and that the Bible in a number of places presents marriage as the divinely ordained context for the expression of full sexual intimacy. The creation narratives of Genesis 1 and 2 thus depict God as blessing the male-female couple and commanding them to be fruitful and multiply and as creating woman to live in companionship with man. Both Jesus and Paul quote these passages and make heterosexual marriage normative along with celibacy in their own discussions of sexuality. Such study should also consider homosexuality within the context of the Church’s moral and ethical tradition, which we as a commission have not yet dealt with fully. In particular, we need to discuss the relationships between the various

functions of human sexuality recognized in the Christian ethical tradition and already foreshadowed in Genesis 2, namely the strengthening of a committed love relationship and the procreation of children.

### III. Conclusions and Recommendations

This commission, like the Church at large at this time, is not of a single mind in its assumptions and prescriptions about what the Church should do and say concerning human sexuality. We feel it important to say that there are no self-declared gay men or lesbians on the commission; we heard their views expressed in open hearings and from Dr. Bonita Palmer and the Rev. Paul Woodrum, who attended our October, 1990, meeting. Although a strong majority of us believe that the Church's primary call at this time is to do justice to a group of people long excluded from open and honest participation in our common life, some of us believe that our call is rather to gain a better understanding of the moral issues concerned with homosexuality. We do not agree, in particular, concerning two issues fundamental to the Church's position on ethical questions before us: (1) whether homosexual orientation is an equally valid, God-given alternative to heterosexual orientation, and (2) whether committed, monogamous, heterosexual marriage is the only morally acceptable context for full sexual intimacy.

Being divided ourselves on such key issues, we recognize that some of our recommendations will strike many people in the Church as not going far enough and that they will strike many others as going too far. We ask all those who would take issue with our recommendations to consider them carefully as conclusions arrived at deliberately and prayerfully. We offer them as a starting point for continued discussion at every level of the Church.

There are large areas where this commission is in full agreement. We are agreed that, although sexual desire can often be misused and result in cruelty and serious wrongs to others, the teaching of the Church needs especially to emphasize the positive aspects of the fact that we are sexual beings. Our sexuality can be a means of growth in grace and the ways of caring and sacrificial love. A fully developed spirituality will include a fully integrated comprehension of sexuality.

We are agreed that sexuality is rightly used and blessed by God in the life-long marriage covenant of a woman and a man. We believe that Christian communities should strive to be much more supportive of these marriages and families.

We are agreed that all sexual exploitation and coercion of the powerless by the powerful is wrong (as for example, of women by men, of employees by employers, of those being counseled by counselors, of children by adults). The Church must accept its responsibility to provide firm guidelines regarding standards of sexual conduct.

We are agreed that homosexual orientation is not morally culpable or inconsistent with being a committed Christian. Such a position is consistent with a biblical witness, which, as mentioned earlier, does not speak in terms of orientation. It is also consistent with the evidence we have received from the social sciences that such an orientation is not, in the vast majority of cases, a matter of choice. We are opposed to the argument which holds that for persons with a homosexual orientation a genuine conversion to Christ will always be accompanied by transformation to a heterosexual orientation. This Church should admit that it has, in practice, in the recent past excluded and in some places still does exclude a whole class of people from its ministry and thus burdens them with unnecessary guilt on the basis of their sexual orientation. We need to repent of such activity and take steps to see that it no longer happens.

In addition, we all accept the biblical witness, first enunciated in Genesis 2:18, that human beings are not meant to be alone. The single and celibate life is part of the vocation of a number of disciples, but all persons can benefit from the comfort and support of close relationships. We agree that homosexual relationships often provide such comfort and support and exhibit commendable love and commitment. We agree that homophobia, defined not as a clinical phobia but as an irrational fear and hatred of homosexuals and homosexuality, is widespread in our culture and in our Church. Where present it must be exposed, denounced, and, when appropriate, repented of. Such fear, and the prejudice it engenders, is often fed by ignorance, sometimes naive and sometimes willful, about such matters as the difference between pedophilia (that is, sexual desire of an adult for children) and homosexuality. We reaffirm the call of the 1985 General Convention to the Church "to foster a better understanding of homosexual persons and to dispel myths and prejudices about homosexuality." We agree that the basic civil rights of gay men and lesbians in such matters as equal protection and due process of law need to be upheld. Increasing violence against gay men and lesbians dictates that we reaffirm this principle already enunciated by General Convention in 1976 and reaffirmed in 1982. We are also in agreement that it is wrong to use the term "homophobia" to denounce any one simply because that person does not affirm that homosexuality is God's will.

A strong majority of this commission believes that it is possible and desirable for Christian communities fully to support marriages of men and women and their families, to bless, safeguard and strengthen them, without withholding support and blessing from persons of the same sex who are in faithful, committed relationships, seeking in them the characteristics of sacrificial love and abiding care for the other. The firm intention of a life-long covenant with these characteristics is the context for the offering of God's blessing and the community's commitment of full support. To all disciples in these covenant relationships the challenge of the gospel calls them to live in purity of heart and to grow together in ways that will show forth to the world aspects of the faithful and sacrificial love of God and to find in their mutual care greater strength to serve the community. A strong majority of this commission recommends that the Standing Liturgical Commission study the theological and liturgical issues involved in affirming and blessing these covenants of gay and lesbian persons and begin the process of developing liturgical forms for them.

This commission also recommends that the Church acknowledge that it has for centuries ordained gay men and has in recent years ordained lesbians from whose ministries it has benefitted, and that some of these persons have been and are sexually active. A strong majority of this commission recommends that the Church be open to ordaining gay men and lesbians otherwise qualified who display the same integrity in their sexual relationships which we ask of our heterosexual ordinands. We recommend this because we consider the opening of the ordination process to gays and lesbians a matter of justice where justice should no longer be denied. If it is granted that a homosexual orientation is involuntary and for most persons unchangeable, it is unjust to present celibacy as a calling for only some persons with heterosexual orientation who believe themselves called to the ordained ministry but for all persons of homosexual orientation who believe they have that call. Explicitly opening the ordination process in this way is certainly desirable to clear the Church of the taint of hypocrisy, since the presence of gay men and lesbians among the clergy is no secret. It may also be necessary if the Church is to counteract the irrational fear and hatred of gay men and lesbians rampant in our society; we cannot effectively advocate civil rights for gay men and lesbians in society at large if we appear to deny such rights within our own fellowship.

While two members of this commission, Scott Evans and David Scott, agree with much of the sexuality section of this report, they disagree with the recommendation to develop liturgies blessing same-sex unions and the recommendation to ordain sexually active homosexuals. They believe that scripture clearly and consistently witnesses to heterosexual relations as God's will and that such relations have the fullest potential for human wholeness. They also believe that neither the Church nor this commission have sufficiently established the scriptural and theological bases needed to support these recommendations.

A strong majority of the commission believes, however, that the issues have been studied in considerable depth for a number of years by this commission and other bodies and that the time has come to move forward in the direction recommended by this report.

#### IV. Issues for Further Study

In addition to one task already mentioned above, namely, more fully appropriating scripture and the Christian moral tradition in order to address contemporary issues related to homosexuality, the commission notes several other tasks that remain to be done. We need to gain a greater appreciation of the distinctive character and unique perspectives of the gay and lesbian experiences. We need to address the unique circumstances of gay and lesbian youth and their parents and the ways the Church can help meet those needs. We need to learn how the Church can minister effectively and evangelize within the gay and lesbian community. We also need to consider whether the Church should and how it can advocate extending legal protection to gay and lesbian couples. Does the Church need to take a stand on allowing gay men and lesbians such privileges accorded to married couples as rights to visitation in intensive care and protection for community property? Such issues can provide fruitful avenues for further work by this commission in this area during the next triennium.

#### V. Proposed Resolution

This commission believes that our Church is engaged in a long and ongoing process on these issues, one in which there will continue to be different perspectives, often strongly held and argued. We know that there are disciples of profound morality on several sides of the issues.

Truth in complex issues is rarely comprehended fully from one perspective, and we believe we need each other's insights to grow together toward fuller understanding. In the Anglican-Episcopal Church tradition we also believe that it is not only possible but of God that we do not insist that there be only one agreed-upon position on these matters and that we can live and serve together with that tension. We believe that how we live with this tension and care for one another and others is more important to God than how we resolve it.

We also beg to say to ourselves and our Church that these issues ought to remain in context and perspective. As important as they are, further study, discussion or debate should not so concentrate the attention of Christians that they cannot vigorously carry forward the missionary work of evangelism and service to which God calls us or suggest to the secular media and the rest of society that homosexuality is some form of fixation. There is too much else to be done for God.

In this spirit, and also aware that different parts of the country and different dioceses presently experience the tension regarding these issues and the pastoral and evangelical aspects of them, we propose the following resolution.

### Resolution #A104

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That each Diocese of this Church,**  
2 **acting in accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in**  
3 **the United States of America, and in accordance with its own constitution and canons,**  
4 **is fully competent to determine whom best to ordain to the ordained ministry of the**  
5 **Church in the light of the qualifications presented for ordinations in the Book of Com-**  
6 **mon Prayer; and be it further**
- 7 *Resolved*, **That, in accordance with national and local canons and long-standing prac-**  
8 **tice, the Ecclesiastical Authority in each diocese determines which clergy may be received**  
9 **or licensed to officiate within the respective diocese(s).**

## 2. SEXUAL ABUSE, EXPLOITATION AND HARASSMENT

The epidemic of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment which is coming to light as victims bravely step forward to confront their abusers is clearly one of the major crises facing our Church and society. Especially troubling is the molestation and sexual abuse of children. Evidence of sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment by clergy and lay leaders who are employed or volunteer in the Church is growing. When such events occur, significant numbers of people are inevitably affected: families of victims and perpetrator, church members, other clergy and lay employees, the diocese and the national Church. Each incident has an impact far beyond those immediately involved, extending for many years into the lives of many people. These behaviors strike at the very heart of the Body of Christ by destroying the trust people in need have in ordained persons and others in leadership positions. The Church is no longer a safe refuge when abuse, exploitation and harassment occur within it.

In every denomination, the Church's historic response to these behaviors by clergy and lay leaders has been primarily aimed at protecting the perpetrator and covering up the incident. We believe that a church-wide, comprehensive response is needed to address these issues, one that will move the Church beyond mere defensive action to avoid legal and civil suits. We recommend that actions be based upon several principles.

—We must recognize that sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment often stem from a societal attitude about women and children. Women and children (especially women and children of color) are the poorest, and therefore least powerful members of our society. This primary cause must be addressed at every opportunity by the whole Church in order to combat the underlying reasons for the frequency of abuse, exploitation and harassment.

—The victim's needs must be met first. All the resources at the disposal of the Church should be brought to bear quickly and directly to help those who are victims.

—We must embrace a "wellness" not a "sickness" model. Aiding the victims and helping the perpetrators are not enough. The Church must take a positive, preventative, educational approach for clergy and laity because it holds the best potential for effecting systemic change.

—Dioceses and denominations should share their work in this field and be open to assistance and education from the social sciences, the medical and mental health communities and the legal field.

Holding these general principles in mind this commission recommends that the following actions be taken:

1. The Church Deployment Office and Office of Pastoral Development as well as individual dioceses and congregations should make every effort to put in place pro-

cedures that would minimize abuse and exploitation, and intervene immediately to protect the innocent and give help to the exploiters. A "tracking system" should be developed which would prevent known abusers from being hired where they could sexually abuse or harass children or adults unless successful treatment was completed.

2. We urge the seminaries to increase the awareness of their students about sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment and about resources and methods to care for those who abuse and who are abused.

3. Educational materials should be developed to aid congregations in providing sex education as well as educational materials and training for specialists to help congregations that have suffered through the tragedy of a sexually abusive staff member or volunteer.

4. Working with the Office of Pastoral Development of the House of Bishops and dioceses that are developing guidelines about clergy boundaries in the pastoral relationship (the dioceses of New York, Minnesota, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, among others), each diocese is urged to develop and disseminate such guidelines in training sessions to all clergy and other church employees.

The Standing Commission on Human Affairs would like to commend the Office of Pastoral Development of the House of Bishops for its efforts to move beyond mere reaction to this crisis and into preventive measures. Its work with individuals and dioceses, and with the Episcopal Church Foundation, is a good first step to begin to address this issues.

#### For Future Action

##### Child Abuse and Violence Against Children

The commission recommends that for the 1991-1994 triennium the Standing Commission on Human Affairs address the issue of violence against children. This violence is taking countless lives and putting our nation's children at peril. The violence can be physical, emotional or even economic. *Time* magazine recently reported that "every 8 seconds a child drops out of school. Every 26 seconds a child runs away from home. Every 47 seconds a child is abused or neglected. Every 67 seconds a teenager has a baby. Every 7 minutes a child is arrested for a drug offense. Every 36 minutes a child is killed or injured by a gun."

Jesus said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." The Church must become a sure and safe sanctuary for our nation's children. Increasingly, with the disintegration of the family and the decline of our schools, the Church may be for many children the only institution that can be their advocate and protector. The report and recommendations of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs in 1994 could be the catalyst to mobilize the resources of the Episcopal Church to fulfill our responsibilities to our nation's most precious resource, its children.

##### Violence Against Women

The commission recommends that for the 1991-1994 triennium the Standing Commission on Human Affairs vigorously address the issue of the epidemic of violence against women. This violence can be physical, emotional or economic. Women and children make up the vast majority of the poor in this nation. The Church can and should become a strong resource for advocacy on behalf of women.

### 3. NULLITY CANON

Resolution D089s of the 1988 General Convention directed the commission to study Canons I.18 and I.19, "concerning the need for criteria for a judgment of nullity by the Church and how it might be effected," and to report back to the 70th General Convention.

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The commission gave this matter sustained and serious study. A proposed revision for Canons I.18 and I.19 was prepared and circulated to all the bishops with jurisdiction for their comments and suggestions, and responses were received from approximately one-third of the bishops.

As a result of the responses from the bishops who have responsibility for the administration of these canons and our own discussions, the commission recommends that no change be made in these canons respecting additional criteria for a judgment of nullity. Along with many of the bishops responding, we believe that the addition of criteria for a judgment of nullity would have the effect of sharply changing the pastoral character of the present canon to one of a more juridical nature. As one respondent put it, "One of the beauties of both the English common law and also [the canons of] the Episcopal Church is its adaptability to the world in which it functions. This assures that it will not die for lack of responsiveness to the needs of men and women who participate in the Church."

Thus we recommend that these canons be left unchanged, and that the responsibility for determining criteria for a judgment of nullity be left to the individual Ordinary, who may best assess each individual circumstance when an application for nullity is presented to him or her.

#### 4. ENVIRONMENT

The Standing Commission on Human Affairs, in its consideration of environment as a major focus of its work this triennium, reaffirms Mission Imperative #6, "Act in faithful stewardship in response to the biblical teaching of the right use of God's creation," the environmental priority for our Church approved by the 1988 General Convention.

God's Planet Earth is in trouble; life on this only home we have is threatened by extinction, and yet the Church has remained silent. While all other segments of society have moved forward in addressing the gargantuan environmental problems facing the world, the religious community has not. Since the crisis is essentially a religious issue, we find this lack of response appalling. The commission believes the time has come for us, the Episcopal Church, to offer real leadership in addressing this issue.

The time for study of environmental issues and for raising awareness has passed. We know the problems. We daily experience the results of polluted air, water, land and food. It is time for us to move forward and at great speed to respond to the challenge facing us if we are to save planet earth.

We are grateful for the Consultation on the Environment and Sustainable Development called by the Presiding Bishop in September, 1990, to develop a policy and plan of action for the Episcopal Church. We view their work as the beginning of what must become an intensive, intentional, ongoing effort by the Church to join with others throughout the world seeking to protect, heal and restore creation. We call the Church to work with people of all faiths and disciplines on the issues which address survival of life on the planet as we know it. We believe that this crisis offers great potential for renewal in our Church and that we must seize the opportunity to act boldly and creatively with our hearts and treasures. We are at a turning point unlike any in our history. We are called to a new communion with creation and a new era in sacred, universal community.

We affirm and support the Consultation's report presented in their document, "The Episcopal Church in Communion with Creation: Policy and Action Plan for the Environment and Sustainable Development," and urge its adoption by the 70th General Convention. We adopt as our own their call to action, including the following:

1. That a response to the crisis of creation in all its dimensions has the highest priority for the Church.
2. That a theology responsive to the revelation of Christ in creation today must be formulated and proclaimed.
3. That collective inquiry and action from the local parish to the General Convention guarantees that the protection and healing of creation infuses all areas of work, ministry, and mission.
4. That the importance and appropriateness of dialogue with people of all faiths, all disciplines, especially those with scientific expertise, and those experiencing environmental and economic oppression be recognized and heard.
5. That the Church's true wealth—its treasures and its teaching, its talents and its traditions—be committed to these issues here and in support of others throughout the world.

The Standing Commission on Human Affairs was represented in the Consultation and made available to them for inclusion in their document our theological statement on creation, which is included in this report to the General Convention. We believe the Consultation's document to be of such importance that it should be shared with the other churches in the Anglican Communion and should be sent to every diocese and parish in the Episcopal Church for implementation under the leadership of the diocesan bishops and parish clergy.

In order for the Church to insure implementation of actions called for by the Consultation and by this Standing Commission, the efforts must be centered, forceful and visible if we are to attain any degree of success and make any difference in the enormous and complex problems we face. Therefore, we call for a new staff position at the Episcopal Church Center to coordinate the work at all levels in the Church and to provide the leadership and networking that is needed. If the members of this Church take these issues as seriously as they merit, funding must be found for this position.

We also call for the creation of a new Standing Commission on Environment and Sustainable Development. Our work on the issues this year has clearly shown us not only the urgency of the crisis but also that the problems are too overwhelming to assign to any existing Standing Commission, nor should they be spread out among several existing Standing Commissions. The membership of this new Standing Commission should include knowledgeable persons from the religious, scientific and educational communities, and also those impacted by environmental and economic oppression. The commission should especially address the complex links between the environmental crisis and patterns of economic injustice. For example, the United States cannot demand that Brazilian farmers not cut rain forests without examining how United States lifestyle and economic policy contribute to the economic plight of Brazilian farmers. We as a nation ought not to promote solutions to problems of toxic waste or polluted air at the expense of the economically and politically marginalized in the United States.

The world is at a crossroads; decisions made in the forthcoming decade will affect those generations who follow us, even to the seventh generation. Will those generations be able to bless us because we cared enough to do all in our power to reverse the trend toward the destruction of planet earth, or will they curse us, and rightfully so, because we heard the message, had the opportunity and did not heed it. The Choice Is Ours.

### Toward a Theological Vision

As we consider the plight of the earth and our relationship to it, we reaffirm the venerable tradition of Anglicanism of discerning the hand of God's revelation in the history of the planet—in nature's long story, in the chronicle of human events, and in the interaction of the two.

Over the Great Flood the rainbow arches. Through plagues and parting seas the Jewish people were delivered. Christ enters, suffers and redeems history itself. From inside countless wars, genocides, revolutions for freedom and natural disasters, we peer for fresh evidence and new understanding of God's will and the transforming action of the Holy Spirit among us.

Some such episodes are marked by signs. The angel of death passes over Egypt. The star of Bethlehem heralds the birth of the Redeemer. And in our own lifetime a transforming vision comes once again from the heavens. The moon-shot photographic icon of the whole earth—first seen from space as one integrated body—defines both the predicament and possibilities of this moment.

With the help of science as an instrument of revelation, we now behold incontestable evidence of the underlying unity and inextricable bonds within all God's creation. Awestruck by the precious beauty of this portrait, only seconds later we are shocked by evidence of earth's peril.

The report of the first Joint Commission on Peace (1982) documented such threats: "the disappearance of wilderness areas, the destruction of fragile ecosystems through a mixture of natural causes and human intervention, the renewed use of consumable energy sources . . . the depletion of ozone layers. . . ."

Since that report, conditions have worsened and new threats have been discovered. Population growth remains unchecked, particularly in those parts of the world most vulnerable to famine and disease. Our profligate use of fossil fuels is jeopardizing our intricate planetary climate through global warming. Topsoil, rain forests, whole species known and yet to be discovered, fall victim to reckless and unmanaged development. Toxic wastes, particularly those generated by the legacy of nuclear weaponry, lie dangerously undisposed of or buried at risk to the health of communities.

The quality of life in our great cities—centers of culture, civility and commerce—deteriorates under the burden of congestion, garbage, poisoned water and air, and the loss of parks and open space. These conditions have disproportionate effect on minority communities. As in every arena of public life, racism taints the disposition and care of our natural treasures.

Underlying all these circumstances, planetary and local, are fundamental challenges to our habits of consumption and growth. We must establish criteria for sustainable development (also referred to as sustainability) that will meet the needs of the present, curb the wastefulness of the world's most affluent, and not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Development must not destroy or undermine its ecological or resource base and must be able to be maintained over a long period of time. In this respect, environmentalism must be guided by a steady vision of economic and social justice. As Gro Bruntland has stated, "Inequality is the planet's biggest environmental problem."

A moment of great urgency is upon us. Responsible environmentalists are telling us that we have forty years to reverse many of these ominous global conditions. In these dangers lies the opportunity not only for direct response but also for renewed reverence. The ongoing revelation of God in creation—both in its beauty and in its jeopardy—

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becomes for us a moment of grace in history. It offers an unprecedented new sense of scale for understanding "the purpose which God set forth in Christ . . . to bring to unity all things to God, things in heaven and things on earth" (Ephesians 1:9-10).

It is this vision of unity in which all things are interrelated that lies at the heart of the Christian doctrine of creation. This vision is implicit in our Trinitarian understanding of God as interacting persons in community, and in the redemptive work of Christ himself, as we claim in the words of Colossians: "[Jesus Christ] is before all things, and in him all things are held together" (Colossians 1:17). It is this principle of interconnectedness, holding in tension and balance the entire created order, that calls for us to care for the earth with the knowledge that what we do in any one sphere affects the whole.

In the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ the world was redeemed from sin and death. This redemption affects not only the human family but the human family in relation to the entire created order. Caring for the earth we both celebrate the goodness of creation and the redemptive activity of God in history. "The creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God," writes St. Paul. "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we are saved" (Romans 8:20-24). The promise of redemption and the care of the earth are indissolubly connected in the Christian understanding of what it means to live in Christ.

In response to this call to celebrate the beauty of the created order and to share both in the redemption of the earth and in the vision of interconnectedness that undergirds it we must speak in broader and more inclusive metaphors of an organic nature; we do not stride atop inert matter. There are many scientists who would postulate earth as a living organism with a dimension of sacredness that we attribute to all living things. As humans we are part of a single organic creation, and our true role is to use our human qualities of caring and nurturing that such relationality demands. To live in Christ is to live in the world as prophetic witnesses to the fundamental unity of all creation.

Just as this dynamic of unity/community underlies our understanding of "Trinity," so too "baptism" expresses the affirmation of our immersion into, and inseparability from, the totality of God's creation. Finally, the word "communion" now describes with unprecedented accuracy the structural interdependence of all life revealed by the ecological sciences. One body. One body in Christ. Our deepest sacrament grows in appropriateness, authority and universality for this moment in history.

And because we live in constant communion with creation we know more than ever, in the words of the Holy Eucharist, that "this fragile earth" is truly "our island home." We are literally grounded again, come to our senses, a prodigal species returning.

Rediscovering so dramatically that earth is our home, we can understand our human story more fully as part of the earth's story, and both as chapters of God's story. The "dust" from which we humans come and into which we return is, scientifically, star dust. The intergalactic maps of our universe are tracings of our ancestry and, together with them, all living things are embraced as kith and kin. So we hear the voices and we walk together with those indigenous and native peoples and other world faiths which affirm with us this all-embracing intimacy with God's creation.

Its beauty, as always, constantly awakens and replenishes our yearning to know and experience its Creator. And we are drawn to Christ's sacraments to be redeemed into and not out of God's natural order.

The present crisis of the planet is intrinsically religious. It offers a unique opportunity for our Christian faith not only because it bears on the relation of humans to

the rest of God's creation, but also because "religion," understood etymologically, is that which secures in communion what St. Paul refers to as "the all in all."

As we face the broken and wounded condition of the planet and our mission to help restore it, we first recall the Genesis vision of the earth as habitation, not possession, and dominion understood as the exercise of stewardship. We affirm creation as good. But Christian hope, as it relates to the protection and healing of the earth, offers much more hope. We believe that in the fullness of Christ God's entire Creation is renewed. This "newness" is sacramentally present, visible and available. And in turn, through the consecrated action of the faithful, this healing is also available to our planet home. Right now.

Broader, more inclusive and appropriate teaching and metaphors for this new moment are available to us throughout scripture. We are also suddenly able to appropriate anew the patristic vision of the fullness of restored unity and the transparency of creation. St. Francis, Hildegard of Bingen, Julian of Norwich, Meister Eckhardt, Chief Seattle, all speak to us in this time. We must draw upon the insights of feminism, particularly in the way that it has reflected the insights of ecology.

Anglican faith in human reason, moreover, requires us to integrate the perspective of science. Indeed, a new moment in intellectual history stands before us. The environmental crisis cries out for a great new dialogue calling upon the insights of science, religion, humanities and the arts, exploring the great interdependencies, and proclaiming an all-inclusive vision of creation.

It is with considerable depth and steadiness, then, that the Church can embrace the environmental agenda as her own. We are a church in communion. Increasingly, environmentalists are calling upon religious institutions to offer much needed dimensions of spirituality, motivation, and analysis. Prominent lay Anglicans—Gregory Bateson, Rene Dubos, Buckminster Fuller, James Lovelock, Margaret Mead, W. I. Thompson, L. Van der Post—have established the foundations and framework for ecology as a critical new discipline and perspective. Anglican representation has been prominent at major international environmental conferences in Assisi, Oxford and Moscow. Thirty-four prominent international scientists, including Nobel Laureates, have turned to us to help establish and implement "A Joint Commitment in Science and Religion."

An urgent healing mission awaits us, offering great opportunities for our leadership, renewal and growth. It requires specific, concrete measures now. But the dimensions of the crisis, its theological implications, and the diversity of relevant disciplines also require that we reach out. We must act firmly on our own while listening more than ever to others.

*Plan of Action.* The Standing Commission on Human Affairs endorses the Consultation's Plan of Action as stated in their document, summarized as follows:

1. Establishment of an Episcopal Office of Environment and Sustainable Development at the Episcopal Church Center.
2. Establishment of a Standing Commission on Environment and Sustainable Development.
3. Provincial determination of eco-regions in line with ecological knowledge.
4. Provincial meetings called by the national Church to identify eco-regional environmental problems and to develop an action plan.
5. Identification of qualified persons in dioceses and provinces to serve as Consultants on Environment to congregations and dioceses.

6. Development and production of multi-sensory materials in English and Spanish for congregational use.
7. Upon the approval of the Consultation's document by the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, distribution of the Consultation's document to member churches of the Anglican Communion in response to the 1988 Lambeth Resolution #040.
8. Recognition of pollution of the environment as a global concern and strengthening the involvement within the Anglican Communion through specific actions recommended by the Consultation.

**Resolution #A105**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That an Office of Environment and**
- 2 **Sustainable Development be established which shall report directly to the Presiding**
- 3 **Bishop; and be it further**
- 4 *Resolved*, **That the Office develop a program which will provide theological educa-**
- 5 **tion, worship, and action for our churches at all levels of our structure, stimulate and**
- 6 **support environmental programs at diocesan and provincial levels, establish communica-**
- 7 **tion programs with database projects in the Episcopal Church and other religious bodies;**
- 8 **and be it further**
- 9 *Resolved*, **That the Office of Environment and Sustainable Development work with**
- 10 **all faith communities, locally and globally, and maintain liaison with government, scien-**
- 11 **tists, environmental organizations, community activists, and others.**

**Resolution #A106**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That Canon I.1.2(n) be amended by adding the following new paragraph:**

- 1 **“A Standing Commission on the Environment and Sustainable Development, consisting**
- 2 **of 9 members (2 Bishops, 2 Presbyters or Deacons, and 5 Lay Persons). It shall be**
- 3 **the duty of the Commission to study and concern itself with the theological, ethical,**
- 4 **economic, justice, and pastoral questions inherent in issues concerning the endangered**
- 5 **planet and to develop recommendations and strategies that will assist the Church to**
- 6 **respond actively to the ecological crisis facing Creation.”**

**Resolution #A107**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That the 70th General Convention**
- 2 **call on all members of this Church and its institutional structures to respond to the**
- 3 **cry of help from God's Planet Earth by practicing wise and responsible stewardship**
- 4 **in all facets of daily activities at home, work or play, and by making those initiatives,**
- 5 **governmental and individual, on global warming, ozone depletion, smog and acid rain,**
- 6 **rain forests, solid waste, hazardous substances, saltwater pollution, freshwater pollu-**
- 7 **tion, energy consumption, and overpopulation a top priority.**

**Resolution #A108**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That the 70th General Convention**
- 2 **affirm and support the principle of sustainability (the ongoing capacity of nature and**
- 3 **social systems to thrive together equitably); and be it further**
- 4 *Resolved*, **That we affirm and support the principle of justice which demands that**
- 5 **all members of the human family have enough of the world's goods to live and to**
- 6 **pass on to future generations; and be it further**

## THE BLUE BOOK

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7 *Resolved*, That we recognize that this requires equitable sharing and organized efforts  
8 to restructure the economy towards this goal.

### Resolution #A109

1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Episcopal Church, through  
2 its Social Responsibility in Investments Committee, promote the Valdez Principles, which  
3 address: Protection of the Biosphere, Sustainable Use of Natural Resources, Reduc-  
4 tion and Disposal of Wastes, Wise Use of Energy, Risk Reduction, Marketing of Safe  
5 Products and Services, Damage Compensation, Disclosure, Environmental Directors  
6 and Managers, Assessment and Annual Audit; and be it further

1 *Resolved*, That diocesan Social Responsibility in Investments Committees or other ap-  
2 propriate agencies be urged to follow the National Church's SRI Committee's leader-  
3 ship in its shareholder activism with regard to corporate compliance with the Valdez  
4 Principles.

### Resolution #A110

1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That all properties owned by any  
2 part of the Episcopal Church be managed in accordance with responsible stewardship  
3 principles.

### Resolution #A111

1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That all future General Conven-  
2 tions of the Episcopal Church be models of the stewardship of God's Creation and  
3 that the General Convention Office and the Planning and Arrangements Committee  
4 be directed to implement the following actions:

5 1. Provide recycling centers for newspapers, office paper, computer paper,  
6 aluminum cans, glass and plastics;

7 2. Use recycled paper for printing of resolutions, for computers and for publica-  
8 tions (*The Convention Daily*);

9 3. Use pottery or glassware instead of styrofoam or paper cups;

10 4. Photocopy both sides of papers distributed to deputies, when possible;

11 5. Use only white paper for printing; and be it further

12 *Resolved*, That registration fees be increased if necessary to cover any additional cost  
13 incurred to implement these changes; and be it further

14 *Resolved*, That the Executive Council implement these and other environmentally  
15 responsible actions at the Episcopal Church Center and any conferences it sponsors  
16 to reflect a commitment and desire to restore God's Creation to wholeness; and be  
17 it further

18 *Resolved*, That all provinces and dioceses be strongly urged to take corresponding  
19 actions.

## 5. HOMELESSNESS

It is difficult to know what new to say to our sisters and brothers in Christ about the issue of homelessness as we review what has already been said so many times, in so many ways.

Justice is a mandate of which we are all aware. Christ calls us, each of us and as a church, to serve the world around us in his name. In these days, economic justice is in danger of becoming simply a catchphrase to cover all the things we ought to be doing and too often are not.

Each General Convention of the Episcopal Church in recent years has dealt with economic justice by way of resolutions. These calls to respond as Christ would respond are most often passed with little discussion and amendment, to rest in the records of Convention for another three years.

There was excitement and enthusiasm surrounding the so-called "Michigan Plan" at Detroit. It was, while underfunded, a blueprint for the Church to tackle at least one aspect of homelessness, that is, the lack of resources with which to acquire a home, or to pay rent on a house or apartment. Beyond that, homelessness extends to those for whom the street, cars, doorways and abandoned buildings are present abodes.

For these people, men, women, and children, rent or a down payment are not even a part of the question. These monies are beyond reach or imagining for the victims of rank poverty, drugs, alcohol, mental illness or the simple combat fatigue of street life.

It does not seem constructive to attempt to deal with homelessness unless we move immediately to the root causes of this widespread phenomenon in American life. The wrenching poverty seen today goes beyond the poverty many endured in the Great Depression. Too often today, "going without" means having nothing: no housing, no money or sufficient clothing to bear the weather, and not much possibility, without substantial help, of getting out of the deep trench of abject poverty.

The Episcopal Church, in the voice of its General Convention, has acknowledged the conditions cited. We have passed resolutions that deplore the plight of the poor and the disadvantaged. If we are to be the servant church, we must now do what we have called ourselves to do. In every diocese, in every congregation, we have the wherewithal to engage in actions that will enlarge the opportunity of the poor to rejoin the society from which they are cut off.

Accurate measurement of the homeless population is almost impossible. Estimates of the total number of homeless persons in the United States range from 600,000 (by a research group) up to three million (by an advocacy organization). Based on the results of a survey conducted in 1988-89 by The Partnership for the Homeless Inc. (a New York interfaith organization that oversees a shelter network), 46 localities around the country estimate that from 0.7 to 1.1 percent of their respective populations is homeless. This would translate to a total of as many as two million homeless nationwide.

To the totals above must be added the number of families inadequately housed in seriously overcrowded apartments or sub-standard units. The numbers are scandalously large, and the suffering of these millions of persons intense. The survey by the Partnership for the Homeless indicates that the number of homeless Americans increased by 18 percent between 1988 and 1989. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology study projects 19 million total homeless persons in the U.S. by the year 2000, if federal housing programs are not restored to 1979 production levels.

Denominationally or ecumenically, the people of God, using their considerable resources, can make a difference in very practical ways with housing rehabilitation and with construction of housing that is financially structured to be available to the low-income, the elderly and the disabled.

### GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

There are none of us, except by reason of foreign citizenship, who cannot vote. The polls, where we call our elected representatives to the tasks for which we elect them, are the places in which we express with some emphasis our determination that, as in the Episcopal Church, so also in the nation there are to be no outcasts. It is a responsibility that extends from our faith to our citizenship.

On November 28, 1990, Congress passed the National Affordable Housing Act (Public Law-101-625), which was signed into law by President Bush a month later. This is a major new initiative authorizing a host of programs totaling \$27.5 billion in this fiscal year (1991). A significant proportion of these funds will be targeted to low and moderate income families, to reduce the number of persons put at risk of becoming homeless. Important to note is the subtitle "Community Housing Partnerships," under which assistance will be forthcoming for community-based nonprofit organizations engaged in housing developing. Churches that form nonprofit corporations for the purpose of building or renovating housing will benefit from the subtitle.

The 1990 Housing Act would never have been passed without the grassroots outpouring in the last three years of support for government-assisted housing programs. A key factor was the Housing Now! demonstration held in Washington in October 1989. Out of an estimated 200,000 participants (according to the organizers), church members made up a significant percentage.

Grassroots lobbying efforts in support of adequate funding levels for programs targeted specifically to the homeless will continue to be essential over the next triennium. In its 1990 session, Congress authorized only a modest annual increase in the McKinney Homeless Act: in 1991, to \$482 million; in 1991, to \$659 million. According to the Partnership for the Homeless, this act needs to be funded at a minimum of \$2 billion to provide levels of emergency food, shelter and other services commensurate with need. Congress should be urged to fund the McKinney Act at significantly higher levels.

We see elements of a resurgence of racism in many parts of the country. Much of the lack of opportunity for the poor stems from unequal advantage. It is too easy to write off tens of thousands of people as unqualified, underqualified, or perhaps as inappropriate for employment or, for that matter, lacking residency in the "right places." As Christ's people by baptism and therefore servants in his image, we have work to do in turning around attitudes—our own and those around us.

The people of the Ninth Province of our Church face equally daunting problems. An accurate determination of housing needs for the homeless in Mexico and Central America is difficult to ascertain, but we do know that in Mexico, for example, over 400,000 housing units are needed for families earning minimal wages. In Costa Rica, Habitat for Humanity places the need at over 40,000 housing units.

Interneine fighting caused by clashes between rival political groups, and between government and revolutionary forces in a number of Central and South American countries, has forced thousands of people to abandon their homes in order to escape the violence. The U.S. military action in Panama left many civilians homeless. With nowhere to turn, the homeless look to the Church for aid, and refugee resettlement is an important component of the Church's work in these areas. In Northern Mexico, U.S. corporations have established manufacturing plants on foreign soil to take advantage of cheap labor and have created new housing problems. Workers enticed to these otherwise underdeveloped areas by the promise of work, find when they arrive that the only

housing available is small, bare, barracks-like units. The workers are forced to pay a high percentage of their earnings to provide what is terribly inadequate housing for their families.

The Church at large, and the Episcopal Church in particular, plays an important part in assisting persons who are homeless and in preventing others from becoming homeless. Our parishes and diocesan agencies are directly involved in developing housing units for the elderly using federal Section 202 funds. Interdenominational coalitions of churches, such as the model Nehemiah Projects in Brooklyn, are developing housing for low and moderate income families.

We also commend to parishes and missions across the country the Habitat for Humanity programs. Many Episcopalians have joined in this remarkable effort. A hands-on, home-grown project, carried out by Christians committed to a personal participation in the providing of houses for the poor, Habitat is a presence in many cities and easily accessed. It is only one response but an effective one.

We call our brothers and sisters in Christ to carry home the message of this Convention to our dioceses and parishes, neighborhoods and work places. Use the tools of our own Church and community to promote and support the variety of works that address hunger, poverty, unemployment, underemployment and homelessness.

For your reference, we have asked for distribution of the texts of resolutions regarding homelessness already enacted by preceding Conventions. We bring to your attention the "Michigan Plan," enacted by the 69th General Convention, as a fine example of the paths we have laid for ourselves by action of General Convention. There have been many more actions over recent years by which we have called ourselves to an active role in bringing justice to the poor. Suffice it to say, however, that these resolutions only point us in the right direction. It remains for each of us to return to our home dioceses and congregations with a determination to live out the command to love one another, in the most comprehensive meaning of that call.

## 6. AREAS THE COMMISSION HAS NOT ADDRESSED

This commission has tried to address most of the issues that were either a part of its stated objectives in the 1988 Blue Book Report or were referred to it by the 1988 General Convention. However, because of a lack of time and staff we have not been able to address the issues of pornography, alcoholism and "being single in a 'coupled society.'" We still believe these are important issues that the Church should address, and we trust that a future commission may be able to make recommendations on them to General Convention.

## E. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE COMING TRIENNium

Several suggested issues for study by the commission for the coming triennium are:

1. A continuing study of areas of human sexuality, particularly to include marriage and families and how church communities may better support them; and
2. The issues and concerns of gay and lesbian persons as set forth in this report, particularly the issue of teenage gay and lesbian persons and the problems they face.
3. Child abuse and violence against children, with particular emphasis on these occurrences within the church community and the ministering to parties involved both as abused and abuser.
4. Violence against women, including psychological as well as physical violence.

- 5. Pornography
- 6. Homelessness

as well as such other matters as shall be referred to us by the General Convention.

**F. PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE COMING TRIENNIUM**

<b>Income</b>	<i>1992</i>	<i>1993</i>	<i>1994</i>
From Assessment Budget	\$17,000	\$19,500	\$14,000
<b>Expenses</b>			
Commission Meetings	\$17,000	\$19,500	\$14,000

**G. PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR BUDGET APPROPRIATION**

**Resolution #A112**

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That there be appropriated from the Assessment Budget of the General Convention for the expense of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs the sum of \$50,500 for the triennium 1992-94.**

**H. APPENDICES**

*1. Task Force on Accessibility*

The following resolution is submitted by the Commission on Human Affairs on behalf of and as a courtesy to the Executive Council's Task Force on Accessibility.

**Resolution #A113**

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, **That this 70th General Convention commend the Congress and the President of the United States on the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and be it further**
- 2 **tion commend the Congress and the President of the United States on the passage**
- 3 **of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and be it further**
- 4 *Resolved*, **That the Episcopal Church voluntarily comply with the provisions of this Act.**

*2. Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging*

The following report is submitted by the Commission on Human Affairs on behalf of and as a courtesy to the Episcopal Society on Aging.

The Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging (ESMA) was created by the 1964 General Convention, and reaffirmed by subsequent General Conventions, as the nationally affiliated agency of the Episcopal Church responsible for the development and support of ministries on aging. ESMA is a volunteer organization of clergy and lay persons working to serve the spiritual, psychological and physical needs of older persons while fostering the use of their unique gifts and talents as valuable assets for contributions to the Church and to society.

ESMA understands its charge in the context of historical demographic changes and a commitment to church members of all ages who seek a productive life in their later years. ESMA also works to strengthen the sense of common mission and purpose among Episcopalians of all ages. In spite of continuing financial constraints, ESMA is working towards increasing collaboration with the national Church and constituents at provincial, diocesan and parish levels.

*ESMA's Task Today*

In November, 1989, the ESMA Board elected as president Dr. Bernard E. Nash, former Executive Director of the American Association of Retired Persons. Dr. Nash has a challenging message, not only for older Episcopalians, but for the Church as a

whole. He links ESMA's purpose with the broader mission of the Church as a religious and social institution.

Why does ESMA ask that the Church concern itself with healthy, able-bodied, middle-aged and recently retired members? asks Dr. Nash in the February 1990 edition of ESMA's *Network News*. Truly believing that the Church should be involved in every part of our lives, we are, in the short term, obligated to work to address the needs of elders and be advocates for expanded support services.

In the long term, states Nash, we must also help people change their perspective on aging, a process in which everybody is engaged, no matter what their chronological age. In this enterprise, ESMA's role is that of "educator, and advocate, a conscience." The organization, says Nash, has a prophetic as well as an immediate message.

"If we concur that aging is a process, not a state of being, then ESMA's mission is to intercede in that process at appropriate points to effectively assure that future generations are better prepared to live in dignity, with purpose, and with opportunities to experience spiritual growth and fulfillment to their life's end."

As ESMA enters the '90s, it is called to reflect upon its role in a world where the emphasis is increasingly upon the kind of world we wish to leave to our children and grandchildren. ESMA cannot accomplish its goals in a vacuum. As conscientious Christians, we are all charged to participate in this task.

#### *ESMA's Structure*

The focus of the aging program of the national Church, through ESMA, is to bring about changes in social attitudes, public policy, and in the Church's ministry, to eliminate discrimination and injustice toward older persons. ESMA encourages use of the experience and creativity of older persons and works to provide more effective responses to their spiritual, emotional, social and physical needs. Its goal is to assure each individual's sense of well-being and fulfillment.

A national network of provincial coordinators and bishop-appointed diocesan designees has been working to implement ESMA's goals locally. The network's primary objective is to touch the lives of the aging and their families in the parishes, and to involve all church members in experiencing what it means to age in a "grace-filled" way. The network is a collaborative effort between parishes, dioceses, provinces and the national Church.

The nineteen-member Board of Directors (including two bishops and five other clergy) represents diverse ages, backgrounds and regions of the country. Meetings of the Board are held twice each year. Volunteer network provincial coordinators, diocesan designees, and others participate in the annual meeting. The diocesan designees within a province are normally in direct communication with their provincial coordinator and, nationally, with each other at the annual meeting. The ESMA staff operates out of offices in the Diocese of Bethlehem's diocesan/cathedral complex: 323 Wyandotte Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015 (215-868-5400). At present the staff consists of one full-time executive secretary and one part-time bookkeeper. Office volunteers augment the limited staff. ESMA's liaison to the national Church is Marcia Newcombe, Staff Officer for Social Welfare.

ESMA's program activities include designing and conducting training programs, gathering information on the dioceses' and parishes' needs, and finding creative and practical ways to apply that data. Program development and dissemination occurs largely through the network of provincial coordinators and diocesan designees and in cooperation with other church bodies and national and international groups on aging. ESMA applies its resources for education and training at multiple levels for church leadership

development, seminary and continuing education, workshops and training. ESMA continues to produce publications linking religion and aging, and to offer parishes resources for celebration and reflection.

### *New and Continuing Program Development, 1988-1990*

*Network News*, first published in April, 1989, is an in house quarterly publication which goes to the provincial coordinators and diocesan designees who make up ESMA's nationwide "Network." The newsletter includes resources, dates of approaching events, and other related topics of interest. *Network News* complements ESMA's other publication, *Aging Accent*. Published three times yearly, this publication, devoted to information pertinent to aging, reaches an audience of 3,500.

### *Collaborative Committee on Aging and the Church.*

In the 27 years since ESMA was created by General Convention, it has defined a role for itself within the Church as an advocate and resource for older members of Christ's Body. As ESMA enters the 1990s it is taking concrete steps to share more intimately in the mission and ministry of the national Church. To that end, ESMA's Committee of the Future undertook a series of studies to find out where ESMA could be most useful and where it could collaborate with other Episcopal Church-related organizations.

In 1988, the Committee of the Future sent out 150 questionnaires to members of the ESMA Network. In collating findings from the 57 responses, certain "absolutes" emerged. A majority of respondents emphasized the need for network training and orientation. Most also felt ESMA should continue to explore and initiate programs, such as the project to train seminarians in gerontological issues. A majority also felt that the national Church needs ESMA's attention. Fifty-eight percent felt that the national Church leadership was not sufficiently sensitive to the changing age profile of the Church's membership and its implication for the Church and its members.

At its November, 1988, meeting the Board set up four task forces to study ESMA's bylaws/mission, finances, Network and training/education needs. Working with a consultant, the Board established time-framed objectives based on ESMA's 1987 Executive Council-approved mission statement and the Committee of the Future's recommendations. Gradual changes in bylaw structure ensued, including introducing rotating Board membership and increasing Board size from fifteen to nineteen members. To insure financial stability, more emphasis was placed on the Development Committee. Training and Education was expanded in many ways including providing training opportunities at the ESMA annual meeting for both Board and Network. Broader communication efforts with the ESMA network ensued, such as the establishment of *Network News* in April 1989. The issues of ESMA's relationship with the Episcopal Church Center was addressed. Contact was established with Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning.

One June 22, 1989, four members of the Board, along with Social Welfare Staff Officer Marcia Newcombe, met with the Presiding Bishop to talk about ESMA's future. The Presiding Bishop agreed to appoint a bishop and a member of Executive Council to the ESMA Board. Bishop Browning also assigned the Office of Social Welfare to work with ESMA in development of a Collaborative Committee on Aging and the Church. This committee is made up of Church Center staff representatives and ESMA Board members. Two subsequent planning meetings for the collaborative effort with ESMA and national Church staff were held. ESMA employed a consultant to assist in facilitating the process. In 1990, ESMA received a \$30,000 grant to develop and implement the Collaborative Committee's program over the next two years. The purpose of this project

is to explore ways to develop collaborative ministries with the staff of the Episcopal Church Center focusing on aging as an issue. The first meeting of the Collaborative Committee with national Church executives was scheduled in the winter of 1991.

#### *Other Continued Programs and Publications*

**Age in Action.** In 1989 *Age in Action* materials highlighted the theme "Memories Shape the Future," with over 6,000 copies of the material distributed to parishes in 67 dioceses. The theme for 1990 was "Responding to God's call," distributed to all diocesan designees for use in their dioceses. The theme for 1991 is "Older Persons: Full Participants in God's Family." *Age in Action* is celebrated each May and has been endorsed by General Convention.

**Ministry with the Homebound.** In 1989 ESMA completed its pilot programs focused on ministry with the homebound in the Dioceses of Tennessee and Indianapolis and eight dioceses in Provinces I and II. Originally developed by the Diocese of Maryland, the program emphasizes involving the homebound elderly and persons with handicaps in action programs for themselves, their families, congregations and communities, as well as exploring their spiritual needs. An article in 1989 in *The Episcopalian* brought this program to the attention of the wider Church.

**Affirmative Aging: A Resource for Ministry.** This book, published by ESMA in 1986, is a resource on spirituality and aging as seen through the eyes of eleven people experienced in issues affecting the elderly. Now in its third printing, it is available through the ESMA office (\$9.95 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling). It includes a study guide which increases its usefulness in parishes. It has been proclaimed "the best book on religion and aging yet published" by specialists in the field.

**Older Adult Ministry: A Resource for Program Development.** In 1987 ESMA and the national aging offices of the Presbyterian Church and the United Church of Christ joined together to produce this manual. ESMA provided several authors from its volunteers and staff. The publication (\$5.95 plus \$2.00 shipping and handling) is available through the ESMA office.

**Facility Directory.** ESMA, in cooperation with the Episcopal Awareness Center on Handicaps (EACH) and the Episcopal Church Housing Office (ECHO), conducted a national survey of Episcopal-sponsored housing facilities. Two hundred eleven facilities were identified, and are listed in alphabetical order. The directory, published in 1989, is available from the Episcopal Awareness Center on Handicaps. For details call 704-433-2811.

**ESMA's Funding.** The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church has provided funding to ESMA for carrying out its mandated national program on aging in the amount of \$30,000 in 1988 and 1989, \$27,500 in 1990 and 1991. Additional funds are obtained through membership fees, donor gifts, grants, sales and interest. Funds received from these sources since the last General Convention were approximately \$62,000 in 1988 and \$37,000 in 1989. Individuals, parishes, dioceses, ECWs, and Episcopal institutions provide a critical donor base for ESMA. In order to carry out its mission, ESMA Network and Board members make cash and in-kind contributions annually (equivalent to over \$35,000 in 1989).

ESMA has been awarded a \$30,000 foundation grant for the work of the Collaborative Committee on Aging and the Church in 1990 and 1991.

In conclusion, ESMA seeks to be responsive to the reality of the increasing number of gifts and needs of older adults within our Church and our commitment to enable older members to live out their Baptismal Covenant. At the same time, ESMA recognizes that "today's children are tomorrow's older people," to quote Dr. Robert N. Butler, former

## THE BLUE BOOK

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Director of the National Institute on Aging and an Episcopalian. ESMA envisions a new wave of collaboration and cooperation with all programs of the Church so that we may become One in the Spirit of God.

The Board of Directors  
Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging  
Bernard E. Nash, Ph.D., President

### Resolution #A114

- 1 *Resolved*, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church reaffirm and
- 2 **support the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Society for Ministry on Aging**
- 3 **(ESMA) and commend the embracing of the ministry of ESMA to all levels of the**
- 4 **Church (provinces, dioceses, congregations, institutions and nursing facilities).**

### EXPLANATION

ESMA recognizes the revolutionary changes in the demographics of "This Church" with reference to the aging of its membership, which indicates an ongoing and urgent need for the constant updating, studying, interpreting and disseminating of current data in order that the Church may make an effective, appropriate and collaborative response in addressing the intergenerational needs of persons in "This Church" and society.

#### 3. *The report of the Episcopal Family Network*

The following report is submitted by the Commission on Human Affairs on behalf of and as a courtesy to the Episcopal Family Network.

Toward Health for Clergy and Clergy Families.

Healthy parochial clergy:

- feel joy and satisfaction from work in the Church
- feel healthy and energetic
- do not feel lonely and isolated
- feel spiritually whole and growing in spiritual depth
- do not think seriously about leaving the parish ministry
- feel people in the congregation understand their needs for private time
- feel they have been successful in overcoming difficulties and obstacles in their ministry

Healthy spouses of parochial priests:

- feel healthy and energetic
- feel spiritually whole and growing in spiritual depth
- feel they have enough time to do what is expected by their families
- do not feel lonely and isolated
- feel joy and satisfaction from their work in the Church
- do not feel they impose unrealistic expectations on themselves
- have enough time to be alone for reflection, hobbies, reading or recreation
- feel people in the congregation understand their needs for private time

These statements make up the index of health found in a study done by the Episcopal Family Network through its Clergy Family Project. They are documented in *Clergy Families in the Eighties*, published by the Episcopal Family Network in 1988. They emerge from data gathered from clergy and spouses of clergy in six dioceses in the eastern half of the United States. EFN was prompted to consider to what extent they were reflective of

other parts of the country and, if so, what might be done that would help highlight and sustain them.

“Resolved, That the Clergy Enrichment Project be continued in additional dioceses, as funds are available, during the next three years, and insofar as such funds make it possible, a report be made to the 70th General Convention in 1991.” Thus it was that the 69th General Convention meeting in Detroit supported the Clergy Family Project and the pilot study done in six dioceses. The Episcopal Family Network went to Detroit in the hope of receiving money to subsidize Phase II of the Clergy Family Project. It left with no money, some support, and its developers pondering how to sustain an idea within financial limitations. What follows is the story of our progress, beginning with a brief history.

The Clergy Family Project is sponsored by the Episcopal Family Network. As part of EFN’s mission to families and in response to the particular needs of clergy and their families, EFN undertook in 1986 a program to enrich the lives of clergy and their households. Six dioceses—Alabama, Central Florida, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, and Tennessee—agreed to participate in this. What evolved was a research project with an action follow-up, designed to include married clergy and their spouses as well as single clergy, bishops, and spouses of bishops. It enlisted the participation of a diocese in the development of resources to sustain the physical, emotional and spiritual health of clergy and of their families. The results were published in 1988 in the above-mentioned *Clergy Families in the Eighties* and distributed to bishops and deputies to General Convention of that year.

At the same time, in response to requests from other dioceses, the Episcopal Family Network was moved to explore ways to make the project more widely available. A value of this project, thought EFN, was the participation of clergy, bishops, and spouses in exploring their common concerns and, together, developing resources responsive to those concerns. EFN wanted to avoid a style that would appear to diagnose or analyze the “problems of clergy and their families” and list solutions, in favor of one that focused on wellness and made *all* active participants in a process. For it was clear, in the pilot dioceses, that it was the *engagement* in a process that was valuable and energizing for a diocesan committee.

The pilot project was generously funded by Trinity Church in New York City, the Church Pension Fund, and the Episcopal Church Foundation. It also drew heavily on the funds that the Episcopal Family Network received from the national budget as an agency related to the Division of Social Welfare. These funds underwrote the development of the assessment tool, staffing for the project, and yearly matching grants to the six pilot dioceses over the three years of the project.

EFN’s challenges, if it were to extend the project, were how to package the product so that others could use it, how to implement that process, and how to fund both. The Episcopal Family Network decided that at least two components were needed: a manual that outlined the process and a person to coordinate the entire procedure.

The Episcopal Family Network came to the 1988 General Convention with a prototype of the manual and a request for funding Phase II of the Clergy Family Project. EFN left that Convention knowing that people thought the project a good idea but without financial backing.

For the pilot project, EFN had contracted with two consultants and a research analyst to implement that phase. Dr. Adair Lummis of Hartford Seminary was the research analyst for the project. Christine Folwell and Roberta Walmsley worked directly with the participating dioceses. During the year following General Convention 1988, all three con-

tinued their involvement in bringing the pilot project to a conclusion, wrote and edited *Clergy and Clergy Families—a Manual*, and developed a strategy to disseminate the project.

Several conclusions were reached. Participating dioceses would be expected to fund their own participation in the project and whatever resources they developed. EFN in turn would provide a person to coordinate and supervise the beginning of Phase II.

The manual was completed by June of 1989. The Rev. William Winterrowd, the president of EFN, sent a letter to each diocesan bishop announcing the availability of the manual. There were responses from 35 bishops, who then received a copy of the manual. A presentation was made at the interim meeting of the House of Bishops in Philadelphia in September, 1989.

In January of 1990, Roberta Walmsley became the coordinator of Phase II of the project. A decision was then made to expand the consultant pool. In that way each participating diocese could be assigned a consultant whose main tasks would be to orient the diocese on the use of the manual and purpose of the project, to assist in the research portion of the project, and to provide an ongoing tie between the participating diocese and the national project.

The six consultants for the Clergy Family Project are Julie Coffey (Arkansas), Beth Coleman (Central Florida), the Rev. Randall Chase (Massachusetts), Christine Folwell, Jan McDonald (Maryland), and Nancy Hopkins (Minnesota).

As of this writing, twelve dioceses are actively involved in the project. They are Hawaii, Oregon, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Northern Indiana, Kentucky, Lexington, Southern Ohio, Central New York, Atlanta, and Western North Carolina. There are others which still express interest.

The process which each diocesan committee working on the project uses is outlined, step by step, in the manual. They begin in the diocese. Through a questionnaire they assess the needs of clergy and spouses of clergy in their diocese and propose resources to address those needs. They then evaluate what they have done. They do this in the context of building community and promoting wellness.

For this phase of the Clergy Family Project, the Episcopal Family Network received funds from Trinity Church, New York City, the Church Pension Fund, the Episcopal Church Foundation, and the Diocese of Utah. Such support has been greatly appreciated.

The Episcopal Family Network, the project's sponsoring agency, owes its existence to a resolution of the 1979 Denver General Convention that recognized the need for the Church to "understand and nurture the families of God" and established a National Committee on Family Life, which evolved into the Episcopal Family Network. EFN's goal is to encourage ministry within the family and to provide resources to support this ministry, cognizant of the need to incorporate in its thinking the diversity found in family configurations in these times.

The Episcopal Family Network sees its ongoing charge as one of supporting and assisting diocesan and parish Family Life Committees by developing resources that promote the enrichment of family life at the local level. To this end, it has developed a notebook, *Being God's Family*; produced and distributed a film, *Families Matter*; and published a quarterly newsletter, *Family Matters*. Its focus since 1986 has been on the Clergy Family Project as one way of promoting the health and well-being of all families.

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