# STANDING COMMISSION ON LIFELONG CHRISTIAN FORMATION AND EDUCATION

# Membership

Ms. Janie Stevens, Chair\*, 2015

Canon Thomas G. O'Brien III, Vice Chair, 2018

The Rev. Moki Hino, Secretary, 2015

Ms. Laurie Bailey, 2015

The Rev. Evan D. Garner, 2018

Ms. Andrea McKellar, 2015

Ms. Kathryn Nishibayashi, 2018

The Rt. Rev. John Rabb, 2015

Ms. Carly Rowe, 2018

The Rev. Helen Svoboda-Barber, 2015

The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, 2018

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, Ex Officio

The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, Ex Officio

Ms. Ruth Frey, President of the House of Deputies Liaison

Ms. Deborah Stokes, Executive Council Liaison

Ms. Bronwyn Clark Skov, Staff

## Changes in Membership

There were three changes to the Commission's membership during the triennium. Mr. Trey Yarborough was replaced by Ms. Andrea McKellar; Ms. Lydia Bucklin was replaced by Ms. Carly Rowe; and The Rev. Robyn Barnes was replaced by The Rev. Helen Svoboda-Barber.

# Representation at General Convention

Bishop John Rabb and Canon Thomas G. O'Brien III, Vice Chair, are authorized to receive non-substantive amendments to this report at General Convention.

# Summary of Work

**Mandate:** To review formation needs throughout The Episcopal Church and to develop and recommend to the General Convention comprehensive and coordinated policies for children, youth, young adults, adults, and seniors for Lifelong Christian Formation.

Our "work" is to become aware of situations and opportunities that relate to Christian and Formation and Education, to obtain information regarding actions and programs conducted by others in these areas, to evaluate the information obtained, and to make reasoned and feasible recommendations to General Convention about policies to be implemented and actions to be taken by others to improve Christian Formation and Education in The Episcopal Church.

# The Work of the Commission and the Five Marks of Mission

The Five Marks of Mission and the need to assist small congregations have informed and guided the work of the Commission during the Triennium.

<sup>\*</sup>Janie Stevens passed away to her eternal reward on September 22, 2014.

All of the initiatives of the Commission are related to the Second Mark of Mission to "teach and nurture." In addition, all of our initiatives support the other Marks of Mission in assisting others to implement those Marks actively in their lives and ministries as they impact their education and formation needs.

We believe that for The Episcopal Church to live into its best future, the Five Marks of Mission will be both the verbal expression and the undergirding basis for all activities of the Church and its dioceses, congregations, and members. The Five Marks of Mission incorporate and subsume the Episcopal Baptismal Covenant, the Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation, the Children's Charter, and the Millennium Development Goals — each of which articulates specific aspects of living into the Five Marks of Mission so that The Episcopal Church and its members will grow more vibrant and loving in bringing the Gospel message to all.

If The Episcopal Church is to live into its best future, it will provide platforms and environments that enable persons to use their giftedness for the betterment of the Church and the world. The Five Marks of Mission are what The Episcopal Church is supposed to look like when it is doing its work.

Christian Formation — the making of disciples — is central to the implementation of **all** of the Five Marks of Mission. Formation is not just education — it is **all** of those activities that "form" us as Christians and, in particular, as Episcopalians. Formation empowers and enables each of us to have the resources to live out the Five Marks of Mission in our own circumstances, contexts, and ministries. Each of us needs to know the "story" of being an Episcopalian and to have it inculcated into our lives if we are to present ourselves and The Episcopal Church to others in a believable way. This is particularly true for young adults and for youth. Formation is central to knowing (and living out) the "story" and what it means to be an Episcopalian in the 21st century.

In the work of the Commission, we have been especially mindful that small congregations often lack significant resources for Christian Formation and Education. Much of our energy has been directed at developing ways in which small congregations and their Christian Formation ministers can gain access to materials and resources that will make their efforts more fruitful.

# Meetings

The Commission met in person in St. Louis, Missouri November 13-15, 2012; and in Linthicum Heights, Maryland October 21-24, 2014. The Commission also held six two-hour meetings via Adobe Connect. These electronic meetings were held February 5, 2013; April 30, 2013; July 17, 2013; November 12, 2013; February 4, 2014; and May 20, 2014.

At each Adobe Connect meeting, the Commission received oral reports from the chairs and members of the subcommittees that were established to develop information regarding each of the areas of concentration.

At its July 17, 2013 meeting, the Commission developed extensive responses to the Budget Visioning Questions posed to CCABs by the Finances for Mission Committee of Executive Council.

At its October 2014 in-person meeting, the Commission reviewed and revised a draft of this Blue Book report.

At each meeting, reports were received from the Commission's Staff Liaison and its Executive Council Liaison, as well as from a variety of networks that are involved in the ministry of formation and education. These included Forma and Episcopal Camps and Conference Centers.

The Commission was represented by its members at a number of gatherings of Christian Formation leaders, such as at Forma's Annual Conferences in 2013 and 2014; at the Christian Formation Conference at Kanuga in 2013 and 2014; and at the Western Christian Educators (renamed PNEUMA) Conference in 2013.

Members of the Commission also served as liaison to other commissions and reported to SCLCFE on the activities of other commissions.

#### **Areas of Concentration**

At the initial meeting in November 2012 in St. Louis, Missouri, the Commission reviewed resolutions passed at the 77th General Convention relating to the work of the Commission. The resolutions referred to the Commission by the General Convention Office were: A076 (Small Congregations) and A128 (Doctrine of Discovery).

The Commission was prepared to work with the Executive Council Committee on Indigenous Ministries as well as with the three entities that were directed to consult with the Commission in Resolution A128 regarding the Doctrine of Discovery. The Commission continues to stand ready to assist in this work.

In addition, the Commission determined that the following resolutions from General Convention 2012 might be applicable to its work:

- A046: Commend Continuing Development of Lifelong Christian Formation
- A047: Online Resource Center
- A067: Theological Education Ministry (referred to the SC on Ministry Development)
- A125: Recommitting to the Work of Anti-Racism
- Do68: Address Education and Pastoral Care of Developmentally Disabled

The Commission, in response to Resolution Ao76 and other resolutions, decided to concentrate only on the following areas during the triennium:

- 1. Awareness in The Episcopal Church of the Five Marks of Mission
- 2. Updating the 2004 Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse (the "2004 Model Policies")
- 3. Updating or supplementing the written and web-based *Safeguarding God's Children* and the *Safeguarding God's People* materials, and revising or supplementing other materials used to implement the 2004 Model Policies and to protect other persons against similar abuses
- 4. Confirming that dioceses and their congregations have adopted the 2004 Model Policies and are conducting training to prevent the abuse of God's people by persons in positions of authority (including volunteers)
- 5. Awareness of electronic resources for Christian Formation
- 6. Use of certification programs for persons engaged in Christian Formation and Education
- 7. Dissemination of formation resources for persons with special needs

#### **PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS**

A072: DEVELOP AWARENESS OF THE FIVE MARKS OF MISSION

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention affirm that the Five Marks of Mission adopted by the 76th General Convention in Resolution Do27 are central to the work of the Church, its dioceses, its congregations, and the formation of its members; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct that educational materials for instructing Episcopalians about the Five Marks of Mission (including separate curricula for children, youth, young adults, and adults) be developed, publicized, and disseminated; and be it further

Resolved, That in addition to printed versions of educational materials and curricula for the Five Marks of Mission, online versions of the educational materials and curricula be made available on The Episcopal Church website and on other Electronic Resource Centers (such as those maintained by Forma, Anglicans Online, the Center for Spiritual Resources, and others); and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church Center publicize the availability of educational materials and curricula for the Five Marks of Mission to dioceses and congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct dioceses and congregations to use materials that instruct persons about the Five Marks of Mission, such as Marked for Mission (for youth and young adults); and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses and congregations adopt the practice of intentionally and publicly stating how each of their activities relates to the Five Marks of Mission.

#### **EXPLANATION**

For the Five Marks of Mission to become truly central to the life of The Episcopal Church and its members, the Church needs to educate itself at all levels (congregations, dioceses, camps, and seminaries) about the Five Marks of Mission. This means that excellent teaching resources should be developed for all levels — for children, youth, young adults, and adults. These resources need to be made available and publicized on The Episcopal Church website and in other appropriate ways so that all Episcopalians and others will be aware of the Five Marks and The Episcopal Church's commitment to them.

To emphasize and inculcate this centrality, dioceses and congregations should adopt the practice of stating how each of their activities relates to the Five Marks. For example, each action undertaken by a vestry or diocese should be directly related to one or more of the Five Marks, and this relationship should be understood by the persons taking the action. By consistently relating actions to one or more of the Five Marks, Episcopalians will become more aware of the Five Marks of Mission and their importance in the life of the Church.

A073: UPDATE MODEL POLICIES FOR PREVENTING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention direct that the 2004 Model Policies developed by The Church Insurance Agency Corporation for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse (the "2004 Model Policies") be updated and supplemented to reflect the experience of the Church in using the 2004 Model Policies and to cover topics such as social media, mission trips, pilgrimages, camp and conference center programs, and other overnight events; and be it further

Resolved, That the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies, not later than September 30, 2015, jointly appoint a Special Task Group of five to seven persons with experience in the use and development of Model Policies for Preventing Sexual Misconduct to update, or to oversee the updating of, the 2004 Model Policies; and be it further

Resolved, That the updating and supplementing of the 2004 Model Policies be completed by March 31, 2016; and be it further

Resolved, That the Updated Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse to the Church (the "Updated Model Policies") be promulgated after they are approved by the Special Task Group; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church Center appoint a knowledgeable person to serve as a point of contact for dioceses to obtain information about complying with the 2004 Model Policies and the Updated Model Policies; and be it further

Resolved, That not later than December 31, 2016, the Guidelines for the Protection of Children and Youth of each diocese conform to the Updated Model Policies with due regard to applicable local laws on the subject matters of the Updated Model Policies; and be it further

Resolved, That all dioceses annually confirm, in writing or by email, to a designated office in the Episcopal Church Center, that the Guidelines of the diocese conform to the Updated Model Policies.

#### **EXPLANATION**

In the years since the 2004 Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse were issued, there have been many new developments in both communications and ministry. The continued use of outdated policies may well be dangerous to God's people and to The Episcopal Church and its dioceses and congregations. The 2004 Model Policies may be found on the web at https://www.cpg.org/linkservid/3F743B4C-06F1-5DFF-86FFB64C8B79DE07/showMeta/o/?label=Model%20Policies%3A%20Preventing %20Children%20and%20Youth%20from%20Abuse

Accordingly, the Commission urges General Convention to require updating of the 2004 Model Policies to reflect the experience of the Church in using the 2004 Model Policies and to cover such matters as social media, mission trips, pilgrimages, camp and conference center programs, and other overnight events. This updating work would be overseen by a Special Task Group, and the work of the Special Task Group should be completed by March 31, 2016.

A knowledgeable person should be appointed to serve as a contact person for dioceses to consult regarding the 2004 Model Policies and the Updated Model Policies.

In addition, we urge General Convention to require all dioceses to confirm to the Episcopal Church Center in writing that the diocese has adopted Guidelines for the Protection of God's People that conform to the Updated Model Policies. We do not urge that dioceses be required to report on the content of their Guidelines or on how they are implementing them, but merely that dioceses have guidelines are in place.

# A074: UPDATE THE SAFEGUARDING MATERIALS

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention direct that the Episcopal Church Center arrange for the updating or supplementing of written and web-based materials used in the Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People programs to reflect the experience of the Church in using the Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People materials; and to cover

topics such as social media, mission trips, pilgrimages, camp and conference center programs, and other overnight events; and be it further

Resolved, That, in addition to developing printed and web-based versions of the updated or supplemented Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People materials, electronic links to the online versions of the Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People curricula be made available on The Episcopal Church website; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church Center publicize the availability of the revised or supplemented written and web-based Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People materials to dioceses and congregations; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses of The Episcopal Church be required annually to confirm, in writing or by email, to a designated office in the Episcopal Church Center that the diocese and (to the best of its knowledge after due inquiry) congregations in the diocese are training persons in positions of authority (including clergy, staff, vestry, children, and youth educators/leaders and other volunteers) by using the Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People materials or other appropriate materials for this training; and be it further

Resolved, That after the written and web-based Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People curricula are revised or supplemented, re-training of trainers be conducted so that the persons conducting training in congregations and dioceses are fully aware of the changes in the training materials and are able to teach them competently; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention request the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance to consider a budget allocation of \$50,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

#### **EXPLANATION**

The Safeguarding God's Children and the Safeguarding God's People materials were prepared more than 10 years ago. Since then, there have been many new developments in both communications and ministry. The continued use of outdated policies and practices may well be dangerous to God's people and to The Episcopal Church.

Accordingly, the Commission urges General Convention to require updating or supplementing the written and web-based Safeguarding God's Children, such as those at www.safeguardingonline.org (password required) and the Safeguarding God's People materials to reflect the experience of the Church, and its dioceses and congregations, in using these materials; and to cover such matters as social media, mission trips, pilgrimages, camp and conference center programs, and other overnight events. This updating work may well be outsourced to the Church Insurance Agency Corporation (an affiliate of Church Pension Group) and should be performed under the overall supervision of appropriate staff at the Episcopal Church Center.

Some of this updating and supplemental work has been done by dioceses. The program of the Diocese of California may be found at http://www.diocal.org/safechurch. Its Social Media Guidelines are at http://www.diocal.org/sites/default/files/media/PDF%20Docs/c2rr social networking guidelines.pdf

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut has Guidelines for the use of Social Media at https://www.episcopalct.org/Find-Resources/General-Parish-Operations/Safe-Church-Resources/Guidelines-for-Social-Media/

The Diocese of Texas Safeguarding Policy on Social Media may be found at http://www.epicenter.org/safeguarding-policies

These three policies give those revising or supplementing the *Safeguarding God's People* materials and the other materials a "running start" in their updating and supplementing efforts.

In addition, we urge General Convention to require all dioceses to confirm to the Episcopal Church Center that the dioceses and their congregations are implementing the *Safeguarding God's Children* and the *Safeguarding God's People* programs or other comparable programs to protect children, youth, and others from abuse from persons in positions of authority. We do not urge that dioceses be required to report on how they are implementing the *Safeguarding God's Children* and the *Safeguarding God's People* (or similar) programs, but merely that they are implementing them.

We consider these recommendations a very high priority both to prevent harm to any of God's people and to reduce the potential for legal and other claims against The Episcopal Church, dioceses, and congregations for failing to take appropriate steps to protect others. Funds allocated for this updating and training work are an investment against harm to God's people and potential claims against The Episcopal Church and its dioceses and congregations.

A075: DEVELOP AWARENESS OF ONLINE CHRISTIAN FORMATION RESOURCES

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the Episcopal Church Center establish a prominent tab or link on the website of The Episcopal Church to give persons seeking Christian Formation resources access to websites that provide suitable Christian Formation resources, including the websites maintained by Forma, the Center for Spiritual Resources of the Diocese of Western North Carolina, Anglicans Online, and the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church Center publicize to dioceses, congregations, and Christian Formation leaders the availability of these websites that provide helpful Christian Formation resources, and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses and congregations with websites consider including links to websites that provide suitable Christian Formation resources; and be it further

Resolved, That Christian Formation leaders throughout The Episcopal Church be encouraged to share with these websites suitable formation resources that they themselves have developed.

#### **EXPLANATION**

There are a number of electronic resource hubs that provide easy online access to, and a workable index of, resources for Christian Formation. This resolution urges The Episcopal Church to make the existence and content of resource hubs more widely known and available to Episcopalians at all levels. The resource hubs are especially helpful to small congregations.

Some of the currently available electronic resource hubs are maintained by Forma (http://episcoforma.org/resource-area and http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net), by the Center for Spiritual Resources of the Diocese of Western North Carolina (http://thecsr.org), by Anglicans Online (http://anglicansonline.org/

resources/ce.html), and by the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at Virginia Theological Seminary (http://www.vts.edu/cmt?rc=o).

The Episcopal Church can be a "connector" to help coordinate access to the resources that exist both inside and outside the Church today by creating a prominent tab or a link on its website (http://www.episcopalchurch.org) to serve as a portal for any church or individual seeking materials to support ministry in the area of Christian Formation.

The Church Center should also make congregations and Christian Formation ministers aware of the electronic resource hubs. Most dioceses and congregations do not have a staff member to search for program ideas and resources from the greater Episcopal community in the area of Faith Formation. The internet greatly reduces that isolation, but it takes a trained eye and an Episcopal ethos to analyze the vast amount of content that is found on the web that can inform living out our Baptismal Covenant and the Five Marks of Mission.

Finally, many Christian Formation leaders in congregations have developed materials that they use and which would be helpful to others. This resolution requests that these Christian Formation leaders submit these materials to the electronic resource hubs so they can be used by others.

## A076: COMMEND USE OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION CERTIFICATIONS

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention commend to all dioceses and congregations the use of Christian Formation Certifications as a way to encourage professional development for both paid and unpaid Christian Formation leaders and to deepen the Church's commitment to the value and status of lay Christian Formation leaders; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention commend the work of Forma in having developed through Faith Formation Academy the Certificate in Leadership for Lifelong Christian Formation and the Certificate for Youth and Family Ministry; the programs at Virginia Theological Seminary; the Seminary of the Southwest's Certificate Program in Christian Formation; General Theological Seminary's Certificate in the Spiritual Guidance of Children; and the programs of other recognized entities offering continuing education opportunities and certification for those called to the ministry of Christian Formation; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church Center promote awareness of these certification programs.

#### **EXPLANATION**

In recent years, the positions of numerous congregational and diocesan Christian Formation leaders have been eliminated due to budget limitations. At the same time, membership in Forma has grown, and more congregations are requesting ideas for resources and programming to provide educational ministries for children, youth, and adults. People with the skills and talents of Christian Education and Formation are needed more than ever.

Christian Formation leaders, facilitators, and teachers who are called to this ministry — paid or unpaid — need continuing education and resources to do their ministry well. Our research shows that certification is desired by Christian Formation leaders, teachers, and directors in many dioceses and congregations; and that certification programs are effective in increasing competence, confidence, and networking.

This resolution does not mandate certification for those called to the ministry of Christian Formation and Education, but reaffirms those who desire to continue their education and professional development.

A07	7: PUBLI	cize Resoui	RCES FOR	PEOPLE	WITH SPECIAL	NEEDS
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Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That The Episcopal Church recognize that all people are children of God and that those with developmental disabilities may require different approaches to education and pastoral care; and be it further

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention direct the Episcopal Church Center to publicize, through the Episcopal Church website and by other appropriate means, to dioceses, congregations, and Christian Formation leaders, compilations of resources that will help educators and clergy in the formation of persons with developmental disabilities.

#### **EXPLANATION**

Resolution Do68 (Address Education and Pastoral Care of Developmentally Disabled) of the 77th General Convention directed the creation of a task force "to study what resources are currently available [for persons with developmental disabilities] and to create resources that can be used to help educators and clergy to tend to this population."

The Do68 Task Force and the Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Formation and Education received three lists of resources compiled by others that will be helpful to educators and clergy in this ministry. These lists of resources have been provided to the Formation and Vocation Ministries Team at the Episcopal Church Center.

The proposed resolution calls for the Episcopal Church Center to make these resources more widely known and available to Christian Formation leaders and clergy.

# A078: REAFFIRM THE CHARTER FOR LIFELONG CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention commend the ministry of Christian Formation and education leaders in The Episcopal Church for continuing to lift up *The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation* adopted as Resolution Ao82 at the 76th General Convention; and the importance of inviting, inspiring, and transforming all people, lay and ordained, in the Christian Faith as well as the continued development of training for leaders of the Church; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses and congregations adopt The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation and annually review the ways in which their Christian Formation ministries reflect and embody *The Charter*.

#### **EXPLANATION**

The Charter for Lifelong Christian Formation (http://www.episcopalarchives.org/cgi-bin/acts/acts\_resolution.pl?resolution=2009-A082) should continue to inform the work of The Episcopal Church and all persons involved in Christian Formation and Education. Having The Charter adopted by dioceses and congregations and reviewed at least annually by them will remind Episcopalians that Christian Formation is a lifelong process and encompasses more than education.

# A079: RECOMMEND MEMBERSHIP IN FORMA

Resolved, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring, That the 78th General Convention commend Forma for its leadership in building a network of lay and ordained persons engaged in Christian Formation and Education, assisting in the exchange of information among Christian Formation leaders, and providing resources and certification programs for lay and ordained persons engaged in Christian Formation and Education; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses and congregations encourage lay and ordained persons engaged in Christian Formation and Education to become members of Forma and, where possible, to pay their dues.

#### **EXPLANATION**

Forma (http://www.episcoforma.org) is a network that assists Christian Formation leaders — clergy and lay persons — in the conduct of their ministries. In addition to its online resources, Forma holds an annual conference and maintains a Listserv to enable members to share recommendations and information.

This networking is a great service to Christian Formation leaders, particularly those in small congregations. The Commission strongly urges persons engaged in Christian Formation and Education to become members of Forma. The annual dues are nominal.

# **Budget**

The Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Formation and Education was provided a triennial budget of \$16,000 and expended a total of less than \$10,000 as of November 30, 2014. The Commission does not expect to incur any significant expenses in 2015.

SCLCFE understands that, unlike 2012, there will not be an Initial Meeting of all Committees, Commissions, Agencies, and Boards in 2015.

Assuming that CCABs continue after 2015, SCLCFE will need to hold at least two in-person meetings during the 2016-2018 triennium — one in early 2016 to set its agenda and work program for the 2016-2018 triennium, and another meeting in late 2017 to prepare its Blue Book report for General Convention 2018.

In addition, the Commission will meet using Adobe Connect or similar electronic means at least five times during the next triennium.

We are advised that the average cost per person for a three-day, in-person meeting is \$1,100. Accordingly, the two in-person meetings and the Adobe Connect meetings will require \$14,000 for 2016 and \$14,000 for 2017, for a total of \$28,000 for the triennium for the Commission.

Even if the CCABs do not continue after 2015, we strongly urge that a task force be established to continue to fulfill the mandate of SCLCFE to review formation needs throughout The Episcopal Church and to develop and recommend to the General Convention comprehensive and coordinated policies for children, youth, young adults, adults, and seniors for Lifelong Christian Formation.